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Tribute
Zenebeworke Tadesse
Editor 1987-1993

As we go to press with this issue of *Africa Development*, Ms Zenebeworke Tadesse, Editor of *Africa Development* and Deputy Executive Secretary (Publications) retires from CODESRIA to take on new challenges back home in Ethiopia. This is the last issue which she is editing.

We take this opportunity to pay a glowing tribute to the dedication, devotion, integrity and intelligence which Zene over the past seven years has brought into building CODESRIA's publications programme into one of the top most in academic publishing in Africa. We wish her all the best in her new life.

Hommage
Zenebeworke Tadesse
Rédacteur 1987-1993

Au moment où nous envoyons ce numéro d'*Afrique et Développement* en impression, Mme Zenebeworke Tadesse, rédacteur de ce journal et Secrétaire Exécutif adjoint chargé des publications quitte le CODESRIA pour aller affronter de nouveaux défis chez elle en Ethiopie; le présent numéro est le dernier que le CODESRIA a publié sous sa direction.

Nous voudrions profiter de cette occasion pour rendre un vibrant hommage au dévouement, à l'intégrité et à l'intelligence avec lesquels Zene a fait du programme de publication du CODESRIA l'une des meilleures éditions scientifique en Afrique pendant les sept années qu'elle a dirigé la section des publications. Nous lui souhaitons plein succès dans ses entreprises nouvelles.

Tade Akin Aina
Editor / Rédacteur

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Ghana Under PNDC Rule analyses the changes in Ghanaian society under Rawlings's Provisional National Defence Council, the longest serving government in the country's turbulent history. Since 1981, Rawlings has become a favourite of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, and his government's Structural Adjustment Programmes have been judged as the most thoroughgoing and consistent in the world. What shape did this transition from 'revolution' to 'economic recovery' take? What has been the effect of these policies on the Ghanaian economy, and more importantly, the Ghanaian people?

Very little has been written about the policies and outcomes of the Rawlings regime. This book, written by Ghanaian scholars is a vital contribution to the written history of Ghana. Topics include the crisis of 1981 and the retreat from democratic rule and the role of the state in achieving political objectives. Strategies of political mobilisation, are examined, as are the IMF and World Bank-influenced agricultural and economic policies. Changes in foreign policy and the law and the effects of PNDC policies on women and their impact on labour are also looked at in depth.

This book is essential reading for any student, scholar, individual or organisation who is interested in Military rule, impact of Structural Adjustment Programmes in Africa.

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Some Problems in Ghana's Transition to Democratic Governance

Kwame A Ninsin*

Résumé: *Alors que la démocratie libérale peut conduire à la disparition du militarisme et de l'autoritarisme, le populisme quant à lui peut s'accomoder des deux systèmes politiques. Au Ghana, des luttes prolongées des diverses forces sociales ont abouti à des gains politiques comme la liberté de former des associations politiques, la liberté d'expression et le droit de choisir ses représentants politiques à travers des consultations politiques. Cependant en eux-mêmes, ces gains ne garantissent pas une gestion démocratique des affaires. Cette dernière ne peut être obtenue que si la société civile est suffisamment forte et autonome pour imposer sa volonté sur l'Etat et permettre une supervision permanente de l'utilisation du pouvoir d'Etat. La société civile au Ghana est faible bien que le pays dispose d'une classe moyenne suffisamment large et économiquement vigoureuse. Cette faiblesse a été exacerbée par les crises socio-économiques. En outre les capacités de l'Etat à prendre des actions politiques indépendantes ont été améliorées par un flux massif de l'aide par le truchement de l'intervention des institutions financières multilatérales dans l'économie politique du Ghana. Ainsi le régime a pu initier un processus de réforme qui lui a permis de gérer le processus de transition de sorte à garantir des résultats positifs ainsi que sa propre continuité.*

Introduction

In their policy towards African countries, donor agencies and countries have emphasized the need for regimes to restore political pluralism, competitive elections and also respect civil liberties as political conditionalities for further economic assistance. It is implied that when a country's authoritarian regime - civilian or military - concedes these elements of liberal democratic ideology that country becomes or has become democratic. This view has been around, at least, since the 1950s. Among both nonacademics (Mackenzie 1958) and academics of Western democracies a government is democratic if it is based on free elections. Hence Huntington could insist as late as the 1970s that 'holding free and competitive elections is accepted as a sign of pluralist democracy'. (Huntington and Moore 1970:509). The irony is that after decades of failed experiences this view did not die. It was simply put on the ice; and has resurfaced in the same form buttressed by the same depth of conviction.

In this paper I argue that merely conceding such elements of liberal democracy does not lead automatically to democratic governance. By democratic governance I mean the institutionalization, through sustained

political practice, of legitimate organizations, procedures, norms and rules that would ensure limited government and respect for human rights as well as efficient and effective government through a transparent system of accountability. I shall use the case of Ghana, where a new government was elected recently, to argue that the prospects for democratic governance are affected by: i) the political values held by the governing elite, especially in so far as these affect the chance that democratic ideas and practice would flourish; ii) the degree of autonomy of the state; and iii) the level of development of civil society or non-state publics.

The Background
After nearly à decade of military rule the government of the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) agreed to return the country to constitutional rule after considerable domestic and external pressure. From August 1991 to March 1992 a consultative assembly sat to write a new constitution which was duly approved at a referendum held on April 28 of the same year. Presidential and parliamentary elections were held in November and December 1992, respectively; and on 7 January 1993, a government, elected under the new constitution, was sworn in.

The 1992 constitution contains more elements - both doctrinal and structural - of liberal democracy. There is an elaborate chapter on fundamental human rights (Chapter 11), and a Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (Chapter 18). The powers of the three organs of the state - the executive, legislature and judiciary - have been carefully delineated and at the same time combined in a complex system of checks and balances, coordination and cooperation (Chapters 8, 10 and 11). The constitution further provides for a media commission that will create the enabling environment within which the media could operate as the watchdog of the rights or the citizen (Chapter 12). An equally significant provision of this constitution will be found in Chapter 6 which deals with the 'The Directive Principles of State Policy'. This provision dates back to the 1979 constitution. It is nonetheless remarkable for its affirmation of the democratic doctrine of limited government and the principle that governments are set up for the sole purpose of protecting and enhancing the liberties of the citizen.

These beautiful provisions notwithstanding, the constitution may not succeed as the framework for democratic governance if the ruling elite does not believe in democracy, and if the political and social conditions are not supportive of democratic governance.

The Rawlings Regime's Conception of Democracy
The dominant political values within the present government may be extrapolated from the various ideological positions of the PNDC government. These values determine the regime's conception of democracy which was redefined three times during its tenure in response to political crises as and

when they occurred. What then is the Rawlings regime's conception of democracy?

Essentially the view of democracy that prevailed during the first two years of the regime emphasized popular participation or some form of direct democracy by the masses of the people. The defence committees were seen as the bedrock of that democracy (Chazan, et al., 1988:71-92).[1] Elections, political parties, representation and representative institutions as well as constitutions were denounced as bourgeois mystification. They not only aborted democracy and negated the sovereignty of the people; but they also alienated the people from the state. This was said to be a malaise that was at the root of the political crisis of the state. The solution to it was to create the means by which the people could exercise direct sovereignty. During this period the people, in political practice, referred to the urban underclass.

The Rawlings regime started to redefine the political basis of democracy from 1984 onwards and ultimately gave it a new institutional form. By then the Economic Recovery Programme (ERP) had alienated and destroyed the urban coalition that had been forged in the early years of its rule, undermined the credibility of its radical populist ideology, and precipitated a legitimacy crisis. Consequently, the social strata that constituted the agents and beneficiaries of the new democratic revolution also had to be redefined. Thenceforth the defence committee ceased to be the 'bedrock' of the new democracy: they had become a political menace and a liability to stability and legitimacy (Ninsin, 1993). The new beneficiaries of democracy were now the rural people - the 'real workers', and the District Assemblies (DAs), which were inaugurated in 1989, became the new agents of mobilization.

Though they were intended to be representative, the DAs were based on a rather limited view of elections and democracy.[2] Accordingly, elections to the assemblies were conducted on nonpartisan basis and electoral competition was permitted only within the monolithic political framework defined by the PNDC government. The usual canons of liberal democracy - political pluralism, open and free debate, and respect for civil liberties - were conspicuously absent.

So clearly certain political imperatives were at work. The period between the middle of 1982 and 1984 witnessed a great deal of instability, and exposed the fragile legitimacy of the regime to much greater threat. It was

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1   See *Also a Revolutionary Journey,* (Collected Speeches by J J, Rawlings) Vol. 1. Accra: Ministry of Information.

2   For the rules governing the conduct of elections to the district assemblies, refer to *The Local Government Law 1988* (PNDCL 207).

therefore prudent that the regime should initiate some reforms, following the crackdown of the defence committees, in order to stabilize the situation and also ensure greater legitimacy for itself. As part of the reforms that followed 1984, the Rawlings regime attempted to partially accommodate some of the demands of the country's political and economic elites but did so very cautiously. For instance, new appointments were made from the ranks of these elites to fill vacancies created in the PNDC and its leading organs by the political upheavals. In justifying such appointments Rawlings said that the 'new political system' would be built with 'nationalists', the 'representatives of the people', men and women who would be chosen for proven 'experience, maturity, and dedicated and patriotic service' (Ninsin, 1993:8-9, op.cit.).

It is also significant that the PNDC, even as it sought to placate the country's political and economic establishment elites, did not intend to fully liberalize politics in order to give representatives of the establishment the chance to participate freely in politics. Instead the lower middle classes were made the principal target of incorporation. The regime merely appointed a handful of carefully selected members of the establishment to fill one-third of the seats on the DAs as stipulated in the *Local Government Law 1988 (PNDCL 207)*; the result was that the DA election brought into office predominantly small property owners. According to the *Information Digest* (November/December No. 7, 1989) of the Ministry of Information, the DAs total membership of 6,500 was dominated by farmers (33.2%) and teachers (32.3%) all or most of whom were resident in their respective localities. They were followed by civil and public servants (12.7%) and self-employed (9.5%). There were only 109 (1.78%) accountants and bankers and 40 (0.6%) legal practitioners. It should be noted that a large number of these minority groups were appointed by the regime to strengthen the rather low calibre of the elected assembly members and more especially to strengthen its links with society. Clearly therefore the political reforms which were ushered in by the new notion of democracy were intended to coopt selected 'publics' in order to bolster the regime's faltering legitimacy and strengthen its capacity for governance rather than restore liberal democratic governance.[3]

This conception of democracy implies opening up the political system through reforms that will bring selected publics into the decision-making structures to ensure broader consultation and accountability. It is consistent with current definitions of 'governance' which dominates discourse on government and politics in Africa among academic Africanists of North American Universities as well as bureaucratic Africanists within the donor community and multilateral financial institutions. See for example, Bratton and Hyden, (1992); and World Bank, (1989; 1991). Among these 2 Africanist groups, there is the tendency to define 'governance' not as a democratic system of representation, accountability and consultation, and of securing consent and legitimation. The emphasis is

Compared to their more established counterparts of mainstream and upper middle class elites, these members of the lower middle classes are less economically independent and secure. The PNDC government could therefore not expect any organized opposition from the latter. Besides, these lower middle class elites had been elected to the DAs in their individual capacities and not as representatives of organized political parties and associations or of other non-state publics. Experiences from the regime of the Convention People's Party (Austin, 1964) and the Supreme Military Council (Ninsin, 1985) show that this lower stratum of the middle class, which comprises mainly small property owners, has one political disability: it lacks economic security and therefore tends to rely on the state - become politically gullible in exchange for economic favours. Given these favorable political conditions in the DAs the PNDC could be confident that the DA members would not turn themselves into a force for either more political reforms or democratization.

The established middle classes boycotted the election to the DAs because in their view the political reforms that led to the establishment of the assemblies were undemocratic. On the surface of it their boycott fulfilled the PNDC regime's intentions. In reality, however, the boycott only aggravated the political crisis of the PNDC and forced it to initiate the third level of political reform which led to the inauguration of constitutional rule. In fact, from 1986 to about 1990 the agitation for democratization had involved many more groups, strategies had become better coordinated, and much more intensive, involving as it did groups like the Movement for Freedom and Justice (MFJ), Ghana Bar Association (GBA), Christian Council of Ghana (CCG), and the National Union of Ghana Students (NUGS) as leaders of the movement. During the same period the contradictions and weaknesses of the ERP had become more glaring.

In attempt to fathom the full depth of the political crisis the regime conducted two public opinion surveys between the middle of 1990 and August 1991.[4] Significantly, both surveys, the second of which was done covertly, revealed widespread aversion with continued military rule. A substantial majority showed preference for multi-party politics and a return to constitu-

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on a broad corporate kind of structures within which consultation, accountability and so-called transparency as well as effectiveness and efficiency in government could be achieved.

4   The 2 studies were conducted on behalf of the government by the National Commission on Democracy. Refer to National Commission on Democracy, *Evolving a True Democracy* (Summary of NDC's Work Towards The Establishment of a New Democratic Order) Report Presented to PNDC, Accra, March 25 1991 and National Commission on Democracy, *Public Reaction to The NCD* Report on Evolving a True Democracy and the PNDC's *Constitutional Proposals*. (A Study conducted by the NCD's Research Department and sponsored by the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung), Accra, August 1991.

tional rule. In the circumstances, further political reforms became the only solution. It was at this juncture that the Rawlings regime felt compelled to concede the additional political reforms which ushered in the government of the New Democratic Congress (NDC) headed by Rawlings himself.

It must be emphasized that even as the regime conceded the latest political reforms, it still stuck to its original view of democracy as popular, participatory and without political parties. Rawlings did not only admit his opposition to political pluralism publicly, his regime also deliberately packed the consultative Assembly, which wrote the 1992 Constitution, with people who may be described as representatives of the grassroots or the masses. As Jonah (1991) has argued, this strategy is reminiscent of how the country's past military regimes had tried to monopolize and manipulate the constitution-making process for their benefit. We should add that the composition of the assembly was intended also to emphasize that body's popular character, as well as revitalize the regime's own links with the social forces which it had targeted for mobilization since the mid-1980s (Ninsin; Drah, 1991). On the one hand, such practices could come from a military regime that is under pressure to disengage (Hansen; Kennedy, 1989). On the other hand, they manifest the regime's commitment to using anti-democratic means to achieve its goal of popular democracy. Either of these tendencies was bound to produce undemocratic practices. The transition period - 1991 to January 1993 - became a test case of the regime's commitment to liberal democratic ideals. In brief, the regime tightly controlled the transition process to ensure that this populist notion of democracy would be realized, and its political and economic positions vindicated.

The Undemocratic Transition

The principal feature of current Ghanaian politics is the successful transformation of the PNDC into the civilian regime of the NDC also with Rawlings as head of state. The politics that produced this self-succession had to be controlled because much was at stake. The regime had come to power claiming to represent the popular masses. From 1983, when it started to implement the structural adjustment programme, it consistently claimed that its policies and actions were in the best interest of the people. On the one hand, the transition arrangements, the centerpiece of which were the elections, had therefore become an acid test of the government's legitimacy before the donor community which needed to be assured that, after years of ruling the country with a heavy hand, it was still popular. On the other hand, they were crucial as a means of proving to its critics at home that it indeed enjoyed popular support. Accordingly, the idea of a transition to constitutional rule through multiparty elections became part of the state's ideology of legitimation. Such was the need for the regime to legitimize itself, especially in the face of mounting criticism from home and abroad coupled with domestic political protest, that it did not only have to accept the need for

multi-party elections. More especially, it had to control the entire transition process to ensure a favorable outcome. Towards this goal, democratic norms and principles are expendable; for even without democratic principles; 'elections still have meaning as a legitimating mechanism. Elites seek to demonstrate public approbation even in authoritarian contexts' (Hayward 1987:14). This section examines the more visible aspects of this controlled process.

From the late 1980s, when the MFJ was formed to spearhead the agitation for democratic reforms, to May 1992 when the ban on pluralist politics was lifted, the PNDC monopolized the political space. It did not allow freedom of political activity; and political associations like the MFJ were formed in defiance of the regime's antipathy. Apart from the MFJ, several other political associations could exist only in disguise. When the ban on political activities was lifted and several political parties came into the open, the regime persistently refused to engage in dialogue with the parties of the opposition despite repeated demands by the latter. Nor would the intervention[5] of the Christian Council of Ghana and Catholic Bishop Conference convince the regime of the legitimacy of the opposition parties as well as their demands and thereby oblige her to engage in dialogue with them. Yet the opposition had raised burning issues which had to be thrashed out before a smooth and peaceful transition to constitutional rule could be guaranteed. The issues included:

a) the need to replace the PNDC government with a transitional government in order to ensure fairness in the transition process;

b) dissolution of the government's revolutionary and para-military organs;

c) revision of the voters register which was flawed by over-registration;

d) repeal of laws which were considered undemocratic and repressive;

e) dissolution of the district election committees which had been set up to manage the district council elections of 1986-89 for fear that these might interfere with conduct of the elections;

f) holding the presidential and parliamentary elections simultaneously;

g) revising the Political Parties Law 1992 to make it more democratic and fair to all aspiring political leaders.

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5   These two main religious bodies presented separate memoranda to the government. Their positions were identical to that of the opposition parties - in effect a rebuttal of the government's intransigence. See Christian Council, *Christian Council Response to Ghana's Search for a New Democratic System*, Accra, December 1990; and Catholic Church, *The Catholic Church and Ghana's Search for a New Democratic system*, Accra, February 1991.

It should be noted that in the meantime the opposition parties comprising the New Patriotic Party (NPP), Peoples Heritage Party (PHP) and the Popular Party for Democracy and Development (PPDD), had formed one umbrella organization called the Alliance of Democratic Forces (ADF). When the results of the presidential election were announced these parties had altogether won 41% of the votes cast compared to the 58% won by Rawlings' NDC. Yet the government refused to recognize the legitimacy of the opposition parties and their demands.

When the regime finally agreed to talk to them it became quite evident that dialogue and compromise were impossible between the two contending parties. Accordingly after a couple of rather unproductive meetings the consultations collapsed. With that opportunity for both government and opposition parties to lay a firm foundation for liberal democratic politics aborted, the culture of suspicion, intolerance and recrimination, which had characterized Ghanaian politics over the last 11 years of military rule, gained firmer roots. Accordingly, the decision of the opposition parties to recognize the NDC government and legislature, and also act as a responsible opposition from outside the legislature did not improve the political situation. The regime retained firm control of the political situation.

Under these controlled conditions, what meaning could we attach to the presidential and parliamentary elections? Certainly, the elections allowed the Ghanaian electorate to choose representatives. But clearly the mere opportunity to exercise such a right does not amount to democratic choice. How effectively (or rationally) the franchise is used, and more especially the atmosphere within which it is used as well a the opportunities the voter has in exercising the franchise freely are all extremely important in determining the real meaning of an election (Hermet, 1978). In the circumstances of the 1990-1992 period, when internal protests and criticisms were increasing, and external pressures were also mounting, it would appear that the need to renew the bond between state and society and to legitimize the regime's exercise of political power, had become an imperative that no regime anxious about its survival could afford to ignore. The controlled transition process ensured that the elections would produce results that are advantageous to the regime. After all, when authoritarian regimes are in crisis, elections become an important means for bringing the state closer to society (Young, 1987). In the Ghanaian case, the whole of the transition process became part of the means by which the regime legitimized itself.

The Autonomy of the State
The Rawlings regime could be so arbitrary not only because the country did not have a democratic constitution that would define the parameters of state power and also limit its exercise; but more especially because the Ghanaian state had become extremely powerful and autonomous. The concept of state autonomy does not imply absolute independence and freedom of the leading

organs of state from society and its publics (Nordlinger, 1981; Jordan, 1985). It is used here to refer to a situation where the key organs of state are not entirely free from social and other pressures from their environments but are sufficiently free to often ignore or override such pressures (Nordlinger, 1981) in peripheral societies, however, the crucial role played by the state in organizing access to scarce resources like foreign capital and, generally, in promoting accumulation gives the state much greater autonomy from the political and economic interests within its domestic environment (Ninsin, 1985) than is normal.

In Ghana's political economy during the 1982-92 period, the massive flow of foreign loans and grants enabled the state to restore its shattered fiscal base and thereby strengthen its capacity to discharge crucial social, economic and other obligations. With that, the Ghanaian state of the Rawlings regime was also able to salvage its crumbling legitimacy and political capacity. Consequently its autonomy from the economic, cultural and political elites increased considerably. The regime's record of unparalleled political will - an euphemism for authoritarianism (Hansen, 1987; Hansen and Ninsin, 1989; Ninsin, 1991a) - in implementing the ERP is explained partly by this massive support it received from the donor community.

Furthermore, the regime enjoyed monopoly in policy formulation;[6] and so had almost unqualified discretion in determining the parameters of economic activity and in restructuring economic relations. In the absence of established democratic structures and procedures for ensuring accountability, the Rawlings regime was accountable only to itself for the use or misuse of the massive economic resources and political power it monopolized.[7] In those circumstances the Ghanaian state did not only become authoritarian, it also became independent of key political, economic and cultural elites and so could act freely within its domestic environment without the fear that any of such interests might mobilize an independent resource against it. This autonomy was expressed in the patron-client relations which were subsumed under the military bureaucratic state as a wide range of interests depended on the regime for access to foreign capital and contracts while regions, dis-

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6   The rather limited and frustrating relationship between the PNDC government and the business community on the very politically sensitive question of privatization, which is an example of the monopoly the government exercised over the decision-making structures, is analyzed in Tangri (1991:528-533).

7   Recently there were some interesting revelations about the management of public funds inside the Ghana National Petroleum Corporation, and about the embezzlement of public funds in the public services in the private media. Official response to the first was to take legal action against the press house and journalist concerned with that revelation. Regarding the second, the government simply kept its usual silence. See various 1992-93 issues of the Ghanaian Chronicle.

tricts and communities looked up to it for development projects - like health posts, school blocks, electricity, piped water, tarred roads and bridges.

As has been shown elsewhere in this paper, the level of the state's autonomy become evident from the absolute control the PNDC regime could exercise over the transition to constitutional rule in spite of the protestations of individuals and groups with contrary views. In the end, the results of the November and December 1992 elections, which gave the PNDC party - the National Democratic Congress (NDC) - undisputed control over the executive and legislative powers of the state,[8] show quite clearly the extent a regime could go to employ state power, that stood unchallenged, to achieve desired results.

Chazan (1987:70) has argued, with some justification, that Ghanaian 'elections as a mode of transition... have insured continuity with the immediate past' rather than effect new directions in policy. In the present case the prospects for continuity in policy is born out by the significant fact that the regime of the National Democratic Congress, which is headed by Rawlings, is the 'first child of the PNDC' (to quote The Speaker of the present Parliament, Mr Justice Annan, then a leading member of the PNDC when he made this remarkable revelation): it is not a matter of speculation. Accordingly, there is a strong possibility that the undemocratic values that shaped the policies and actions of the PNDC government would prevail during the tenure of its successor, the NDC, in spite of the constitution.

It is true, as shown above, that the 1992 constitution provides reasonable grounds for realizing democratic governance in the long run. But recent actions of the regime provide additional grounds for suggesting that the authoritarian tendencies within it could easily undermine the constitution. A few cases may be cited to illustrate this threat. The constitution was approved in a referendum held in April 1992. The legal position as to whether its approval at the referendum made it immediately operational, and binding on all officers of the state is not clear to me. What is clear is that the PNDC has acted in a number of ways which, if continued, could easily threaten the sanctity of the constitution, and ultimately abort it. For example: i) the PNDC government continued to promulgate a number of laws that are said to predate the constitution even after it had ceased to exist; ii) in total disregard of the constitution it appointed certain public officers whose appointment is otherwise regulated by the constitution; iii) it announced a budget

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8   The NDC, whose presidential candidate was Rawlings, won the presidency with 58% of total votes cast, and gained undisputed control of the legislature with 190 of the 200 seats at stake. The NDC's electoral allies - the National Convention Party and the Eagle Party won 7 and 1 seat respectively; while the remaining 2 seats went to independent candidates, both of them women.

just a day before it left office; and that budget came into force without the approval of the legislature contrary to the provisions of the constitution. Surely then, this continuity syndrome in Ghanaian politics was not just an election gimmick (as the election ideology which was so generously propagated in the heat of the transition politics appeared to suggest), but as Rawlings warned in his inaugural address as the first president of Ghana's 5th Republic, the revolution is not over yet!

The Weak Civil Society

The question that remains to be answered is: Why should the PNDC/NDC regime be able to act so capriciously when Ghana is known to possess one of the most vigorous middle classes in sub-Saharan Africa? The answer to this question must be sought in the character of civil society - that strata of intermediary organizations and associations (otherwise called non-state publics) which represent various social forces.

The literature on civil society and democracy in Africa has tried to link the growth of associational interest groups or voluntary associations to the rebirth of democracy (Diamond et al., 1988; Rotchild & Chazan, 1988; Chazan et al., 1982; Bratton, 1989). According to Chazan, who has written extensively on Ghana, the crisis of the Ghanaian state has energized civil society through the development of alternative - that is, parallel (to the formal) - economics for purposes of survival and entrepreneurship. These developments in society and economy have produced in the political sphere alternative institutions and patterns of interactions - referring to the growth of associational interest groups - which are pregnant with democratic ideals and aspirations because, according to her, such associations are restructuring their relationship to the state. Democracy in Ghana is therefore gaining a new dynamism.

It is true that the crisis of the Ghanaian state has induced a process of informalization both in society and the economy which is expressed in the proliferation of self-help or voluntary associations. The problem however is whether the formation or existence of such associations is evidence of the development of an autonomous civil society. Chazan seems to assume that it does. If her analyses, conclusions and prognoses were valid, Ghana's transition to democratic governance should not be so problematic. Indeed as Guyer (1992:66) points out with regards to the Nigerian situation: 'the larger (political) context (in which such associations operate) needs to be taken into account. The associations based in communities are often too small to achieve very much in any larger arena...' If we regarded civic associations as urban phenomena, then Herbst (1993:172-73) has had good reason to be skeptical about their political importance in the particular case of Ghana where a multitude of them has mushroomed in the city of Accra and other big towns.

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In any case, the conceptualization of the current political crisis in Africa and the prospects for democracy in this structural-functionalist framework has been criticized on several grounds. Some of the criticisms (Bangura and Gibbon, 1992) require consideration here. First, the formulation is based on the false proposition that power and exploitation are exclusive properties of the formal structures of the state and economy. Accordingly, informalization in the economy necessarily implies freedom and autonomy from the formal structure of the state and the economy, and therefore the democratization of political power, or the proliferation of autonomous centres of power in the political sphere. On the contrary, relations of power and exploitation characterize non-formal political and economic structures as well. Second, the dichotomy is a false one. The state-nonstate and formal-informal spheres are not mutually exclusive. They are characterized by a complex relationship of super-ordination and subordination. In the Ghanaian situation, for instance, it has been observed that the non-formal sectors are dominated and exploited by the formal sectors (Ninsin, 1991c). Third, the formal and informal sectors are integrated into a single entity (Beckman, 1990:12) at the level of the individual producer/worker, household, the extended family, and community.

Fourth, society in Ghana and elsewhere in Africa, is fraught with interests and tendencies that are parochial, sectarian, full of insoluble contradictions and bear a strong tendency to act in undemocratic, if not authoritarian, ways. Accordingly the voluntary associations that are developing from these societies should logically reflect such tendencies. To attribute democratic culture and aspirations to these associations is therefore to overlook such objective conditions.

Finally, the concept misrepresents social reality by equating mere existence to autonomy. Most of Ghana's voluntary associations lack adequate financial and other material resources. They lack economic security. This makes it extremely difficult for them to be entirely free and independent of the state in the crucial and larger political arena where important decisions are made about resource allocation and the distribution of social, economic and cultural rights. Hence the majority of community development-oriented civic associations, for example, often find it necessary to link up with an external agency - usually a foreign NGO or a department of state through members of the bureaucratic or political elite - as a condition of their success. Those associations which are based on independent economic activities like trade, construction, transportation and artisanal vocations tend to eke out an existence from the meagre contributions of their members. The pressure to depend on the state for access to much needed resources is therefore quite strong. A good example of a large private association - which is one of the member unions of the Ghana Trades Union Congress - is the Ghana Private Road Transporters Union (GPRTU) whose clientelist relations with the state

is now legendary.[9] It is most likely that the GPRTU was organized independently of the state. But several of the so-called civic or self-help associations find themselves politically so weak that the impetus to get organized actually had to come from the state (Ninsin, 1991c:112). There is therefore no empirical basis for attributing autonomy to these and similar voluntary or civic associations. Their capacity for independent political action is extremely limited. Indeed the majority of them may not be political at all.

Independent political action in Ghana has rather been the preserve of a small number of established middle class professional organizations like the Ghana Bar Association, bodies like the Christian Churches as well as the organizations of workers and students. It is the voluntary associations of such groups that confronted the arbitrary regime of the Supreme Military Council (SMC),[10] and have since 1982 been the mainstay of the opposition against the PNDC government (Ninsin, 1987). Again, it is the representatives of such social forces that formed the opposition parties, and also founded private newspapers. The political parties they founded - the NPP, NIP, PNC, PHP, and PPDD - were popular enough to collect a total of 41% of the votes cast at the November 1992 presidential election. Also the opposition newspapers have, within the rather short period of their existence, established an impressive credential of independence and autonomy from the state and thereby won considerable public support and respect.

However, from the late 1980s it was clear that these middle class professional associations and others would not be able to dictate the terms and direction of political reform. First the political reforms that culminated in the establishment of the DAs were determined solely by the PNDC government in spite of the vociferous criticisms from these opposition forces. Second, the PNDC dictated the programme for transition to constitutional rule in total disregard of their views. Third, contrary to the their record of struggle against the SMC regime during 1977-79 (Ninsin, 1985), these groups were unable to mobilize public discontent for demonstrations, strikes, boycotts and other forms of civil disobedience against the PNDC government. This monumental political weakness was starkly revealed when, contrary to repeated public announcements,[11] the opposition parties failed to convene a national conference of all opposition elements (along the same lines as those taking place in the francophone countries) to pressurize the PNDC to

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9   There is a brief analysis of the nature of this clientelist relationship between the PNDC government and some organized interests, including the GPRTU in Ninsin, 1991b.

10 The various forms of civil disobedience which this middle class was able to mobilize against the government of the Supreme Military Council (SMC) are analyzed in Ninsin, 1985.

11 For example, what looks like the final announcement on that national conference appeared in *The Ghanaian Chronicle* Vol. 1, No. 47, 27 July 2 August, 1992 p. 1.

relinquish power, and even seizing the political initiative from the regime. Therefore the leading non-state publics in Ghanaian society were in a state of near paralysis compared to the political energy and effrontery of the PNDC regime.

In general these signs of gross political weakness on the part of civil society were also expressed as sycophancy during the period immediately following the elections. As soon as it became certain that the PNDC had retained political power under the constitution, and despite the controversy and tension that followed the elections, various important social groups found it necessary to either send congratulatory messages and assurances of unflinching support and loyalty to the new president, or they sent delegations to deliver such messages. Among such groups are chiefs from all the ten regions of the country, queen mothers from some of the regions, market women's associations, some district assemblies, certain pentecostal churches and a number of civic associations. Sycophancy is for such groups a way of exchanging political support for access to existing patronage networks.

Sycophancy was prominent in Ghanaian politics during the Nkrumah regime. It was part of the political practice primarily of civic groups or associations that were economically weak and insecure. Its resurgence twenty six years after the overthrow of the Nkrumah regime[12] is therefore indicative of the persistent backwardness of the whole of Ghanaian society.

It may also be argued that the weakness of civil society is invariably reflected in the capacity of certain state institutions that also bear part of the responsibility for protecting, and enhancing the enjoyment of the rights and liberties of the citizen. Such state institutions would include the legislature - where the interests of various social forces are concentrated, compete, and cooperate in a concerted social endeavour to restrain the executive and other arms of the state from any excesses, and the judiciary, which remains the ultimate watchdog against excess and violations committed by the executive. In the present case, the conduct of the Ghanaian judiciary, for example during the period of transition to constitutional rule, is quite instructive. In an attempt to restrain the regime from engaging in further actions which the opposition parties regarded as illegal or unconstitutional, the courts were

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12 Of course, there have been evidence of sycophancy in Ghanaian politics since the overthrow of the Nkrumah regime. These took various forms, including sending messages of loyalty and support to the head of state as well as expensive, often full-page, advertisements in the print media congratulating the head of state on some occasion or achievement. It appears to have reached its apogee under the government of the SMC when young and aspiring business executives and professionals, with the support of some intellectuals, organized themselves into various civic associations to support that government's bid to 'reconstitutionalize' itself. For a discussion of the rather fascinating politics of that period refer to Ninsin, 1985.

asked to determine the legal and/or constitutional status of two of such ac-
tions. They are the *Political Parties Law 1992* and the citizenship of Rawl-
ings, who had then declared his candidacy in the presidential election. How-
ever, contrary to expectations that the courts would be courageous enough to
lay a firm foundation for interpreting and defending the constitution they
dismissed both cases - for lack of jurisdiction in the case of the law on
political parties, and for lack of substantive evidence regarding the suit on
the citizenship of Rawlings. The cumulative effect of all such cracks in the
fabric of civil society and in the institutions which are expected to act as the
bulwark of constitutionalism is that the Rawlings regime could successfully
execute its own agenda of political reforms which enabled it to succeed
itself. Not even the intervention of powerful bodies like the Christian Coun-
cil and the Catholic Bishop Conference could weaken its resolve.

Conclusion

The current political reforms in Ghana are due largely to the sustained strug-
gles mounted by various social forces - comprising mainly established mid-
dle class civic groups and associations - against the regime of the PNDC.
However, the democratic gains so far achieved - such as freedom to form
political associations, freedom of speech, and the right to choose political
representative through open political competition - do not in themselves
make democratic governance possible. Democratic governance could be
realized only if civil society is strong and autonomous enough to impose its
will on the state, and ensure constant supervision over the use of state
power.

If people must have power before they could make their governments
govern in their interest and secure their welfare, then Ghana's civil society is
not strong enough to be able to strive for the goal of democratic governance.
Undoubtedly, the Ghanaian middle classes are substantially large and
economically vigorous. Nonetheless, the prevailing underdeveloped social
and economic environment, and not just the economic crisis and the weak or
soft state that it produced,[13] does not seem to have enhanced their growth
into an autonomous political force capable of taming the state and
democratizing political power. The same conclusions may be drawn for for-
mal sector workers and students. The labour unions which have in the past
demonstrated a potential for independent political action lack an independent

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13 Like Ghana, Botswana is an underdeveloped country though its economy is healthier than
    Ghana's. However, even without an economic crisis, civil society there is so weak that the
    state power has evolved along corporatist rather than democratic lines. See Molutsi and
    Holm (1950) for a discussion of this case. Cf. Herbst (1993:38-75; 172-73) where the
    weakness of civil society is attributed exclusively to the battering of the economic crises
    of the decade preceding the implementation of economic reforms.

means for organization and self-financing. Accordingly, their numerical size, unity and potential political strength are easily undermined by state policy. Similarly, the state can easily weaken the student movement which is concentrated in the country's institutions of higher learning and is embodied in the National Union of Ghana Students, because students and indeed the entire education system depend almost totally on state subsidy.

As the weakness of civil society was exacerbated by the socio-economic crisis of the last 15 years or so, the capacity of the state for independent political action, received a substantial boost from the massive inflow of aid that accrued from the intervention of multilateral financial institutions in Ghana's political economy. Hence the PNDC regime, despite the clear political disadvantages it suffered during its tenure, could transform itself into an elected regime while the whole of society looked on in bewilderment.

It may be concluded from the foregoing analyses that the regime's success in achieving the results of the November and December elections are indicative of its resolve to employ the substantial financial and political resources at its disposal to perpetuate its rule despite the limitations imposed by the constitution. But more especially, this success seems to hint at the possibility that the transition to democratic governance may stop at the level of mere political reforms. Indeed the series of political reforms which culminated in the inauguration of the elected government of the NDC appear consistent with the PNDC's policy of tactically opening up the political space to incorporate a progressively larger number of civic groups in the political process while retaining the power structure it dominated; because, if one may repeat what Rawlings said at his inauguration as the first president of Ghana's 5th Republic, *the revolution is not over yet.*

It is in this clear vision of regime continuity that Ghana's political reforms should be seen - as changes in form. At the ideological level, the purpose of the reforms was to legitimize the regime as well as restore stability to the political order. At both this ideological and the structural levels, the goals of the reforms were therefore limited: they were not intended to promote the growth of appropriate institutions and practices as well as democratically defined state society relationship for democratic governance. A liberal democratic agenda appears to contradict the regime's populist democratic agenda; the two are not the same. The first leads to the extinction of militarism and authoritarianism while the latter appears to sustain them.

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* Associate Professor and Head, Department of Political Science, University of Ghana, Legon, Ghana.

Angolan Woman and the Electoral Process in Angola, 1992

Horace Campbell*

Résumé: Au centre de la lutte pour la paix et la reconstruction en Angola se trouvait le processus électoral. Les Angolaises ont fait montre d'une grande flexibilité et de stratégies de survie face à la violence de la guerre et à l'extrême déconfiture de l'économie. C'est pourquoi, et surtout dans les zones urbaines, les femmes sont devenues des acteurs sociaux dignes de ce nom et moins dépendantes des hommes et du gouvernement. Elles ont soutenu les élections avec un zèle inouï et ont fait montre sous différentes formes de leur soutien à de nouvelles formes d'arbitrage politique dans la société. Les femmes constituent l'essentiel d'une pléthore d'associations professionnelles, civiles et entrepreneuriales. Cependant la plupart des partis qui avaient pris part aux élections de 1992 avaient une aile féminine, mais reflétaient une forme d'organisation commune en Afrique et qui milite contre l'organisation autonome des femmes. Pour ce qui concerne plus particulièrement ces femmes, ces formes d'organisation sont le témoin que les femmes peuvent être organisées pour des objectifs différents et non pas seulement pour mettre fin à l'oppression et à la violence contre elles. En réalité, comme le prouve la ligue indépendante des femmes angolaises, on peut organiser les femmes autour du renforcement de leur oppression. Dans ce cas, la valeur qu'on leur accorde est liée à leur état de mères qui produisent les nouvelles générations de combattants.

Angolan women of all races and classes have suffered from the oppression inflicted by colonialism, war and destabilization. African women have suffered disproportionately from the dislocation of rural society. During the recent elections they intervened decisively to demonstrate their vasted interest in peace and reconstruction. Displaced by war, mobilized on the basis of ethnic consciousness and exploited at every level of the social structure, African Women in Angola developed techniques of survival while planning for a period of peace where they could participate in the building of a new society.

The recent focus on the so called 'civil war' in Angola has tended to erase the memory of the wars of resistance of the Angolan people which culminated in the national liberation struggle which was launched in February 1961. The cold war legacy of East - West confrontation meant that even before the achievement of independence of Angola in 1975 the politics of the society was thrust in external manipulation. From the period of the first South African invasion in 1975 up to the defeat of the Boers at Cuito Cuanavale, the conventional war in Angola was one of the fiercest in Africa

since Rommel was defeated in North Africa in World War II. The weaponry available to the Angolans and to the South Africans made this arena of military confrontation important not only in the context of African liberation but in the manipulations of the cold war and low intensity warfare of recolonization (Campbell, 1990). In the thirty year period from 1961 to 1991 over a third of the Angolan peoples were uprooted from their village communities and over a million lost their lives.

On top of the tragedy of this massive loss of life in this rich but under-populated society, living conditions of Angolan workers and peasants deteriorated according to every index of the quality of life: health care, delivery of water, infant mortality, access to primary education, nutrition and food security, pre- and post-natal care and household incomes. In this pervasive climate of violence and destruction, women were more susceptible to multiple assaults and attacks. Increased violence meant there was more sexual abuse and beating of women. The militaristic struggle for state power affected social relations. With the collapse of the economic infrastructure (except for the extraction of petroleum products) it was the resistance and resilience of the African women which on the whole kept body and soul together.

With the existence of over 1 million explosive mines, roads and village paths became danger zones in a society beset by all the scars of war. The limited transportation and economic infrastructure in the rural areas had collapsed under the weight of the most massive bloodletting and dispersal since the slave trade. This large scale movement and dispersal which had been precipitated by war and violence reflected the continuities in the centrality of force in the processes of production and social reproduction in Angola. European colonialism in Africa had refused to recognize the dignity of the African and the more oppressed the European society was the more they intensified the oppression of Africans. As a backward state, which had turned its back on the enlightenment in the 18th and 19th centuries and on the social democratic changes in Europe in the 20th century, Portugal resisted all claims for human rights and dignity for African people. Yet it was this same state which laid the claim to the defender of white civilization in Africa (Panikkar, 1962).

Without the financial means to fully exploit the rich resources of the territory (via real subordination), extra-economic coercion, force and the threat of force were central to colonial rule. It was this force which was at the heart of the fascism and militarism of Portuguese colonialism in Africa. African reaction to this force was manifest in many forms of covert and open rebellion but was most striking in the form of the liberation struggle for independence. African women from the period of Queen Nzinga were central to this anti-colonial struggle and fought at different fronts of the liberation war 1961-1975. There were several notable women in the fight for

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independence and one of the monuments to the heroic struggles of Women is the eternal flame of peace at the square in Luanda named after Deodlina Rodriguez, one of the first women to fall in the war of liberation.

The Movimento Popular de Libertaçào de Angola (MPLA) as the historic liberation movement had underscored the importance of Angolan women in struggle by affirming that:

> *The role of women, and the need for them to mobilize on their specific questions, was recognized from the start; In 1962, one year after MPLA launched the armed struggle, the Organization of Angolan Women (OMA) was set up,*(OAW, 1984).

This statement on the formation of the OMA; and the legal initiatives of the MPLA on sex discrimination at work and in the payment of wages had underscored the prevailing position of the discussion of Angolan women, especially in the analysis of the importance of mass organs of the MPLA. The fact that the government was the largest employer meant that abolishing sex discrimination at work was easier in some aspects, especially with respect to training schemes and to equal pay. By 1990 under the impact of pressures from the OMA the Angolan government enacted one of the most progressive Family Codes in Africa Wolfers, Bergerol, 1963: 125-127 Sogge, 1992: 109-110).[1]

The changes of legal statutes in relation to the oppression of women by the MPLA government did not change the deeply ingrained social practices of male centered inheritance, bride price, initiation rites, polygamy, arranged marriages and sexual abuse of women. The constitutional guarantees of equal rights which have been championed by the OMA and found in the election manifesto of the MPLA have not changed the social differences between whites and Africans and between men and women. War and its consequences have created new forms of social relations which are now being consolidated. One of the more important thrusts is the attempt by women to develop economic independence in the market place so that they can lessen their dependence on men.

The peace accord signed by the MPLA and Uniào Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA) in May 1991 had been welcomed by all Angolans but especially by the African women of Angola. They had been at the forefront of the calls for peace and those organized in the OMA had demonstrated and called for an end to the war. Angolan women who have been maimed by the war have been silenced in the literature on the 'civil

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1   Commentaries on the OMA by those who were sympathetic to the MPLA pointed out that the OMA was passives and the oppression of Women was rarely discussed in the government controlled media.

war'. The memories of the African people of peace and self rule become important in the present conjuncture because so much of the writing on Angola has been influenced by cold war politics.

The tragedy of continuous warfare in Angola forces progressive scholars to reconsider the dominant conceptualization of conflict resolution, peace and humanitarian efforts imposed from outside. Current research by Jacques Depelchin on the search for peace in Southern Africa asks the question: how do those who long for peace but reap war conceptualize these experiences when the most accessible modes of expression and communication are imposed by forces which are directly or indirectly responsible for such a situation? Depelchin (1993) argued that even the efforts to measure the cost of warfare has had the unintended effects of trivializing the experiences of war and destruction. This paper attempts to examine the experiences of African women in the search for peace in a society which has been virtually torn asunder by war and violence.

The signs of the physical costs of the war can be seen in the destruction of the farmlands, of the roads, bridges, vehicles, rail service and communications system. One can also measure the impact of the war on the support of water supply services, on health care delivery and on impact on the environment. International agencies have documented the economic costs of war and destabilization in Southern Africa. The official estimate by the Angolan government was that the cost of the war 1975-1991 may well be over US$ 20 million. Yet as Depelchin cautioned, one cannot take accurate statistical measurement on the impact of the war on women and children because the process of destruction which is involved is not easy to quantify (Urdang, 1969; Magaïa, Mengue, 1989). Angolan women had to flee their villages Necause of South African attacks, they were killed, they saw their children killed and kidnapped, they were pressed ganged into the army of UNITA as child bearers, and they were exploited in the factories and sweat shops of the urban areas, while others survived in the *musseques* as itinerant traders and small time operators in the informal sector. The war and destruction had a devastating effect on the peasant woman.

Studies on women and war in other parts of Southern Africa have pointed to the dual and paradoxical position of women in war situations:

> *On the one hand the traditional women's role of nurturing (associated with sacred life-giving forces) and protecting are not only sustained but significantly extended by the conditions of war. On the other hand women's tending roles in this war implicate them in perpetuating it; they literally keep combatants alive to fight another day. For example, the hazardous tasks of hiding and protecting their kinsmen, preparing and taking food to comrades/warriors in the bush are nurturing roles which are also evidence of women's active role in the conflict* (Annecke, 1990).

This statement on the position of women in the violence in South Africa may not be totally accurate in the context of Angola but in the camps of UNITA women have to show solidarity in praise songs that they sing to Savimbi and UNITA, and songs to engender courage in anticipation of victory. The exploitation in the South is reinforced behind the myth that the military camps of UNITA are organized on the basis of military communism. This version of communism did not include the emancipation of women.

The upheavals in the countryside and besieged towns also increased the burden of household production in every conceivable way. All women in Angola expended a disproportionate amount of labour time carrying the double burden of unpaid work in the reproduction and maintenance of human resources as well as the work of producing goods and services. Angolan women spent more hours on housework than their counter parts in most of the countries of Southern Africa (except for Mozambique which has seen the same violence and destabilization) (Sheldon, 1986). Aside from the usual labour intensive tasks of providing water, fuel supplies (usually wood) in the rural areas and agricultural labour, Angolan women add the labour of organizing to perform work in conditions of a destroyed social infrastructure. In the urban areas, in overcrowded shanties called *musseques*, the search for food and the provision of a daily meal is a major undertaking. In this condition of adversity new forms of solidarity and resistance emerge.

The survival techniques of Angolan women can be seen in the basic struggle for existence, processing food and preparing meals, caring for the ill, children, the elderly and wounded soldiers, sewing, cooking and consoling the bereaved. Even events of bereavement are used to inculcate solidarity and cooperation. In the process of arranging funerals and other by-products of the war, Angolan women forge new relationships with each other to survive in the society.

Women as widows dominate the social landscape and the worse the conditions the greater the survival skills. Unfortunately these survival skills have not been manifest in autonomous organizations for women, except in the case of emerging middle classes who have organized legal clinics for battered women (Sogge, 1992:105). The more educated, the more the propensity for organization and women now form the backbone of a plethora of civic associations, neighbourhood organizations and local non-governmental organizations. Along side these new organizations formed in the aftermath of the 1991 peace accords, women are to be found in entrepreneurial and professional associations with one group of women forming the Women-Entrepreneurs Associations of Huila. Other professional organizations of teachers, doctors, lawyers and translators carried on the tradition of having branches for women.

Most of the parties which competed in the 1992 elections had a women's wing reflecting the traditions of the mass party in Africa which militate against autonomous organizing in civil society. The fact that these forms of organizations of women exist (among parties competing for power) points to the fact that women can be organized for different purposes and not always to end oppression and violence against women.

Experience in North Africa and in the Sudan showed that women could be mobilized to support traditional concepts of women which even- take away the rights which were won at independence. In effect, women could be organized for the reinforcement of their own oppression. This was most apparent in the organization of the Independent League of Angolan Women (LIMA) the women's arm of UNITA. This form of organization was manifest in the elections and reinforced the conservative form, women's organization of which is seen all over Africa, where the conservative definition of women are maintained (Hassim, 1988).

Struggles for peace and reconstruction were central to the electoral process in Angola. Women demonstrated that they had a vested interest in peace and supported the elections with unusual zeal. They came out in large numbers for the registration and they waited patiently to vote. The participation of women in the elections opened up a major area of research which is still underdeveloped in Africa.

The question of the centrality of women's involvement in the present democratic movements in Africa has been the subject of numerous meetings and seminars all across the continent. The issues of democracy and the fact that the costs of structural adjustment has been shifted on to the shoulders of women has been documented extensively as the process of democratization deepens in Africa (Meena, Elson, 1986). A number of papers at the recent conference of CODESRIA on Gender Analysis and African Social Science sharpened the discussion of engendering the social sciences in Africa and focussed attention on the demand for a reconceptualization of those frameworks, methodologies and disciplines which deal with the relationships between men and women in society. It was significant that this conference noted that the dominant methodologies used in the social sciences have been the very ones that produce misconceptions that perpetuate the marginalization and subordination of women (CODESRIA, 1991).

This question of the theoretical framework for the study of African women in the political process has been sharpened by the fact that power is central to both politics and gender relations. African governments have recognized this fact and hence the proliferation of State-feminism (officially sponsored women's organization) and the first lady syndrome (officially sponsored women's organization led by the wife of the head of state) in Africa. Fatima Babiker who has paid attention to the firms of women's organization in Africa, starting from an explicit class analysis, has pointed out

that there were basically three forms of women organization on the continent:

a) the state supported women's movement which is usually conservative and reinforces the conservative image of women as mothers;

b) liberal organizations which want women to have the same position as men, equal access to education and all positions of power without changes in the class structure and production relations; and ˙

c) the organizations dedicated to the emancipation of women including the transformation of the relations of the labour process. These organizations are dedicated to changing production relations to socialize and democratize household production leading to the end of all forms of oppression of women, whether domestic, social, sexual or political (Mahmoud, 1991).

The issue of the organizational objectives of different models of women movements is also reflected in the literature on women in Africa; while the literature, especially in the context of the women in development paradigm (WID), is growing there is a growing theoretical division between those who seek to develop the ideas of liberation in the context of the specific struggles of African women and those who believe that the links between African women and the international feminist movement is central to feminism in Africa. This theoretical division is even more critical since most of the international agencies (which were yesterday called imperialist and today called donor agencies) have programs for women in development.[2]

In Southern Africa, especially Tanzania, Zimbabwe and South Africa, the general discourse on Women in Development and feminism is growing with a corresponding body of literature. The discussion in South Africa centers around two journals on women and gender. One of the journals is called *Agenda*, while the other is called *Women's Studies* and is based in the Department of Philosophy at the University of Transkei. The Zimbabwean effort is geared towards practical issues of ʻthe legal problems of women especially with respect to wife beating, child care, inheritance and sexual violence. In Tanzania where there is a Women's Research and Documentation Center, there is a major bibliographical study on women in the society. There is also some documentation to show how Women in Development (WID) policies:

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2   For the Political Imperatives behind the Women in Development in North America see, *Women in Development*, 1980 Report to the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs, United States House of Representatives, February 10, 1981.

> *represent the most recent form of state intervention to construct gender relations which are compatible with capital's need for cheap labour (seasonal casual labour) and cheap production (produced largely by female waged and unwaged labour)* (Mbilinyi, 1988).

Outside of these three territories in the region of southern Africa, and especially in Angola, the literature on women remains fairly underdeveloped. The most recent study on Angola has been cast in the WID mould with the emphasis on recycled World Bank data to describe the position of women in Angolan society. Unlike in Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, Zimbabwe and South Africa, where the issues of women and war have received some attention, there is very little written on Angolan women except the major report of the OMA, *Angolan Women Building the Future* (Cleaver, Wallace, 1990; Presley, 1992).

There is no doubt that African women were at the forefront of the decolonization process. This much is evident in the area of creative writing and the novels of Sembene Ousmane *God's Bits of Wood* and Ngugi Wa Thiongo's *Petals of Blood* which brought to life the leadership roles performed by women in the independence movement. The fact has been that within liberation movements, women and youth have been mobilized into auxiliary forces and not as constituencies in their own right. Frantz Fanon had noted the power of the mobilization of Algerian women in his seminal article 'Algeria Unveiled' (Fanon, 1989). In many respects one can link the process of political retrogression in Algeria to the subordination of women after independence.

This issue of women and the liberation struggles in Africa has been the subject of numerous meetings with the clear recognition of women who were demobilized after the taking of power. Most recently in South Africa it was none other than Winnie Mandela who questioned whether it is still advisable to maintain such a thing as the ANC Women's League, whether this does not play into the hands of the sexists? Within our organizations why should we not say that women must participate in our movement on the same footing as everybody and prove their own capabilities in the terrain of struggle? Why should we continue to accept a situation where, in every branch, the cream of women's leadership must be channeled into the league thereby denying them a chance of playing any meaningful role in the main activities and policy formulation of the movement (Mandela, 1989).

The issues raised by the liberation project in the period of decolonization have been erased by the destructive violence unleashed by the very forces who now seek to intervene as humanitarian imperialists in Africa. The question of the place of women in the struggle for peace and democracy helps to bring back the issues of social emancipation to the center away from the ideas of liberalization and structural adjustment. This paper is located in the

general discussion which seeks to break the silencing of the African people. It begins with an analysis of the social structure of Angola in the context of gender relations and focus on the elections and their aftermath as one window into the triple oppression of African women in Angola. The overwhelming majority of African women who speak one of the many African languages of the society seek new forms of security beyond the heritage of the cultural and economic traditions of Portugal.

The search for the organization of women, youth, workers, farmers, professionals and students outside of the ambit of traditional political parties was brought into sharp focus by the issues of the election campaign. The fact that one of the parties has resorted to war and violence has sharpened the alternatives and in the short run reinforced the politics of the historic political parties in Angolan politics. The armed wing of UNITA decided that if its leader could not come to power then there would be no country. This continuation of the destruction weighs heavily on Angolan women.

The long term struggles for self determination in Angola and social reconstruction are bound up with the short term tasks of finding an end to the war which now consumes the energies and lives of the peoples. The war continues to postpone the question of how to remove the legal and social barriers to women's equality and the participation of women in national policy making. This requirement of women in national policy making is a necessity to ensure that women's power in their communities can translate into real influence in order to end the pigeon holing of women's issues into specialist wings called women's arm.

The Traditions of Oppression and Resistance in Angola: Women in Angolan Society

The Angolan society in Africa has been the scene of the most intense oppression and resistance over five centuries. From the period of the arrival of the Portuguese in 1483, 'the history of the modern conquest of Angola is irrigated with the blood of its victims' (Sogge, 1992). All the scholars writing on Angolan society have pointed to the devastating effects of slavery in Angola and the long historical period of this slavery from the fifteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth century. In the words of Walter Rodney, 'It was in Angola that the slave trade was conducted with the greatest violence' (Rodney, 1968a).

While scholars chronicled the war and raiding activities of the Portuguese traders, African women communicated to their children the history of the atrocities of the relationship between Portugal and Angola. Contrary to the Portuguese historical record where the victims of colonialism, slavery and pacification appear as silent victims the fact was that African women devised methods to inspire the young despite the ruptures and breakdown imposed by colonial rule. The telling of stories and the collective memories of the African community were carried from generation to generation

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through the oral traditions of the society. The forms of African resistance and protest against Portuguese atrocities in Angola were armed violence, repeated on countless occasions, over a period of three hundred years. Throughout this period the women inspired the opposition to Portuguese rule.

It is out of the scope of this paper to detail the impact of settler colonialism and the contours of fascism in Portugal and its impact on Africa. It is important to italicize the fact that throughout the 19th and 20th century Portugal encouraged white settlers to carry out its 'civilizing mission' in Africa. The economic weakness of Portugal meant that while it was the nominal colonial power in Angola, the society was the field for multinational exploitation led by the British in the period of colonialism and the United States oil companies in the period after World War II. This multinational involvement in the economy partly accounts for the intense international interest in the elections and their aftermath in Angola. This international interest was manifest in the numerous election observers who participated in the elections.

The consequences of Portuguese colonial rule are still to be documented from the point of view of the African majority. The impact of slavery, forced labour and the military campaigns of subjugating African political entities have been the focus of some scholarly work (Duffy, 1962) but the repercussions of the colonial political economy on African women is still to be documented. Because most of the Portuguese who settled in Angola in the 19th century were criminals, they laid a tradition of disorder and corruption which still pervades the body politic of Angolan society. A great deal has been written about Angolan society from the point of view of settlers, ethnic and racial identities but not enough on the social structure as it relates to women.

Because the impact of colonial domination has been so obvious on African women, one of the starting points for drawing attention to the resistance has been to point to the centrality of African women in the resistance against Portuguese rule. The issue of the development of the state structures (kingdoms) in the Angolan territory prior to the invasion of Europeans has been the subject of those studies focussing on 'the African Response to early Portuguese activities in Angola'(Birmingham, 1972). Walter Rodney in his own work has not only drawn attention to the military resistance of Africans but to the fact that those who were fighting the Portuguese also sought unity beyond the pre-slavery kingdoms:

> *We need to give full credit to those individuals who rose above the ordinary; there were those Africans who recognized the full significance of the threat posed by the presence of the economically and technologically more advanced Europeans, and who realized that as an answer to this threat it was necessary to work for a greater unity among*

*the peoples of Angola... Those who noticed this trend at an earlier date
than most of their fellows and those who sought the means of ensuring
the welfare of the greatest number of Angolans are to be placed among
the heroes of Angola and Africa* (Rodney, 1968b).

The heroine who rose above the ordinary to give leadership to African resis-
tance to Europeans was Queen Nzinga of Matamba. Nzinga was outstanding
as a diplomat, military tactician, political leader and monarch.

*Both within Angola and elsewhere throughout Africa there is a growing
literature about Nzinga as well as a wealth of oral stories and myths.
So powerful is her legend that a prehistoric imprint on a rock in the
natural fortress of Pungu Andongo near the Cuanza river is known as
Queen Jinga's footprint, as if her very feet could mark solid stone*
(Sweetman, 1984: 39).

In Angola there are numerous women who were distinguished leaders and
Dona Beatrice of the Kongo Kingdom (1682-1706) used religious appeals to
mobilize her people to African consciousness. Queen Nzinga and Dona
Beatrice are important in the present context of the ideological struggles in
Angola not simply because of their individual leadership but because of the
ideas which underscored their leadership. In the case of Beatrice it was the
centrality of African consciousness which was her lasting contribution. In
the case of Nzinga her most striking achievement was her creation of broad
alliances which drew together, in a common cause, several of the peoples of
Angola.

*In 1635 she was at the head of an alliance involving the Mbundu and
the Jagas of Ndongo and Matamba, Jagas of Dembos, Bangale of
Kasanje, the peoples of Kissima and the .Ovimbundo of the plateau
region of the South. This impressive grouping was maintained for over
twenty years. During this time, defeats were inflicted on the Portuguese,
and they were forced to negotiate with Queen Nzinga. Her pride,
-courage and resourcefulness both in military matters and in
negotiations impressed even the Portuguese...*

*However, no single individual can change the direction of history.
Because of her great foresight, Queen Nzinga could point the way to the
future unity when Angola would achieve unity in the face of the enemy,
but the rate of change was determined by the impact of the European
capitalist economy on the Angolan situation* (Rodney, 1968a:57).

The history of Queen Nzinga (1581-1663) as an African woman who never
surrendered has long been a source of inspiration to women throughout the
continent of Africa and beyond.

A close analysis of the gender roles of military· leaders in Angola also revealed the forms of kinship organization which existed in precolonial society. Throughout most of the territory of Angola the forms of kinship organization was based on matrimonial structures or inheritance through the female line. The crucial social unit in Angola up to the period of independence were the villages and groups based on common descent. Yet even though descent groups in Angola were matrimonial, that is all persons descended from a common female ancestor, through females, the structures of power and authority in class divided societies were vested in males. Property relations vested social and economic power in the males and this was most evident in the pastoral societies.

Because it was the deliberate policy of the colonial authorities to impose fragmentation and intergroup rivalry in the interest of divide-and-rule, ethnicity and ethnic consciousness became important components of the politics of Angola. During the period of colonial rule rural women embraced the positive aspects of ethnic consciousness as a way of preserving African languages and those traditions which incorporated the skills and knowledge from one generation to the next. This positive aspect of ethnic identities were exacerbated by the manipulations of the West who exploited the cleavages in order to find a political base for the cold war intervention in Angola through UNITA and Jonas Savimbi. The literature on Angola identified the liberation movements according to ethnic groups and not according to their political philosophies in calling for self determination (Marcum [1969] 1978).

The social conditions of African women in precolonial society were reinforced by the triple burden of racial, sexual and class oppression under colonialism. The extent of this oppression and the common forms of domination have been submerged under the weight of anthropological and historical analysis which focussed attention on the ethnic orientation of the Angolan peoples. Gender oppression was not specific to any one ethnic group and the conditions of forced labour, taxation and contract labour weighed heavily on women.

The principal tools of the labour process were rudimentary. Women sowed, weeded and harvested crops on land cleared by men. Women cared for domestic animals and collected fruits and other supplements necessary for the reconstitution of labour power.

Basil Davidson visited Angola in the fifties and at that time called the system of forced labour and contract labour a system of modern slavery. He noted how all sections of the colonial state apparatus, the administrators, the settlers, mining capital, the church and the coercive institutions (military, prison, chiefs, etc.), participated in the abuse of Africans in this coerced form of employment. Davidson wrote of the use of women on road projects:.

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> *In the first place, the Government makes universal use of forced labour*
> *for all its own needs, and above all for the maintenance or building of*
> *roads. Rural roads are invariably built and maintained by unpaid*
> *conscripted labour of the people of the area through which the road*
> *passes. These people have to furnish not only their labour but also their*
> *own food, and often enough their own tools. Since many men are absent*
> *on forced labour elsewhere, the local chief or headman in whose hands*
> *responsibility for the road is left will frequently call up women and*
> *quite small children. That is why one sees women with babies on their*
> *backs, and pregnant women, and quite small girls, scraping at roads*
> *with primitive hoes and carrying cupfuls of earth in little bask*
> *containers on their heads, while their headman or his 'responsible' sits*
> *nearby hugging his knees. Quite small boys are rarely seen, because*
> *they are contractible for labour outside their tribal area. These people*
> *who work on roads may be conscripted for a few weeks or for a few*
> *months at a time* (Davidson, 1955: 203).

Davidson further pointed out the negative consequences of forced labour in
a context where the state acted openly and deliberately as a recruiting agent
on behalf of settlers:

> *In some ways the situation is worse than simple slavery. Under slavery,*
> *after all, the native is bought as an animal: his owner prefers him to*
> *remain as fit as a horse or an ox. Yet here the native is not bought - he*
> *is hired from the state, although he is called a free man. And his*
> *employer cares little if he sickens or dies, once he is working, because*
> *when he sickens or dies his employer will simply ask for another. High*
> *death rate among forced workers, have never debarred an employer*
> *from being supplied with more men.*

The impact of the system of forced labour on women was tremendous. Not
only did they themselves participate in the building of roads but the system
of forced labour deeply affected the southern provinces of Angola.

Regional differentiation of the economy meant that there were significant
differences between the African women around the cities where colonial
economic activities were more intense, and between the women of the settler
zones of the coffee producing areas as opposed to the women of the South
whose communities were negatively affected by the system of contract
labour. One effect of the stress on ethnic identification in Angola has been
to minimize this aspect on Angolan history in the recent wars of national
liberation and destabilization. It was a tragedy that the regions with the most
intense exploitation were the same regions where there was the attempt to
reinforce the conservative forms of organizing women. Regional differentia-
tion and the neglect of the government provided a fertile base for the armed

opposition which became integrated into the cold war politics of the region in the eighties.

Social Structure and the Angolan Women

White Women

Numerous writers including Frantz Fanon and Walter Rodney have pointed to the racial hierarchy of colonialism and the relationship between race and power in settler occupied territory. As a settler territory Angola was no different except in the sense that intensive settlement was a post World War II phenomenon.

For European women the gender inequalities of colonial society were mitigated by their ability to buy substitutes for their own unpaid work - employing cleaners, maids, nannies and cooks. Domestic slavery and the exploitation of African women in the homes of European women was significant for, as in other colonial societies, there were European women who thought that it was below their status to even wean their children. Prior to the period of the massive influx of settler in the twentieth century the sexual exploitation of slave women was a central aspect of European domination and the evidence of this can be seen by the large strata of mesticos in Angola.

Prior to 1940 the number of whites in Angola numbered a mere 44,000 and most were military men, administrators, petty traders or struggling settlers. The number of women in this count was not given but the low number of immigrants had reflected the failure of the fascist state to establish a sizeable European population in Angola. White immigration increased considerably after World War II so that by 1973 the number of whites in Angola had risen by seven fold from 44,083 in 1940, 78,826 in 1950, 172,529 in 1960, 290,000 in 1970 and 335,000 in 1973. Most of the Europeans who lived in Angola resided in the urban areas and the class distinctions between the commercial, agricultural/settler elements and the poor whites (pequenos brancos) were sharp. There were many poor whites who settled in the musseques and sought unskilled work as taxi drivers, waiters, bartenders and other jobs where they competed with Africans.

Racial differences reinforces class differences in the society and European women were at the forefront of reinforcing consciousness of skin color. The Portuguese who held jobs of lower social status often felt it all the more necessary to claim social superiority over Africans. Books on white women in colonial Angola made them out to be energetic heroines of the settler society engendering social solidarity among the oppressors (Dias, 1948). The majority of whites, regardless of class background, opposed self determination for Africans.

Except for a few Portuguese men and women who were members of the Communist Party in Lisbon, the majority of these *colonatas* became more

conservative as Africans moved towards independence in the rest of Africa. By 1990 there were only 80,000 Europeans in Angola working to support the basic links between foreign oil companies, transnational capital and Angolan labour.

Mestico Women

The sexual oppression meted out by European males and the gender inequalities in the society created a distinct strata of Euro/Africans called *Mestico*. According to Portuguese law a Mestico was an individual of mixed white and African ancestry, but according to the deformities of racial iden-- tification there were several varieties of *mestico*, depending on the nature and the degree of the mixture.[3] The gradations increased the insecurity and disorientation among *mestico* men and women.

In 1960 this strata represented approximately 1% of the total population but they had more access to education than African men or women and at this time the *mesticos* were also called *assimilado*. The *mesticos* internalized the racial distinctions and by the end of the eighties, with the flight of whites, accounted for about 2% of the population. The position of the *mesticos* continue to be a major political issue in Angolan politics and was one of the issues of the election campaign. One *mestico* woman, Analia de Victoria formed her own political party to represent the *mesticos* and ran as a Presidential candidate in the 1992 elections.

Up to the present there has not been enough research on the specific conditions under which African women entered into sexual relations with European males. Forced sexual relations were common during the period of colonial pacification and the cases of European men marrying African women were few. Right up to the period of the national liberation war of 1961 African women had little legal protection against sexual violence. *Mestico* women were exposed to the same violence meted out against African Women and they sought to escape the drudgery of household production by taking advantage of the access to education offered after the 60s. With few exceptions the *mestico* men and women identified with European culture and accepted the system relating to the superiority of the European and the inferiority of the Africans.

The fact that they had some education allowed the *mestico* women to rise in the ranks of the bureaucracy after the exodus of the Portuguese so that in the present period *mestico* women dominate the lower ranks of the civil service. The mesticos continue to dominate the bureaucracy and the ad-

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3   A *mestico* may be applied to the child of a European and a mulatto, the term *mestico cabrio* referring to the union between two *mesticos* and the term *mestico cafuso* to refer to the child of a union between a *mestico* and an African.

ministrative apparatus of the Angolan state and to guard the position that they held in the national liberation movement. It is this stratum which holds on to the myth of multi-racialism in Angola.

African Women

The African society did not remain homogeneous in the period of colonialism. There were social differences between the children of chiefs, those associated with the missionaries and those who were able to distinguish themselves as traders and farmers appropriating surplus from other Africans. The colonial policy of assimilation led to the creation of a small stratum of Africans who were supposed to be civilized. These Africans became civilized if they could read and write and speak Portuguese, in short successfully absorb Portuguese language and culture. These Africans were called *Assimilados*, a legal status which in principle gave them the rights of Portuguese citizenship so that they could escape the burdens of forced labour. The status of *assimilado* and the legal implications were only abolished after the launching of the armed struggle for national liberation in 1961. *Assimilado* women were in a precarious social situation since the hierarchy of race meant that many *assimilado* men sought to move up the social ladder by marrying *Mestico* or Portuguese women.

The social status of African women has been clouded by the emphasis on ethnicity and ethnic consciousness by anthropologists and historians. Portuguese colonial authorities had understood this aspect of divide-and-rule so that their policies tended to stress ethnic identity. This stress was reinforced by the activities of the religious institutions of Europe in the village community. Both the church and the colonial administration were concerned with the deep resistance by certain ethnic groups. This was the case with the Chokwe. It was for this reason that one of the few works on Angolan women during the period of colonialism looked at women in an ethnic context.

Because the Chokwe's resistance to colonial domination was so deep and because the colonial authorities considered these people backward (if not exotic) there was a lot of study by the Portuguese of how to break down the cultural resistance among women. The book on African women *Sobre a Mulher Lunda-Ouioca* (Angola) written in 1971 obscured the real exploitation of African women (De Sousa, 1971). This kind of study placed great emphasis on the family, polygamy, sexual organs, traditional customs and those areas of spiritual reflection which formed the cosmic orientation of the village. The ethnic origins of women is important but to place importance of ethnicity over class would be a grave error. Unfortunately this emphasis on ethnic ties continues to dominate the understanding of Angolan society.

At the bottom of the social ladder forming the overwhelming majority of the population were the African toilers who were exploited and who resisted external domination by any means necessary. Regional differentiation and

social stratification after independence meant that different sections of the Angolan population were unevenly integrated into the economy. The urban population were unevenly integrated into the economy. The urban elements around Luanda, Lobito, Benguela and Huambo, along with the Africans from the major coffee cultivation areas, had more access to housing, health care and the limited education offered by the colonial authorities. The expenditure of the Portuguese on war meant that there was very little invested in social expenditures so that by the time of independence over 85% of the Angolan population were illiterate.

African women could be viewed as three distinct groups: workers, peasants and traders. Women workers are found in the factories, in the fishing industry, in the homes of petty bureaucrats as domestic servants. Throughout the period of the war women who were employed in the state sector saw their incomes dwindle under the weight of inflation, shortages of consumer goods and the embrace of the government for the packages of the IMF which increased food prices. Stifled by government-controlled trade unions African men and women resorted to the strike as a weapon to demand better living conditions.

African Women and the War

Angolan peasant women up to the period of independence formed the overwhelming majority of the population. They had been the bearers of the ideas of resistance to European cultural and political domination. Through songs, dance, music and the retention of African spiritual values they maintained the spirit of independence under Portuguese colonial rule. They bore the brunt of the disruption and dislocation created by the war of national liberation and the period of destabilization.

During the period of national liberation the political situation was much more straightforward since African women were uncompromising in their opposition to Portuguese colonialism. During the war of national liberation the role of women was diverse with many serving as armed combatants. In the words of the official history of Fapla,

> *From the legendary Queen Nzinga who bravely resisted colonial penetration in Angola to Deolinda Rodriguez and her companions Irene, Teresa, Lucrecia, Engracia - all heroines who fell during the 1st war of national liberation - Angolan women have always been exemplary mothers, companions under all circumstances and intrepid fighters who have helped to hoist the torch of victory even higher* (Government of Angola 1989:222-223).

Angolan women participated in the military structures of Fapla as radiotelegraphists, teletypists, telephone operators, stenographers, nurses, doctors, secretaries, and on the frontline in Aviation, Anti Aerial defence, transport and repairs. The high point of women in the war was the participa-

tion of Cuban and Angolan women working the anti aircraft batteries which broke the South African control of the air space during the siege of Cuito Cuanavale.

In reality, however, the numbers of women fighting in the national liberation movements were few but were highlighted and the liberation movements in Angola and Mozambique quoted the often repeated statement of Samora Machel that: 'the liberation of women is a basic requirement for the revolution, the guarantee of its continuity and a precondition of its victory' (CFIMAG, 1973).

In Angola the formation of the Organization of Angolan Women in 1962 formally recognized the centrality of women in the struggle but the politics of liberation at that time did note involve a transformation of gender relations. In theory, however, the concept of equality between the sexes was adopted.

The reality was that the verbal and legal initiatives with respect to equality did not carry fundamental changes in the relations between white women, *mestico* women and the large majority of African women. In many cases the urban educated cadre of the political movement had more in common with intellectuals from the international progressive movement than with the mass of peasant women toiling under the weight of war and destabilization. This meant that the use of Portuguese and European languages in discussions about abortion, inheritance, and what a 'socialist family code should embody' excludes a large section of the African population.

The regression in the rural political economy in the period after the independence and war can be measured today by the amount of food imported into Angola. In the villages the peasantry suffered regardless of whether they supported the government or the armed opposition. One important study of the peasantry by W G. Clarence-Smith squarely blamed the crisis in the countryside on the Leninist approaches of the MPLA and its simplistic definition of the peasantry (Clarence-Smith, 1983, 1979).

While the work of Clarence Smith downplayed the impact of South African destabilization in the eighties and one may agree or disagree with the critique of the Leninist position of the peasantry, the important point made was that the MPLA ignored the developing class formation in the countryside. He argued that there were changes in the property relations in the coffee zones of the north and in those areas where privatization of communal lands had reached an advanced stage. The important point was that this class differentiation created a social base for the opposition to the collectivization policies of the MPLA. The proletarianization of women and children in this context was a noted feature of the social relations in the villages.

One important point in relation to the conditions of rural men and women was the extent to which the hardships provided a recruiting ground

for the armed opposition, UNITA. Gervase Clarence-Smith had observed that: 'Impoverishment of the peasantry has led to at least apathy and at worst overt hostility to the government in Luanda'.

The Maoist strategy of UNITA to control the countryside and hold the towns hostage meant that the spread of UNITA's war depended on the villages and the support of the peasantry meant that peasant women in Angola felt the full force of the war from both sides. Where the government officially gestured towards a family code and equality for women in those areas controlled by UNITA, women had very few rights. More significantly in seeking support from the peasantry the MPLA sought to offer stipends to the traditional elders (sobas), usually men, while ignoring the supply of hoes and water. During the election campaign in more than one case, peasant women called on the government to bring plows and other tools instead of alcoholic beverages.

The widespread disruption of rural life meant that women were participating in all aspects of the war both in terms of physical fighting and trying to fend for their communities while under constant distress. The breakdown of the peasant sector created food shortages, dumped millions in the poor *musseques* and as refugees in neighbouring countries. This affected all spheres of social reproduction. Women had no immunity to violence, whether social or domestic and were called upon by different parties to support their version of the political divide.

The unevenness of the economy and the facts of regional differentiation meant that different sections of the population had differing impact. This became apparent in the elections when there were two parties representing emerging class forces in the North which came out and supported Savimbi in the election campaign. The parties of CNDA and PNDA represented elements which had remained within the ranks of the one party system but sought new ground rules for accumulation.

It was clear, however, that in the rural areas and in the overcrowded shanties women did everything that they did before, with added tasks as a result of the military clashes. War and destabilization meant that women's work became more hazardous, more exhausting, more frightening and more stressful. The proletarianized women had to take on extension of the role of keeping body and soul together with the breakdown of the health and sanitation infrastructure. Numerous commentaries spoke of the number of amputees in Angola but few spoke of the fact that care of the sick and wounded of war fell to Angolan women.

African women had to stretch their activities beyond providing food and care to include the search for missing relatives, preparing for frequent funerals, protecting children from conscription, protecting possessions while trying to cope with the lack of schooling and child care. The conditions of the women in the areas attacked by the South Africans were even more

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precarious. On top of this insecurity, armed violence and robbery became a feature of urban life.

The women in the areas controlled by UNITA were especially exploited since the ideas of military communism of UNITA precluded any form of independent thinking by women. In late 1987, women soldiers were integrated into the official fighting force of UNITA's army and there were seven who were even commissioned as officers. The organizational arm of UNITA which represented women was a vehicle to sing praises to the supreme leader of the organization and women had no control over their lives.

Sexual abuse and violence was the norm in the military camps of UNITA where women, especially the younger ones, had to be made available to the commanders. The leader of UNITA established a tradition where as the maximum leader it was possible for the political leadership to arrange marriages. The traditional reproductive roles of women in these areas are seen as an extension of the war effort since women produce the human labour necessary for UNITA to continue fighting. Their roles as mothers are seen as essential in providing the new generation of fighters. UNITA recruits youths from their early childhood for military training. Women also act as porters carrying weapons for the South African supported forces of UNITA.

The chronicling of the impact of the war in the areas under military occupation by UNITA has not yet been done in any systematic manner. However, the effects of the war on women and children has been so devastating that agencies of the United Nations such as UNICEF have attempted to provide some elementary basis for understanding the impact of the war. According to UNICEF the war affected women in obvious ways:

> as widows of the carnage, left to look after the physically handicapped as a result of the war, looking after amputees, feeling the brunt of the shortages and hardships imposed by war, water shortages, chronic electricity shortages in the urban areas, shortages of food, shortages of drugs and the breakdown of the health facilities, and the sexual oppression and manipulation by the political parties.

One of the international NGOs source in highlighting the impact of the war remarked:

> On battlefields and rural roads, in farmers' huts and children's wards, war brought death to hundreds of thousands of Angolans. It left countless others physically and psychologically crippled. It spared no age, no ethnic group nor region. Nor did it leave social institutions and national culture untouched. Parts of Angolas rich environment were badly degraded. Altogether, the war seriously compromised the future of the country. In total, about 900,000 Angolans died (Wolfers, Bergerol, 1983: 23).

One of the by-products of the dispersal of rural women in the face of the war was the fact that many of these women become itinerant traders in the so called informal sector. By entering the *Candonga* (the parallel market) urban women are treated as social agents in their own right lessen their dependence on the government and on males. These women have shown remarkable resilience and survival skills in the face of war, violence and extreme disruptions of the economy. While there are many NGOs who romanticize this informal sector, one Angolan scholar has observed that the parallelisation of the economy of Angola is not new - after slavery was abolished, a parallel slave trade was conducted.

> The current informal sector is very important in Angola, since 78% of the goods and services are conducted in this sector and 35% of the active labour force participate in it. Women are prominent in these distribution systems and control nearly 80%. Resources generated from this activity are managed by women and their role is complimentary to men who work in the official sectors (CODESRIA, 1991).

The relation between women, the *candonga* and the government is complex. Because the government and official authorities play a major role in perpetuating social, economic and ideological processes that subordinate women, African women are always seeking avenues of self expression and independence. Despite the progressive family code enacted in 1990 the government upholds Western patriarchical family forms in which women do not have access to the same resources as men. Women are treated as dependents of men in legal and administrative terms so that even when they are able to establish their autonomy through participation in the market the established structures of banking and import export do not support the commercial initiatives of African women.

One could see in the elections that these urban women were active in the whole process for they saw the necessity to move to a new economic stage where women would have more control over their own resources. All the parties spoke of liberalization but the market forces rhetoric of the politicians did not include the activities of the women who were active in the real market. The discussion of structural adjustment was hardly understood since on the one hand men and women wanted the government to relax control over trade while on the other they did not want the increase of food prices which came with the abolition of price controls and the removal of subsidies. The more educated understood that privatization would not empower African working people but bring back the former Portuguese traders. Anxiety among women traders in the period of the cease fire stemmed from the following:

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a) changes in family as a result of the economic and political situation and the war. For example many of the men and women who live together are not officially married.

b) while women may make as much as three times as much money as men and basically support their husbands, bank accounts are in the name of men. Hence, for these women privatization would mean that men will have access to resources they did not have before (CODESRIA, 1991:5).

The changing demographic condition in Angola is one of the clear by-products of the war. The urban population grew from 10.3% in 1960 to 33.8% in 1988. By 1992 it was estimated that over 60% of the population were living in towns and cities. The internal displacement has affected the ability of the government to provide basic services so that the shifts in the population reinforce the· processes of underdevelopment and impoverish-ment. Forced migration to the urban areas compound the crisis of agricul-tural production by forcing the state to import more food.

A survey of nineteen neighbourhood in Luanda by a food studies group found that 35% of the population could be defined as poor by absolute standards. The survey found that all the households classified as poor were without the nutritional requirements or caloric intake needed to remain heal-thy and energetic. 95% of those who were classified in this group were unable to meet their basic food intake needs. This study on the Luanda Household Budget and Nutrition Survey found that all the indices of poverty had negative effects on women.

Among the findings of this survey was the fact that poor women spend a substantial amount of time just getting water, firewood and moving to and fro in search of food.

> *Not only does the time available for work or other activities get usurped by the lack of transport, electricity, and running water, but the burden is placed heavily on women... General health conditions in Luanda are strikingly poor across income groups. Malnutrition perpetuates the inability to fight illness. Public health facilities are in short supply and riddled with long lines keeping their use down, Prices at private facilities limit access to the very well off.*

Children have been the hardest hit by these conditions. The Angolan mor-tality figures show that 30% of children die before the age of five. Diseases that could be prevented through immunization are rampant. The fortnightly rate of illness in children under is 50% and 45% of these children have stunted growth (UNICEF and OXFORD, 1992, 1991).

The conclusion of these consultants were that the rebuilding of the inter-nal infrastructure after the war would be the only way to begin to overcome the levels of poverty and insecurity as it affected women and children. And

yet despite the overwhelming evidence of the absolute poverty of women and children, these same consultants recommended the introduction of 'free market reforms' as the basis for the 'stabilization' of the Angolan economy. In the short run the implementation of the Program of Action by the Angolan government has served to increase unemployment, cut food subsidies and has devalued the return for labour.

The current focus of the humanitarian agencies in Angola and the rest of Africa is to present the problems of the poverty of women and children outside of the context of the forms of exploitation of labour power which exists in Africa. Poverty and maternal mortality rates are by-products of the same process, that of the lack of integration between production and consumption. Angola is a rich society with petroleum and minerals. The people of Angola wanted to be able to move to a stage where the natural resources would be used for económic reconstruction and not simply to purchase weapons for more destruction. In this sense the elections of 1992 were seen as a first step in the process recovering peace.

Angolan Women and the Peace Process

During the period of one party rule in Angola the self expression of African women was channelled at the official level through the mass organ called the OMA. As the intensity of the war increased in the period after 1989 there was the effort to develop autonomous organizations such as civic associations and neighbourhood groups. The effect of the war was to break down the kinship ties of the village since the urban *musseques* did not provide the conditions for the kind of kinship ties which existed. This was at the time when institutions of community solidarity was most needed.

Angolan women demonstrated in every way their support for new forms of political arbitration in the society after the signing of the peace accords in 1991. Numerous non governmental groups organized projects specifically aimed at African women and the research work on Women in Angola emerged from one such undertaking.

At the official level of the international thrust for peace, the participation of women in the peace process was symbolized by the fact that the special representative of the United Nations Secretary General for Angola was a British woman named Margaret Anstee. It was her responsibility to carry forward the mandate of the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM II) with respect to the peace accords. These included the cease fire, confinement of troops to assembly areas, demobilization and formation of a new army and the collection and disposal of weapons.

It was also the responsibility of the United Nations to monitor and verify the neutrality of the police, to observe and verify the electoral process, in-

cluding registration and the political campaign, and to monitor the elections of September 29 and 30th, 1992 (Friedman et al).[4]

In the specific case of the Angolan elections, apart from the symbolism of a woman as the peace maker there was no content to the UNAVEM mission. After the elections when there was a renewal of fighting the failure of the United Nations was simultaneously the failure of the special Representative of the Secretary General. The leadership of Margaret Anstee in carrying out the mandate of the Security Council demonstrated more confidence in the President of the USA than in Angolan men and women. She requested assistance from the USA and spent more effort soliciting the assistance of the US Government than seeking the cooperation of Angolan men and women to ensure the success of the peace effort. UNAVEM activities and public statements of this official reflected the fact that the United Nations was not completely sure of its mission in a context where the United States, dominant force in the United Nations, was publicly committed to one of the opposition parties and had not recognized the Angolan government. In fact there were assertions during the election campaign that the United Nations was partial in favour of UNITA (Dos Santos, 1992). This accusation was repeated at the non-aligned meeting in Indonesia in early September, where the Foreign Minister of Angola accused the Secretary General and the United Nations of not being impartial in the electoral process.

The monitoring system for the peace accords was comprised of soldiers from the Joint Political-Military Commission. This was a commission of primarily military men who had a history of solving political questions by violence. There were no Angolan women in this main monitoring body, nor on the Joint Verification and Monitoring Commission (GMVF) which was responsible for the implementation and functioning of the mechanisms instituted to verify and exercise control over the cease fire. Even though both the armies of the MPLA and UNITA claimed to have women in their ranks there were no women supervising the cease fire, nor ensuring the effective observance of the cease fire.[5]

The fundamental principles for the establishment of peace in Angola were hammered out in a situation where the United States wanted to present the accord as a victory over the forces of communism and Cuban intervention in Africa. For this reason the majority of Angolans who were not organized in either UNITA or the MPLA were not consulted. The cease fire

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4   Ms Margaret Anstee as the special representative demonstrated that the conception of liberal feminists of equality with men will remain limited if women simply occupy positions of men to do the same jobs of men.

5   For the full text of the cease-fire agreement and the various protocol see *Peace accords for Angola*, official translation of the State Department of the USA, Washington, May 1991.

agreement recognized the government of the MPLA, established a timetable for the demobilization of troops, the formation of multi-party democracy and the registration of voters and the holding of elections. Though Angolan women were not consulted nor were represented in the OCPM they used whatever medium to express their support for peace.

Registration

From the period of the registration the figures showed that women represent 52% of the population. The registration period undertaken from 16 June to 10 August brought women in contact with the state for the first time in many years. The elections were greeted with enthusiasm. This was the first time in the history of the society that Angolans were being allowed to exercise the franchise. The fact that women were able to make independent choices by secret ballot was also an added incentive. With the high level of illiteracy and the large number of candidates however, more than 15% of the ballot were spoilt.

There were over 4,8 million Angolans who were registered in this exercise, a major logistical achievement considering the fact that there were hardly any roads in many parts of the country and the existence of land mines made movements precarious. Women walked for miles to the registration centers to be given the plastic picture with their registration number. The enthusiasm of women for the election could be seen in this initial period even before the official start of the political campaign which lasted from 28 August to 28 September.

Women comprised the majority of the population and were visible at all levels of the political campaign, but were less visible at the level of the leadership of the main political parties. Of the thirteen candidates competing for the Presidency, only one was a woman. This candidate, Analia de Victoria Pereira, was the explicit representative of the *mesticos* despite the fact that in interviews the militants of this party claimed that they were representing the youths and women of Angola. The basic position of this party was a pledge to build a democratic Angola.

> *Which can only be reached by assuring to all citizens equal opportunities for education and culture... We want to contribute to building a more just society, where people could be treated equally, without discrimination and privileges. In order to achieve this goal we want to fight for the social valuation of the family, as the basic element of the collective structure; for women's rights to commutarian life. We will defend the interest of labourers through the establishment of a strong trade union.*

This party like all parties claimed to be fighting for democracy and claimed that the social base of the party was students, workers and women. The reality however was that the party drew its members from four main urban

areas, Luanda, Benguela, Malanje and Kwanza South. Founded in Portugal in 1983 as the Liberal Democratic party of Angola the party had changed its name for the elections to the Liberal Democratic Party (PLD). The registration in Portugal and the location of the party headquarters in a compound of expatriate workers said more about this party than its actual program.

This party was able to get 2.39% of the votes for the legislative elections and received three seats in parliament after the election results were announced on October 17, 1992. As a Presidential candidate Ms. Pereira received 11,475 votes, equivalent to 0.29% of votes. There were no indications that African women voted for this candidate.

The symbolism of the leadership of women in the UN system and at the helm of one of the main political parties reflected the fact that there was more tokenism than content to the political expression of women in the election campaign. The issues of peace, adequate provision of water, health care, child care, education, housing, and employment required a political platform beyond the embrace of structural adjustment and free market economic policies. All parties in the elections campaigned on a platform of liberalization and privatization of the economy. The only variation was one of the small parties of the left which wanted free market but not 'savage capitalism'.

The coalition of Angolan Democrats, a coalition emerging from a front for Angolan Civic Association, campaigned against militarism and took a leading role in campaigning on issues of health care with a particular appeal to women. The party claimed that voting for UNITA or the MPLA was voting for cholera or malaria which was certain death. One of the more organized of the small parties, the Democratic Party of Angola (PDA) also had a women's arm called the Union of Democratic Women of Angola (UDEMA). This party, led by a prominent African jurist spoke on the issues of health care, education, housing and of the disabled in a clear attempt to get the votes of women.

Despite the appeals by the small parties they did not have the resources to compete with the two main parties which were signatories to the Bicesse Accords. MPLA as the party of the government used the resources of the government while the armed opposition of UNITA had resources from external sources such as (non lethal financial support from the US Congress) to finance the campaign. Women were active in the ranks of both parties. In some neighbourhoods those involved in the marketing and distribution of goods enthusiastically participated in the marketing of the more than one hundred brands of imported beer which became available during the campaign. The distribution of the paraphernalia of the campaign (t-shirt, headbands, plastic bags and other imported knick knacks) elicited a positive response from all sections of the population.

Women in the MPLA and UNITA

The MPLA had been proud of its record and legislation with respect to the equality of women in the society. As one of the mass organs during the period of the single party, the MPLA, the organization of Angolan women had been established in 1962 to mobilize support for the national liberation struggles. All the written accounts of the war of national liberation pointed to the active participation of women in opposing colonial rule.

By the time of the peace accords the question of the position of the MPLA required more clarity than the declaration with respect to the emancipation of women. The destabilization and war had a disproportionate effect on women and solutions were needed to address the myriad of problems. This need was greatest in the regions of South African activity where UNITA had attempted to mobilize on the basis of race and ethnic consciousness.

Even in the midst of war the ranks of the OMA grew from over 400,000 during the period of independence to over 1,3 million members in 1987. During the sixties and seventies the OMA established literacy programs and worked to expand educational opportunities for women. In 1983 the OMA had announced that 297,604 women had learned to read through their literacy program, including 108,479 housewives, 105,873 workers and 8,644 members of Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola (FAPLA) (OAW, 1984: 31). The government had passed legislation against gender discrimination in employment and in working conditions and the OMA had taken high profile statements on women and national reconstruction. The organizational framework of the OMA was at the level of the government, i.e. from the top down. The Secretary General of the OMA was Ruth Neto, sister of the late President Neto. She had been elected secretary General at the first congress in 1983 and reelected at the second congress in March, 1988. The OMA also took an active role in the Pan African Women's Organization (PAWO) which had its headquarters in Luanda.

The MPLA then entered the campaign with its credentials as a party which had found jobs for women in the teaching profession and in the health services. The President of the MPLA campaigned on the theme of a 'certain future'. This theme resonated with Angolans who, in the final weeks of the campaign, enthusiastically supported the MPLA in the hope that the party would be able to consolidate the fragile peace.

Of all the parties' manifestos, that of the MPLA was one of the few with a clear statement on the conditions of women. The election manifesto promised to 'integrate women in the process of development as a factor of progress. To facilitate the formation of professional organizations to increase equal opportunities for women'.

The election manifesto also appealed to women on the basis of the fact that the MPLA would improve conditions in housing, education and culture.

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The campaign of the MPLA was also assisted by the campaign style of Jonas Savimbi who had taken a belligerent attitude during the campaign, threatening various groups. It became clear in the campaign, especially to the urban poor, that UNITA had not been able to make the transition from a guerilla organization to a political party.

Jose Eduardo Dos Santos campaigned alongside his wife to communicate the image of stability and peace. The message of the campaign was that the election was a 'family reunion' and that:

> *the reunification of the MPLA family is aimed at the adoption of the party to the new condition of political struggle in the system of multiparty democracy, where tolerance and the spirit of internal unity must be the driving force of the party that is willing to defend the construction of a free and democratic society for all Angolans.*

> *The MPLA family are all of us, militants and ex militants; MPLA supporters and friends, youth and elders, men and women, citizens from the countryside and cities, from Cabinda to Cunene, always waited and fought for this hour of peace freedom and democracy, and who are ready to strengthen our unity for the fulfillment of our dream.*

The campaigning of the wife of the Presidential candidate of the MPLA was a clear case of the first lady syndrome. She was portrayed effectively on television visiting day care centers and other projects of the government. As an assimilated woman, this leader could not communicate in the language of the large majority of the peasantry, but the rallies of the President and his wife attracted hundreds of thousands throughout the country. Even the MPLA was taken back by the outpouring of support in areas where there was supposed to be solid support for the opposition parties. The MPLA did not have a clear program for the rural women.

The contradictions of this first lady syndrome and the retreat of the MPLA from its socialist declaration was clear in the embrace of the IMF, the World Bank and the obscene attempts to out lobby UNITA in Washington, but became clearest in the context of the visit of the Pope to Angola prior to the start of the election campaign. The President of this secular Republic had his young child publicly baptized by the Pontiff. This act seemed to be the mending of fences between the ruling party and the church but in the campaign there was no mention whether the MPLA would retreat on the question of the right of women to abortion in order to gain more support from the Catholic church.

UNITA and Women
UNITA was the party with the most visible claim of the support of the most oppressed of the society - African women. In its propaganda UNITA blasted the MPLA as a party of whites and *mesticos* and made a deliberate appeal

on the basis of African consciousness and the philosophy of Negritude (James Martin III, 1992: 132). The party claimed that it was based on the model of African socialism formulated by Leopold Senghor. Under the slogan 'we are Angolans first and Angolan always', UNITA proclaimed that one of the untapped riches of the country was its culture. 'There is no technological and economic progress of national undertaking that can succeed without respecting the feelings and customs of the people'.[6] This was an explicit attack on the multiracialism of the MPLA and the fact that most of the leaders of the MPLA were *assimilado*. 'The UNITA leader speaks many national languages and dialects and he knows deeply the soul of his people'.

The social base of UNITA was clearly the Angolan peasantry. Appeals of the leadership over the radio were explicitly aimed at this section of the population. The campaign strategy of UNITA suggested that the whole period of South African involvement was simply the recourse to external support to fight the MPLA, the communist party supported by the Cubans. It was obvious that this line was not accepted because UNITA was overwhelmingly rejected in both Namibe and Cunene, two provinces which were occupied by the South African defence forces until they were defeated at Cuito Cuanavala in Cuando Cubango region. The reality however was that the poor peasant women of Angola had suffered from the war and the invasions of South Africa.

Cuando Cubango was the area of the most extreme domination of Angolan women and the area of complete control by UNITA. Except for the provincial capital of Menongue and Cuito Cuanavale, UNITA's military and administrative control over this region of 250,000 persons was total. This was one region where the only nominal government control over the administration appeared during the registration period. The major problem for UNITA was that the constituencies in the area under their control was small. For example while in the whole of Cuando Cubango the number of registered voters were over 100,000 in one constituency in Luanda the number of voters were 160,000. It was because UNITA controlled underpopulated areas such as Cuando Cubango that it exaggerated the strength of its political support.

Because of the war some communities and villages dating from the period of Portuguese administration were no longer inhabited or had been replaced by new locations which did not appear on available maps. For example, the commune of Nancova was by the time of the elections infested with mines and the people resided in nearby Kito. Jamba is not on the map

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6   The reference to Socialism and Senghor can be found in *Terra Angolano* of September 23, 1992. The appeal for Angolans to vote on the basis of culture and tradition was made in the same paper on August 22, 1992.

of Angola as a commune or municipality but was the seat of UNITA's government. Transportation in this region was either impossible because of mines or impractical because of the distance between locations. In this region the only vehicles to be seen are the military vehicles of UNITA or the road trucks of the World Food Programme delivering food to the assembly points of the troops of UNITA.

This region was politically important for women in the sense that it was totally UNITA controlled and the government only maintained a symbolic presence. This meant that Angola laws relating to equality between the sexes did not apply in this region. There was no election campaign in this region. The idea of military communism and the forms of forced labour in the UNITA camps in the South ensured that there was no room for complaints with respect to the equality of the sexes.

UNITA had two political appeals. One appeal was directed to the urban African youth who were excluded from the MPLA circuit and to the devastated region of Uige. The other appeal was to the so called UNITA heartland on the basis of ethnic consciousness. UNITA blamed shortages on government corruption and incompetence of the government and campaigned on the slogan 'a better future'. There was no explicit appeal to women in the election manifesto of UNITA. The explicit sexist tone of the campaign was set very early by the leading slogan of UNITA that it was 'time for new trousers'. The symbol of UNITA - the rooster - was also designed to awaken traditional images of male domination. In the village there could only be one dominant (jogoo) rooster among the hens.

The tradition of the political party having a women's wing was also carried forward by UNITA. The independent League of Angolan Women (LIMA), the women's wing of UNITA, sought to give legitimacy to the claim that UNITA was working for the equality of women. Savimbi also sought to exploit the ideology of the peasantry by having some UNITA leaders claim that Savimbi had supernatural powers and that UNITA understood African traditions more than any other party. While the camps of UNITA seemed calm compared to the destruction of urban areas, more than one aid worker in the UNITA camps spoke of the psychological violence against women.[7]

The cult of the personality and leaderism dominated this party and there was no room for democratic discussion. LIMA's public profile was to provide dancers to welcome foreign visitors to Jamba and to reinforce the subservient role of women. Even though UNITA was supposed to be the champion of African values and culture, UNITA discouraged traditional religions

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7   The information on the intensity of the coercion of men and women in UNITA camps was obtained in an interview in one of the assembly areas in Mavinga by this writer, October 5, 1992.

and medicinal practices by women. The military discipline of the guerilla camp was the form of organization in UNITA's political campaign and this discipline meant that women had to submit to the commands of men, even when these commands involved sexual coercion.

LIMA also reinforced the conservative philosophies by promoting the idea that the women were child bearers and the women in UNITA are encouraged to bring up children according to traditions. In short, women were to be sexual objects and mothers. After the age of six these children are available to the party for training and indoctrination. The reinforcement of the conservative definition of women within the ranks of UNITA was known throughout the country. Women inside and outside UNITA were open to sexual violence but the fact that this was tolerated in the armed camps and assembly areas of UNITA was known beyond the confines of these camps.

There was a marked difference between the image given to aid workers in the urban areas and the reality of the harsh discipline and sexual violence in the assembly points. Some indication of this violence had come to light in the context of the murder of Tito Chingunji and the defections of Nzau Puna and Tony Fernandes from UNITA. Two years earlier one of the former supporters of UNITA had pierced the public relations armor of UNITA and observed that:

> *there was a great deal of difference between UNITA's claim of high ideals, openness and efficiency and the reality of deceit, manipulation and sloth, whether concerning the pettiest of details or the heaviest of policy matters* (Sikorski, 1989: 34-37).[8]

Despite their claim to represent African consciousness and African traditions, from a very early period UNITA aligned itself with the remnants of the Portuguese community inside Angola, in South Africa and in Portugal itself. As early as 1975 Jonas Savimbi had come to an understanding with the white settler party, the *Frente de Unidade Angolana* (FUA) (James Martin III, 1989: 104). UNITA and Savimbi had also been seen as a savior to the 'pequenos brancos' or poor whites who had been 'traumatized by the unexpected downfall of the metropolitan government, and fiercely opposed the Marxist policies of the MPLA' (Braganca (de), 1981: 90). Poor whites who had emigrated to South Africa formed a solid rock of support for UNITA. Hence the military support of the South Africans for the victory of UNITA also had a political base.

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8   This analysis is important for it represented a parting of ways between the elements of this magazine and some sections of UNITA. Despite the claims of Sikorski the right in the USA still supported Savimbi.

The most public representative of women in UNITA was a Portuguese economist, Fatima Roque. She had written two books on Angola basically recycling the statistics of the World Bank (Roque et al, 1991). Her family was associated with an offshore banking concern in Madeira. As a woman and as a white this economist served one of the more important constituencies of UNITA, the conservative forces in the USA, Portugal and South Africa. While UNITA took leaders with a line on black consciousness to meetings in the USA of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Fatima Roque was taken to the meetings of bankers and financiers in the USA and to potential investors in Angola.

After the elections and the failed uprising of UNITA in October, 1992 Fatima Roque was arrested. She then claimed immunity from arrest because she was a Portuguese citizen. This was despite her public profile, featured every week up to October in the paper *Terra Angolano* as the economic expert who had the short term, medium term and long term plan for the economic recovery of Angola. In an interview prior to the elections Savimbi had declared that he would form the next government and that Ms. Roque would be the Minister of Finance.

The Elections of 1992
The elections were historic since it was the first time that this form of political representation was occurring in Angola. For weeks before the election there was insecurity all over the country because of the continued armed clashes between UNITA and the forces of the MPLA. Three weeks before the elections the Secretary General of the United Nations reported to the Security Council that:

> *The political and security situation in the country has deteriorated considerably. There are reports of intimidation and provocation by both government and UNITA supporters. Violent incidents, accompanied by killings have erupted since my last report, notably in Malanja in early July and early august, as well as Huambo, Saurimo and the provinces of Benguela and Bie* (Angola, 1992).

By planning with both sides the UN refused to draw attention to the fact that UNITA refused to allow the government to restore civil administration across the country.

The days prior to the elections saw a heightening of tension. Two days before the elections the population came out in large numbers to political rallies to demonstrate their support for differing political parties. The huge turnout in MPLA stronghold of Savimbi supporters on the Saturday before the elections was especially significant. Throughout the urban areas women and children made the armed men temporarily retreat while the festive mood of campaign rallies temporarily prevailed.

Angolans were aware of the intense international interest in the elections. The United Nations had mobilized over 800 international observers to monitor the voting process. The logistical problems of destroyed roads and mines dictated that a lot of movement in the rural areas had to be by air. The United Nations had guaranteed 120 flights to take registered voters to remote areas to vote. There were over 40 helicopters and 10 fixed wing cargo planes to assure transport of election materials. Another 14 helicopters and 12 planes ferried the over 400 international observers.

Angolan men, women and children in the final days were aware of this international presence and therefore celebrated during the day only to retreat to their homes at night. Gunfire could be heard all over Luanda at night. On the morning of the elections there was a complete electrical blackout in Luanda affecting water supplies.

The two days on which the elections were held were designated public holiday. There was a mood of relief and joy as Angolans lined up for hours to cast their votes. Voting took place at over 5800 polling stations throughout the country. Each polling station had enough ballots for 1000 persons. The polling stations were usually set up in schools, warehouses, stores, public building and other makeshift facilities.

Each polling station had a team of five officials who were termed the election brigades. Each brigade was overseen by the President who was in charge. These officials had participated in civic education classes carried out by the National Electoral Council before the election. There was a noticeable absence of women among the heads of the brigades in the 25 voting stations visited by this writer over the two day period. There was one women in Cazenga who was the head of the team though there were at least one woman in most polling station. Investigations on the participation of women as officials in the voting process showed that their participation was mainly in the urban areas where there were women who were school teachers and who worked in the lower ranks of the state apparatus.

If women were not prominent as officials of the voting process they were certainly most prominent in the anxiety to cast the vote. They queued for hours in the sun. Young and old came out all across the country and the state controlled paper carried a picture on the front page of September 30th of a woman over 80 years old who was carried to the polls. Pictures of old women conveyed the image of all of those who had survived the horrors of forced labour under colonialism, the displacement and resettlement of the war against colonialism and the violence and destruction of the war since independence.

The enthusiasm of women to vote was manifest in many ways but most dramatically by the woman who waited in line to vote and gave birth to her child while waiting. As a testimony to the process she named her child, 'vote' (Journal De Angola 1992).

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This intervention by women in the election process was an important demonstration which rendered insignificant some of the logistical problems which affected the process. One of the most pressing was the slowness of the process due to the high rate of illiteracy in the society. Under normal circumstances voting for two or three parties took time but in this election the people were choosing among 11 Presidential candidates and among eighteen political parties for the parliamentary elections. Under the system of proportional representation the voters placed an 'X' beside the candidate of their choice and beside the party of their choice.

Officials of UNAVEM and the Angolan government paid great attention to mobilizing people to the polls but there had not been adequate civic education to explain the process. Future research will expose the extent to which this failure was due to the fact that the principal assistance for political party training and for civic organization training in voter education came from the International Republican Institute in Washington (1992).

Each party had voting guides for their supporters, but from the evidence in the capital it seemed as if the information by the smaller parties had not been widely disseminated.

One other problem was the large number of Angolans with poor eyesight. The lighting conditions in the booths did not help and many of the booths had to close before closing time because of lack of electricity or lighting. The facilities for election workers reflected the general level of the society with poor food (American rations from the Gulf war for the election brigades) and poor sleeping facilities. It was a tribute to the over five thousand mostly young Angolan men and women that the elections were carried out successfully.

The Aftermath
The election turnout and the celebration by the voters was distinct. Despite corruption, mismanagement and the incompetence of the ruling party it was clear from the returns that the Angolan people had made a calculation that they wanted peace and an end to violence. They were not convinced that UNITA had made the transition from a guerilla organization to a political party. The election results from the very first days showed that the ruling party was ahead in both the Parliamentary and Presidential elections. UNITA was trailing and all the other parties were showing less than 3% of the vote. According to election law the winning candidate had to receive more than 50% of the vote. The election had been run on the basis of proportional representation and the parties would receive 5 Provincial seats according to votes (from 18 provinces) and seats according to the percentage of the vote. The total of the Parliamentary seats were 220. From the second day it was clear that the MPLA was in the lead and the doubt was to whether the President would receive over 50% of the vote.

The trend of the vote had also been calculated by the quick count of the United Nations. This quick count of selected polling stations all across the country had shown a decisive victory for the MPLA in the parliamentary elections and a strong lead for Dos Santos over Jonas Savimbi. The count had revealed 58,697 votes for Dos Santos and 45,433 for Savimbi.

Jonas Savimbi with an impressive intelligence organization interpenetrating the government and the international organizations must have had access to this information. Three days after the counting had begun UNITA issued a statement that the elections were fraudulent and that there would have to be another election. The questions relating to the voting procedures and the irregularities in the counting were supported by one letter from four observers from France. This was the only evidence presented out of the reports of the 400 international observers. In this letter the four deputies had alleged that in Kikolo, MPLA election officers were showing people how to vote. This was curious since as an observer this writer spent more than one hour in one of the polling stations cited as evidence.

Even though there was no corroboration of the evidence of irregularities the leaders of UNITA later amplified their charges, especially for the consumption of the conservative forces in the USA and France. The charges of UNITA were carried by the *Washington Times* (1992) and Christian Science Monitor which had consistently supported Savimbi. Among the allegations were the claim that:

a) the number of UN observers was far too low to guarantee adequate supervision;

b) that the government controlled National Election Commission (NEC) cut off registration prematurely thus disenfranchising over 500,000 supporters of UNITA;

c) that voter registration lists were not provided for opposition parties;

d) that several thousand Namibians were brought across the borders to vote for the MPLA;

e) that there were over 100 polling stations which were set up without the knowledge of the opposition and that thousands of extra ballots were secretly printed.

These charges were investigated by the United Nations and were found to be baseless. The country was virtuously held hostage and the climate of war and violence quickly returned. Even though Savimbi called on the CNE not to announce the results, he himself announced the results from Huambo on 13 October when it was evident that Dos Santos had not received over 50% of the vote and that a second round of Presidential elections were to be held. After the election results were announced the UN representative declared that the voting had been in the main free and fair except for incidents of human error.

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Table 1: The 1992 Angolan Election Results
as Announced on 17 October

Party	Presidential Elections (Candidate)	Votes	%	Parliamentary Votes	%	Seats National
PRD	Luis dos Pasos	58,121	1.47	35,293	0.89	1
Pajoca				13,294	0.35	1
PAI				9,007	0.23	0
PDLA				8,025	0.20	0
PSDA				10,217	0.26	0
FNLA	Holden Roberto	83,135	2.11	94,742	2.40	3
PDP-ANA				10,620	0.27	1
PRA	Ruis de Victoria Pereira	9,208	0.23	6,719	0.17	0
CNDA				10,237	0.26	0
PNDA	Daniel Chipenda	20,646	0.52	10,281	0.26	1
PDA	Alberto Neto	85,249	2.16	8,014	0.20	0
FDA				12,038	0.30	1
AD	Simao Cacete	26,385	0.67	34,166	0.86	1
Coalition						
MPLA	Jose Dos Santos	1,953,335	49.57	2,124,126	53.74	70
PRS				89,875	2.27	3
UNITA	Jonas Savimbi	1,579,298	40.07	1,347,636	34.10	44
PSD	Bengue Joao	38,243	097	33,088	0.84	1
PLD	Analia Pereira	11,475	0.29	94,269	2.39	3

Source: Compiled by author.

The total number of registered voters was 4,828,368 and the total number of voters in the parliamentary elections was 4,402,575, equivalent to 91.34% of registered voters'. The seats when divided at the national and provincial levels worked out to the following parliamentary seats for each party:

PRD	1	AD Coalition	1
PAJOCA	1	MPLA	129
FNLA	5	PRS	4
PNDA	1	UNITA	70
PDP/ANA	1	PSD	1
PDA	1	PLD	3

In the presidential elections the total number of voters was 4,401,339, 91.15% of the registered number of voters.

Under the terms of Article 147 of the Electoral Law a second round of Presidential elections was required because the leading candidate Jose Eduardo Dos Santos did not receive over 50% of the vote.[9]

Before the results of the elections were announced, Jonas Savimbi declared on October 3rd that the MPLA was clinging to power illegally and that there are those in the country who would be willing to give up their lives so that the country can redeem itself. As far as we are concerned, it will not depend on any international organization to say that the elections were free and fair. Two days later on Monday, October 5th UNITA withdrew from the national army. The signal of the return to war was immediate all across the country.

Frenzied public attempts to conciliate by those who had supported Savimbi (the United States and South Africa) did not lead to an acceptance of the results by UNITA. A very public intervention by the foreign minister of South Africa to mediate later revealed that his visit to Huambo was an effort to provide UNITA with logistical and political support so that Savimbi could win militarily what he had lost in the electoral contest (Weekly Mail 1992). The South Africans who had no experience of democratic participation in their society had drafted a strategic concept paper to give more political power to UNITA in a power sharing agreement.

Under this strategy there was to be joint responsibility for all key ministries (defence, interior and territorial administration) with UNITA in a crucial position to oversee the integration of the new army. Claiming that the CCPM should dissolve and leave the process to the South Africans, the South African air force was at the same time resupplying UNITA with weapons. The war of words over the fraudulent nature of the elections continued with sporadic acts of violence and UNITA moving to retake strategic areas in the rural areas.

Open confrontation between UNITA and the government flared in Luanda and other cities on 31 October, 1992. Before the third of November UNITA had retaken most of Uige, Bengo, Moxico and Huambo. There were major battles around the international airport, the radio and television station, the presidential palace and at the bank of Angola. In the battles of Luanda, UNITA suffered major losses of the top leadership, the most noteworthy being the Vice President, J Chitunda. Over 1500 civilians lost their lives in Luanda. The Government accused UNITA of planning a coup while UNITA accused the government of planning an ambush. The real result of this outbreak of war was to further entrench force and violence at

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9   The full details of the results were announced on Angolan radio and television by the President of the national Electoral Council on 17 October on the occasion of the publication of the results of the Angolan Presidential and Parliamentary elections.

the center of Angolan politics. By the end of 1992 UNITA had gained control of more territory than they held before the peace accords of 1991.

Angolan Women: Reconstruction and the Position of Women in the Society

Despite the massive intervention by the Angolan people the legacies of war and violence weighed against peace. The outbreak of war in the short run postponed the basis for reconstruction which could be based on democratic participation. The return to war meant that militarism had won and those forces in both MPLA and UNITA which were more comfortable with fighting were again in the ascendancy. The authoritarian traditions of Portuguese culture had won against the struggles for democracy and popular participation. African women were the clear losers in this context.

The fighting also demonstrated the failure of the United Nations in Angola. The UN had no contingency plan for a return to war. The violations of the cease fire had been overlooked while the Secretary General vouched for the democratic commitments of Savimbi. This was in line with the accepted view of the West that Savimbi would win election if they were held. UNITA refused to surrender its heavy weapons to the new unified army or to demobilize the biggest part of its army - FALA.

Comparisons have been made between the missions of the UN in Namibia in 1990 and in Angola in 1992. Observers for the UN mission in Namibia of 1990 numbered 1700 in a country of one million, as opposed to 400 for Angola in 1992, a country of over 10 million people and over 4,8 million registered voters. These comparisons fall short of taking into account the stakes in Angola. Who were the forces in contention? What were the international implications and how did the elections affect the future of class formation? All classes and strata asked different questions in the society. For Angolan women the fundamental issue was the desire for peace.

The winners in the elections were those forces who propose liberalization, privatization and the return of the Portuguese to Angola. The economic program of structural adjustment being implemented by the International Monetary Fund and packaged under the various emergency plans for Economic and financial restoration were meant to deepen the process of class formation. The ideas of privatization and liberalization were embraced by the managers, officers and administrators who were being trained to become entrepreneurs. An alliance between this emerging strata and the international monopolies who dominate the mining sector is already evident. This can be seen especially with the contracts for Angolan oil up to 1996.

Because working women bore the brunt of the hardships they continued to bear the burden of the renewed fighting. Those who were in the real market (called the parallel Market) saw that privatization and liberalization did not mean the reconstruction of the society for their benefit. Former bureaucrats and rehabilitated exile elements with commercial expertise from

abroad with contacts in the import export sector and with commercial links with Brazil, Portugal, and South Africa were in the ascendancy in the so called formal sector while the vigorous parallel market was dominated by working women. They had no control over the legal basis for commercial transactions.

The programs of reconstruction and economic revival showed that the interests of international capitalism were not the same as those of the African women who formed the overwhelming majority of the population. The return to war demonstrated that the efforts of the working people to support elections were insufficient to lay the foundations for new politics. The weakness of the popular forces in Africa were apparent with the open support of Zaire, Morocco and South Africa for the carnage in the Angolan countryside.

The election showed that the liberal form of women's organization organized by mainstream political parties could not raise the issues which were fundamental for women. And yet in the context of the war it was important that the government did not retreat from the laws which gave women equality and protected them under the Family Code. The requirement of building women's groups on a non-partisan basis was an important step in the direction of political and economic freedom for Angolan women. This was especially the case for the majority of women who had neither the time nor energy for formal political activity after a day's work in the fields, factory or in the hustle and bustle of the market place.

All of the parties paid lip service to repairing the social infrastructure, but the issues of sexual violence and wife beating did not figure in any of the campaign literature of the two leading parties. The campaign and the experience of the OMA also showed the need for women's organizations which are independent and self-directed. Ideological questions raised by the elections also pointed out that progressive Africans must not retreat from self-determination to recolonization (under the guise of the so called market) but must link the issues of self-determination to the question of the people. This would be an important step beyond the vanguardism of formal Marxism Leninism, or a Marxism which was not linked to the history and culture of Africa.

Poverty, hunger and insecure shelter have visited the vast majority of the Angolan people regardless of ethnic origin or political orientation. The war has been particularly harsh in the regions of the North, the Southeast and the South. The reconstruction of the means of feeding, clothing and housing the society while cutting infant mortality and increasing life expectancy through nutrition remain the minimum basis for reorienting the priorities of the society. This transformation of the priorities requires the kind of leadership which was inspired by Queen Nzinga in the 17th century.

Her attempt to develop unity and military resistance prior to the development of industrial capitalism had failed because no single individual could withstand the tide of external domination. Colonialism weakened the society and reinforced ethnic consciousness so that the society could be divided. African women from all regions suffered from the politicization of ethnicity. Their independent organization to reverse the cultural domination by Portugal and Europe will define the contours of politics in Angola for the next century.

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* College of Arts and Sciences, Department of African-American Studies, Syracuse University, New York.

Safeguarding Human Rights:
A Critique of the African Commission
on Human and Peoples' Rights

Kofi Oteng Kufuor*

Résumé: *La charte africaine des Droits de l'Homme et des Peuples a prévu la mise en place d'une commission des droits de l'homme destinée à promouvoir et à protéger les droits de la personne sur le continent africain. Les pouvoirs et fonctions de cette commission sont le reflet de l'environnement social et politique de l'Afrique au cours des années 60 et 70. Ainsi la commission a eu à faire face à de nombreux problèmes d'ordre structurel. La commission n'est pas autonome par rapport aux chefs d'Etat; elle n'est pas non plus indépendante pour ce qui est de la collecte des données. Il n'y a pas de cour africaine des droits de l'homme devant compléter le rôle et l'importance de la Commission. Avec les vents de changement qui soufflent sur l'Afrique, il y a lieu de ré-écrire une nouvelle charte. Cependant, cette tâche ne devrait pas être laissée aux seuls Etats. Les ONG ainsi que les juristes indépendants devraient y être associés. Pour que les droits civils et politiques soient préservés il est nécessaire que les Etats cèdent de leur souveraineté au bénéfice de la promotion des droits de l'homme et qu'ils augmentent les pouvoirs de la commission africaine pour qu'elle soit plus efficace.*

Introduction

A human rights treaty can best provide real and proper protection of the rights of individuals it purports to safeguard if it provides for an organization or body that can give practical effect to the general intention of the state parties to the treaty by:

a) investigating alleged human rights abuses;

b) settling or adjudicating the alleged infringement of the rights guaranteed under any treaty and;

c) recommending to the state parties various legal avenues that can be used to protect human rights.

The importance of a safeguarding body cannot be over-emphasized. The International Covenant on civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedom (ECHR) and the American Convention on Human Rights have all established measures of safeguard of the rights of the individual that involve the setting up of a body to protect and promote human rights.

African jurists and scholars, as far back as 1961, in the declaration known as the 'Law of Lagos' (Brownlie, 1971:440-447)[1] realized the need for a human rights convention for Africa which would give effect to the aims of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This declaration was subsequently followed by a number of seminars and conferences organized mainly by either the United Nations or lawyers and scholars who stressed the need for a human rights system for Africa. For the purpose of analyzing the effectiveness of the African Commission, a critical look will be taken at some of these seminars (Welch, Meltzer, 1984:338-339).

At the seminar on human rights in developing countries in Dakar, organized by the United Nations, the issue of establishing an institution to protect the rights of Africans within the framework of the Organization of African Unity, was discussed. The main argument in favour of this idea was that an African Commission could carry out functions similar to that of the European Commission thus enhancing the promotion and protection of basic human rights. It could thus possess powers of investigation of alleged human rights violations and the subsequent conciliation of human rights disputes (United Nations, 1966).

On the other hand, some of the speakers at the Dakar Seminar, although they were not opposed to such an idea *per se*, expressed their reservations on the grounds that the underdeveloped African countries, so recently freed from colonial oppression, were particularly jealous of their sovereignty. It would thus be rather difficult for them to accept the limitations on their sovereignty that accession to such an institution would entail (United Nations, 1966). Furthermore, it was argued that it would be appropriate to ensure the effective protection of the rights of the individual in the respective African countries before proceeding towards a regional or international institution. Thus in the short run, stress should be placed on bilateral or multilateral conventions on human rights which would ensure the protection of human rights within restricted fields prior to any gradual progression towards regional protection is made (United Nations, 1966).

Another step towards the establishment of a framework for the protection of human rights in Africa was taken at the seminar on the Establishment of Regional Commissions on Human Rights with special reference to Africa in Cairo (United Nations, 1969). An important theme underpinning the ration-

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1   Brownlie (1971:440-447) declared '...That in order to give full effect to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, this conference invites the African governments to study the possibility of adopting an African Convention of Human Rights in such a manner that the conclusions of this Conference will be safeguarded by the creation of a court of appropriate jurisdiction and that recourse thereto be made available for all persons under the jurisdiction of the signatory states'.

ale for a human rights system at this seminar was that the political factors operating in Africa at the time served to reinforce the need for a human rights charter and paragraphs 16 and 18 of the seminar document throw more light on this issue.

Paragraph 16 (United Nations, 1969:4) states that due to the fact that Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, Rhodesia and South Africa were controlled by oppressive minority regimes where human rights were being violated, the establishment of a regional human rights Commission was seen as being very useful.

Paragraph 18 (United Nations, 1969) of the seminar document also has political undertones that merit comment. It states that a regional human rights Commission for Africa should be established without delay since all African countries were committed to African unity and they were agreed that they had a common destiny. Moreover, the African states were committed to the total liberation of the continent and any African Commission would certainly have an important role to play.

Social and cultural factors were also considered at the Cairo Seminar. Paragraph 23 (United Nations, 1969:6) points out the failure of human rights texts such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to reflect African values and traditions and that basically the Declaration was a European document that had little relevance for Africa and an African system which upheld African values would serve the continent's needs better.

The proposed Commission was to be accorded fact-finding and conciliation powers (United Nations, 1969:5). It was agreed that to be effective, the Commission should be empowered by the state creating it to establish the facts in situations of alleged violations of human rights in which the complainants might be states or individuals. The participants held the view that it was only when the actual facts could be placed at the disposal of the Commission that it could reconcile the difference between conflicting parties without compromising the basic tenets of promotion and protection of fundamental human rights. The Commission should therefore be afforded all facilities for fact-finding without hindrance from the member states.

It was also seen as being necessary to grant the proposed Commission advisory powers (United Nations, 1969). These powers would include advising interested parties on different aspects of fundamental human rights and how best to protect them, and more importantly the Commission should establish a relationship between itself and national committees inasmuch as such committees were able to influence directly policies and actions of governments.

In 1978, at a meeting of the African Bar Association in Freetown Sierra Leone, legal experts from English speaking countries in West and East Africa met and drew up the 'Freetown Declaration' (*West Africa*, 1978a:1588; *West Africa*, 1978b:1628, 1668). The Declaration amounted to

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a reaffirmation of the basic rights of all Africans by stressing certain freedoms and rights which were seen as being essential to the attainment of international human rights standards.

The Declaration also condemned laws that purported to oust the jurisdiction of national courts on any matter emphasizing that such a practice was a derogation from the idea of fundamental human rights and is to that extent obnoxious. The declaration also deplored the enactment of *ex post facto* legislation and it also reiterated the Association's commitment to the enjoyment of such basic freedoms as the freedom from arbitrary arrest, freedom of speech and expression, freedom from inhuman treatment, freedom from discrimination on the grounds of religion, sex or ethnic origin, freedom of the individual to hold property and freedom of assembly, movement and association (*West Africa*, 1978a, 1978b).

Under the direction of the United Nations, a further step was taken in the direction of creating a human rights regime for Africa at the seminar on the Establishment of Regional Commissions on Human Rights for Africa in Monrovia in 1979 (United Nations, 1979). A number of important issues were raised:

The participants at the seminar hoped that an African Commission could play an important role in human rights standard setting by way of drafting declarations, model rules or draft conventions for possible signature and adoption by the respective African governments. These possible functions were not to replace United Nations standards but they could act as a supplement to them and perhaps, where possible, mould them to suit African conditions (United Nations, 1979:18).

Furthermore, a discussion of the relationship between the proposed Commission and the Organization of African Unity resulted in the view that in order to guarantee the Commission's independence, it should be set up within the institutional framework of the OAU but it should function independently of it.[2]

The participants also considered the concept of State sovereignty and the implications it could have for the effective functioning of any future human rights system (United Nations, 1979:5). The general consensus was that even though sovereignty was a very sensitive matter on which most African

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2   *Ibid.*, p. 12. A consensus was established (para. 66) that the Commission should submit annual reports to the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Council of Ministers or to the Heads of State and Government of the OAU. This was because of the possible need for a backup of the Commission's action at the political level. This view however should be read against the importance that the participants placed on the total independence of the Commission of any Government and the political organs of the OAU. See para 64. 20. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

leaders were unwilling to compromise, it should not be allowed to act as a stumbling block to the full enjoyment of human rights.

Stress was also placed on the desirability of a grassroots approach to human rights strategies (United Nations, 1973:5). After attaching importance to the fact that illiteracy and ignorance of their rights was a problem faced by most Africans, the Seminar acknowledged the fact that there was the need to work through national and local institutions, churches, trade unions, non governmental organizations, and town and village organizations.

Following on from the Monrovia Seminar, African leaders met in Dakar, Senegal, to present their first draft of the Charter and this was approved by the Eighteenth Assembly of Heads of State and Government in Kenya, Nairobi in 1981 (Welch, Meltzer, 1984:338-339; United Nations, 1966).

The import of the above discussion to some of the crucial issues that arose and were debated at the various seminars and conferences is that first of all, it provides an insight into some of the factors and attitudes that later on emerged as provisions of the Commission; and secondly it outlines the discrepancy between the ideal type of Commission that most African jurists and scholars hoped would be established and the actual powers that the drafters of the provisions of the Commission were prepared to accord it.

Based on the above comments concerning the proposed African Commission, and for the purpose of our critique of the Commission, we can assume that the profile of the Commission's powers was to include, *inter alia*:

• fact-finding and conciliation powers;

• advisory powers;

• it was to be free from any control by the state parties.

The African Commission
In order to promote human rights and to ensure their protection, the Banjul Charter provides, under Article 30 (Hamalengwa et al; 1988:12) for the African Commission. The Commission is to be composed of members:

> *chosen from amongst African personalities of the highest reputation, known for their high morality, integrity, impartiality and competence in matters of human and peoples rights with particular consideration given to persons having legal experience (Hamalengwa et al; 1988).*

The Commission's functions with respect to human rights include:

• ensuring the protection of specified rights;

• interpreting provisions of the African charter;

• examining inter-State complaints;

• considering other communications;

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- promoting human and peoples rights by undertaking studies, organizing conferences, and disseminating information;

- encouraging national and local institutions concerned with human rights;

- developing principles and rules aimed at solving legal problems relating to human rights, upon which governments may base their legislation;

- and any other tasks entrusted to it by the OAU Assembly of Heads of State and Government (Hamalengwa et al; 1988:14; Amnesty International, 1987:13).

The Charter creates a degree of neutrality as far as the provisions for the election of members to the Commission as well as their security of tenure is concerned. The only way by which a member of the Commission can be removed is set out in Article 39 (2) (Hamalengwa et. al; 1988:13). The removal of a member can be done only if, in the Commission's unanimous opinion, the member to be removed has ceased to discharge his' duties for any other reason other than temporary absence. The article does not allow for removal either by the OAU or by any of the individual African governments. Thus it could be said that article 39 (2) does provide a considerable degree of security of tenure for the members of the Commission.

Article 31 (Hamalengwa et. al; 1988:13) is another example of the independence of the members of the Commission. It states that the members of the Commission shall serve in their personal capacity. We can infer from this that the members of the Commission are not supposed to act as representatives of the state parties that nominated them but rather they are to articulate opinions and views that reflect internationally defined rules and standards.

Article 43 (Hamalengwa et. al; 1988:14) also guarantees the Commission the necessary freedom to act without fear of outside interference. The article gives the members of the Commission diplomatic privileges that are consistent with those provided for under the general convention of the OAU. This provision is useful in that it protects members of the Commission from laws of state parties that could be used to hinder the execution of their functions.

In view of the above measures, the Commission could be seen as an independent body capable of discharging its functions fairly and freely. Loopholes, exist however, in the provisions relating to the Commission that can seriously compromise its independence and the first provision to note in this regard is article 33 (Hamalengwa et. al; 1988:12).

Article 33 provides for the nomination of the members of the Commission by the parties to the Charter. The potential problem is that the attitudes towards human rights in Africa may lead to the nomination of members who will have the same outlook towards human rights as the nominating state

party. Taking the frequent violation of human rights in Africa into consideration, a number of seats on the Commission could have been allocated to bar associations, national human rights bodies and other non-governmental organizations in order to enhance its impartiality.

The participants at the Cairo Seminar were of the opinion that the Commission should be able to give advisory opinions to interested parties and to be in a position to influence, more directly, national committees that had considerable leverage over actions of their governments. The Commission has in actual fact been granted powers to merely 'give its views and make recommendations to governments' (Hamalengwa et. al; 1988:15).

The wording of this provision raises two important issues in relation to the Commission: First of all, the article renders any advice given by the Commission non-binding, on the state parties to the Charter. Secondly, what is the legal effect of a state parties refusal to be bound by a recommendation of the Commission if all the other parties have agreed to be bound by it? No sanctions are provided for in the Charter and to that extent the effect of the article in question is purely figurative and has no legal effect whatsoever.

Articles 47-58 of the Banjul Charter deal with communications from both states and non-state parties. Under article 47, (Hamalengwa et. al; 1988:15) state communications concerning human rights abuses in other states can be drawn to the attention of the accused state, the OAU Secretary General and the Chairman of the Commission, and within three months the accused state is supposed to submit to the enquiring state a written statement on the matter concerning laws and rules of procedure applied and applicable as well as the redress given or the course of action available.

The first approach towards tackling human rights abuses however, is of an amicable and conciliatory nature. Article 48 (Hamalengwa et. al; 1988:15) states that the settlement of human rights violations should be through bilateral negotiations or any other peaceful means. The question that arises for determination here is what is the effect of article 48?

By resorting to negotiations between states in order to resolve human rights violations, the underlying presumption is that violations of individual rights have implications first and foremost, for the state concerned and not for the individual. Taking into account the fact that in Africa the state is the main violator of individual rights, there is the distinct possibility that common political interests among states (e.g. the suppression of the rights of their citizens) will dissuade states from interference in the affairs of other states and will thus undermine the effectiveness of this provision.

Article 50 (Hamalengwa et. al; 1988:15) further weakens the powers of the Commission. It allows the Commission to deal with human rights abuses only after local remedies have been exhausted but it fails to take into account the fact that in most undemocratic African states the exhaustion of local remedies is practically impossible.

Secondly, both the Commission and the Charter have failed to give a legal definition of what amounts to the exhaustion of local remedies within the framework of the African Charter and for this matter, interpretation might have to be dependent on the domestic laws or the opinion of the courts of the states parties.

Arising out of the uncertainty of this provision, the drafters of the Charter could have paid due attention to the provisions of the Inter-American Human Rights Convention that allows for an escape clause by virtue of article 46, the effect of which is to permit individuals to petition the American Commission if they can show that the said domestic remedies do not exist under their local law (Brownlie, 1971:339-427).

Article 55 (Hamalengwa et. al; 1988:16) allows for communications from parties other than states and it seems, from the construction of the wording, that one does not have *locus standi* and thus communications under article 35 can be filed by private individuals or organizations.

When a communication is received under article 55 it is first brought to the attention of the state concerned. If one or more communications 'relate to special cases which reveal a series of serious or massive violations of human and peoples rights' the Commission is to draw this to the attention of the OAU Assembly of Heads of State and Government. The Assembly may then request the Commission to undertake an in-depth study of these cases and make a factual report with findings and recommendations.

With respect to in-depth studies (Amnesty International, 1987), the Banjul Charter does not explain the procedure for participation of authors of the communications and the state concerned during the course of the study. Against this background, the Commission in order to function effectively will need to decide when and how the authors and the state will be:

- notified that an in-depth study has been initiated;

- invited to submit further and updated information to assist the Commission in reaching informed conclusions; and

- invited to comment on one another's submissions to the Commission.

After gathering the necessary information about a state's violation of human rights and upon coming to the conclusion that there is virtually no possibility of an amicable solution, the Commission shall write a report setting out the facts and the conclusions it has arrived at. The report is then presented to the Assembly of Heads of State and Government and if the Commission so wishes, it can append what it considers to be useful recommendations to its report.

The provision to this however is that the publication of the report is not binding on the Assembly of Heads of State and Government. Publication will be done only when the Assembly deems it necessary to do so (Hamalengwa, et. al; 1988:17). This stipulation gives shelter to the many

states in Africa that are guilty of human rights violations and also further weakens the confidence that observers have or ought to have in the Commission.

The same legal fetters prevent the Commission from making a meaningful impact on the communications submitted under article 55. Under the said article, any investigations conducted by the Commission will be done not *suo motu*, but rather under the sanction of the Assembly (Hamalengwa, et. al; 1988:25). This added dependence on the very people it is investigating in order to safeguard human rights on the continent insinuates that the Commission operates as an organ of the Assembly.

The Commission meets only twice every year, each session lasting between 8 and 10 days and it is questionable whether such a time frame is long enough to consider thoroughly the matters placed before it (Amoah, 1992). ' Furthermore the Charter does not make provision for the Commission to adopt extraordinary procedures (such as meeting at a shorter notice) in an emergency (Amoah, 1992). The same inhibiting procedure of acting on a request from the Heads of State and Government of the OAU restricts the effective functioning of the Commission and according to one legal commentator given the current schedule of the Commission's meeting, an in-depth study sanctioned by the Assembly and its actual completion by the Commission could possibly take the better part of a year.

The confidential nature of the proceedings of the Commission is also another structural predicament. Article 59 of the Charter states that: 'All measures taken within the provisions of the present chapter shall remain confidential until such time as the assembly of heads of state and government shall otherwise decide' (Hamalengwa et.al; 1988:17). In giving practical effect to this article, the Commission has been inclined not to divulge the names of states that are the subjects of complaints (Amoah, 1985:235). Thus the Commission is denied the very effective tool of bringing a state into disrepute which could consequently lead to it being subjected to a considerable deal of international pressure and possibly bring about a change in its attitude towards human rights.

Expressly, the African Commission does not have the power to carry out an independent investigation of alleged human rights violations. The powers of the Commission are limited to the drawing of the attention of the Assembly to human rights abuses it might uncover. The Assembly of Heads of State may then request the Commission to make a report accompanied by its findings and recommendations (Hamalengwa et.al; 1988:17).

Judicial powers of investigation can be justified on two grounds. First by being able to carry out its own investigations the Commission would no longer see itself as being subject to unnecessary restraints in the execution of its duties and as such it could adopt a more socially active stand. It would now be in a position to search for situations where civil and political liber-

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ties have been violated. This change in outlook and function could certainly enhance its functions as a human rights watchdog.

Secondly the Commission lacks powers of enforcement. All decisions based upon its recommendations are acted upon by the state parties. If the Commission could enforce its own recommendations or if it had conciliatory powers of the kind envisaged at the Cairo Seminar (United Nations, 1969:5), it could bring about a marked improvement in the human rights situation in Africa. This suggestion can be borne out by two examples. First of all, countries that can have adverse decisions enforced against them might consider the political embarrassment that could be incurred and the sanctions that could be imposed. This possible impact upon a state's attitude towards the rights of its citizens stemming from enforcement powers given to the Commission is probably the most far reaching impact on human rights that the Commission could have.

In addition, this suggested change might also have an effect on non-state parties to the Charter. Individuals and organizations might be encouraged to petition the Commission if they can be assured that the injustice they seek to redress will be given effect to regardless of the pressure that the Assembly of Heads of State might bring to bear upon it. Viewed as a body that can contribute effectively to the protection of individual civil and political rights, ·there is the likelihood that non-state party communications would increase and this would contribute to the improvement of the human rights situation.

Another aspect of the weakness of the Commission's powers is that it does not have the power to declare domestic legislation of the state parties to be inconsistent with the fundamental human rights enshrined in the Charter. If the Commission had the power to question the validity of legislation or decrees of the governments of the state parties and to declare obnoxious legislation to be inconsistent with the spirit and letter of the Charter, then its capacity to safeguard human rights or at least act as a more vociferous promoter of human rights would be greatly enhanced.

A further criticism is found under Article 62 (ACHRR, nd). This article states that 'each state party shall undertake to submit every two years, a report on the legislative or other measures taken with a view to giving effect to the rights and freedoms guaranteed by the present Charter'. Ostensibly, this provision is to allow the Commission to monitor the human rights activities of the state parties and in the first instance, it seems to be a positive approach to human rights protection.

Placed under close legal scrutiny however, certain omissions in respect of Article 62 serve to limit the impact it could have. First of all, the Charter does not stipulate the form and content of the periodic reports. Presumably therefore, they are to be drawn up by the State parties and this raises doubts as to whether they will be reliable and accurate reports. Secondly, what line of action is to be followed if a state party fails to submit a report to the

Commission. Article 62 does not state the sanctions that will be imposed on any state that fails to comply with its obligations.

The African Charter does not provide for the creation of an African Court of Human Rights as a complement to the African Commission. The 'Law of Lagos' (Brownlie, 1971) asserted the need to establish a court 'of appropriate jurisdiction' in order to further the objectives of the UN Declaration on Human Rights and to protect the rights of the individual on the African continent.

Other references to the need for an African Court have been raised after the 'Law of Lagos'. At the Cairo Seminar the issue of the desirability of an African Court designed to act as an arbiter of human rights cases on the same lines as the European Court of human rights was discussed.

In an article published in the *Human Rights Law Journal*, a former Secretary-General of the OAU has stressed the need for a court of justice. He stresses the fact that the African Commission does not possess all the prerogatives that are enjoyed by the corresponding organs that exist outside Africa and that compared with the measures of safeguard conferred on the European Commission, those foreseen in the Banjul Charter appear to be elementary. He goes on to state that 'without a Court of Justice, like the European Court which plays the role of a genuine tribunal, how can the effective judicial protection of individual rights be assured'? (Kodjo, 1990).

A similar view on the need to establish a regional court to protect the rights of the individual was stated in the 'Banjul Affirmation' at the Banjul Judicial Colloquium on the Domestic Application of International Human Rights Norms. The participants at the colloquium were concerned with developing a system of justice in Africa that would have common application. To this end they expressed their belief that the time had come for an independent court of human rights to be established in Africa that would be similar to the European Court of Human Rights, and whose decisions would be binding (Developing Human Rights Jurisprudence, 1981:4; Interights Bulletin, 1990:39).

Furthermore, there is the added benefit of the binding nature of the determination of state-state dispute (Amoah, 1992:238). The present position (as outlined above) (Amoah, 1992:22, 24) is for the Commission to submit a report of its investigation into alleged human rights violations to the Assembly of Heads of State and Government which will then decide what measures to adopt. This could possibly result in a political compromise being reached by the Assembly to the detriment of the rights of the petitioner in question and thus undermining the objectives of the Charter. A legally binding decision however, would establish a judicial precedent in the field and would thus eliminate any uncertainty as to what will be the end result of an investigation into the alleged violation of the rights of anyone on the continent.

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African dictators have kept themselves in power mainly by denying ordinary citizens basic civil and political rights. Thus the problem with any radical change of the powers of the Commission might result in the loosening of the grip on power that African despots have. It is this possibility that accounts for the weak powers of the Commission and yet at the same time it also serves to impress upon those committed to making civil and political rights effective in Africa, the need to expand the powers of the Commission.

Conclusion

Based on the legal appraisal of the Commission, we can come to the conclusion that:

a) The Commission's advice to African Governments is not binding on the state parties;

b) The Commission does not have independent fact-finding powers of its own thus severely limiting its impact;

c) A further shortcoming is that the Commission is not totally independent of the Heads of State of the OAU;

d) There is no African court to complement the role and importance of the Commission.

The powers of the Commission need to be reconsidered or reviewed. The premise for such a suggestion is that the social and political changes that prevailed on the African continent in the 1960s and 1970s and were consequently mirrored in the powers and functions of the Commission are no longer valid.

Winds of change similar to those that swept over the continent in the 1960s are beginning to blow over the continent once again. Pluralism, and constitutionalism have gained currency as political concepts in countries that used to be civilian or military dictatorships.

In order for civil and political rights to be properly guaranteed, consideration should be given to such concepts as state sovereignty and its compromise in the interest of the promotion of human rights, the individual and his relationship with society, and the possibility of increasing the powers of the African Commission so as to make it more effective.

Also the rewriting of any new Commission should not be left to the representatives of the state parties alone no matter how well intentioned they are. NGOs and African and international jurists should be involved in all aspects.

It should also be noted here that the Commission itself can play a part in increasing its powers by relying on article 60 of the Charter which enjoins it to rely on international human rights jurisprudence generally in the pursuance of its objectives

In the final analysis however, any variation of the powers of the Commission will depend, 'to a considerable extent', on the political will of African leaders. They should be made aware of the need for radical change.

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* Flat 16, Landor House, Elimington Estate, Camberwell, London, England.

Entreprises étrangères et activités industrielles en Afrique de l'Ouest

Amadou Kaka*

Abstract *In the context of industrialization projects, since independence African States have devised various investment policies aimed at attracting foreign investors. The major advantages offered have been fiscal incentives. Foreign investors adopt both defensive and offensive strategies when considering the establishment of enterprises outside their country. A case study of some African branches of French enterprises indicates that the role of fiscal incentives in the decision-making process of enterprises considering the establishment of industrial activity in foreign countries is very limited. Investors require sufficient guarantees and an overall environment which ensures the operation of an enterprise. The significant variables which shape the attitude of the investor include demand stability and the risk factor. But the likely political risk is a key parameter in the decision to create new branches and/or to keep existing ones operating. The current economic financial and social crises facing Africa and the anticipated potential of the East European market are factors which influence foreign investors. Can the process of democratization in Africa today create a climate which would encourage foreign investors to participate in the economic revival of African countries?*

L'investissement étranger en Afrique de l'Ouest connaît, depuis quelques années, une évolution qui retient l'attention des hommes politiques et des observateurs en général. Ce regain d'intérêt se comprend dès l'instant où on considère la place qu'occupent ceux qui le mettent en oeuvre dans l'économie des pays africains: ce sont de gros investisseurs (souvent les plus importants). Leurs interventions portent sur des domaines variés, pour exploiter des activités que les structures nationales ne peuvent, faute de moyens,[1] prendre en charge. En ce sens, le malaise du secteur parapublic en Afrique de l'Ouest n'est plus à rappeler, tout comme les difficultés que rencontrent les entreprises privées locales à survivre.

Parmi les intervenants d'origine étrangère, les groupes français tiennent une place dominante. Ils représentent à ce titre une base d'étude importante dans l'appréciation du mouvement de retrait observé; cela d'autant plus qu'ils prennent une part active dans le processus de désinvestissement engagé par les entreprises implantées sur le continent. Devant l'ampleur du

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1 Au sens large du terme.

phénomène, on ne peut s'empêcher de se demander ce qui explique ces départs.

Dans cette perspective, les motivations qui sous-tendent l'implantation de ces groupes constituent une base d'informations indispensables: il faut en effet connaître les raisons qui sont à l'origine de l'implantation, pour mieux cerner, à partir des études à venir, le mouvement actuel de retrait. Aussi, consacrons nous cette étude à nous interroger sur les stratégies mises en oeuvre dans l'installation des groupes français en Afrique de l'Ouest, autrement dit, comment et pourquoi sont-ils venus?

Avant de présenter les résultats de nos recherches, il y a lieu de préciser comment ont été constitués les échantillons de l'étude, et quelle a été notre démarche.

Présentation des groupes enquêtés

Une enquête par administration de questionnaire a été menée, en vue de réunir les informations indispensables pour analyser la stratégie d'implantation des groupes français en Afrique de l'Ouest. Elle nous a permis d'approcher aussi bien les sièges centraux que les différentes filiales africaines de ces derniers.

La maison-mère élabore la stratégie d'ensemble du groupe. Cependant, les mobiles de l'internationalisation ne sont pas les mêmes pour les diverses zones géographiques: ils répondent en effet à des préoccupations et des objectifs précis, suivant chaque environnement.[2] Il est alors pratiquement difficile de vouloir en identifier un par pays d'accueil: c'est dans ce sens qu'on peut qualifier les réponses ainsi recueillies de 'globales'.

Par contre, les questionnaires administrés au sein des filiales ont une portée beaucoup plus restreinte, et une signification certainement plus précise; il est en effet demandé à des responsables d'apprécier une situation donnée, à partir de l'expérience qu'ils ont du milieu hôte et des relations entretenues avec le groupe d'appartenance.

C'est avec ce souci que nous avons choisi de contacter les 'deux bouts de la chaîne', pour constituer deux échantillons dont il est opportun de présenter, au préalable, la composition.

Parmi les 39 directions générales de groupes que nous avons contactées en France, 25 nous ont répondu. Cependant, pour mener nos analyses, seulement 13 de ces réponses ont été retenues, du fait des contraintes suivantes: les groupes de l'échantillon doivent être présents en Afrique de l'Ouest, et y exploiter des activités industrielles.

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2   Il faut ici entendre environnement dans un sens large: cela peut être un groupe de pays présentant les mêmes contraintes, les mêmes menaces, les mêmes opportunités, etc.

Le deuxième échantillon de notre étude se compose uniquement de filiales appartenant aux 13 groupes choisis. Par suite des difficultés à obtenir le concours de celles-ci, nous avons étendu notre champ d'investigation pour y inclure 4 pays d'Afrique de l'Ouest (la Côte d'Ivoire, le Niger, le Sénégal et le Togo); il nous a permis de contacter 81 filiales. Parmi les réponses obtenues, seulement 30 ont été retenues pour les besoins de notre travail; le tableau suivant en donne la décomposition par secteur d'activité et par pays d'implantation.

Tableau 1: Répartition des filiales africaines par secteur d'activité

Pays d'implantation Secteur d'activité	RCI*	Niger	Sénégal	Togo	Total
Textile	-	1	2	1	4
Agro-alimentaire	3	2	2	3	10
Chimie et Para-chimie	3	4	3	2	12
Fabrication Mat. Constr.	2	-	-	2	4
Total	8	7	7	8	30

* République de Côte d'Ivoire
Source: D'après l'auteur.

C'est sur la base des informations recueillies au cours de ces enquêtes que nous analyserons la stratégie d'implantation des groupes français. La prise en charge d'activités industrielles constitue, pour certains groupes de notre étude, le fruit d'une évolution: ils étaient en effet présents sur le continent bien avant, et situaient leurs interventions dans le commerce. Il faut par conséquent situer cette étape dans l'étude à mener.

La création d'unités industrielles en Afrique de l'Ouest peut se comprendre à partir d'une série de facteurs. Ces facteurs peuvent être regroupés selon les motivations qui sont à l'origine de l'implantation des firmes à l'étranger. Ainsi, cette démarche peut constituer une réponse aux préoccupations commerciales des firmes: leur position sur le marché leur impose, pour se développer, de se doter des moyens d'accéder à de nouveaux débouchés.

Mais l'implantation des firmes à l'étranger n'a pas que des objectifs commerciaux; en effet, l'implantation industrielle en Afrique de l'Ouest s'inscrit aussi dans une logique industrielle; en d'autres termes, elle a pour objectifs d'exploiter certains avantages liés au processus de production.

C'est donc autour de ces deux stratégies (dont il n'est pas superflu de le rappeler, les facteurs déterminants ne sont pas mutuellement exclusifs) que nous analyserons l'activité industrielle des groupes français en Afrique de l'Ouest.

La présence commerciale préalable

L'entreprise qui désire étendre ses activités hors de ses frontières, par transfert de ses produits, a en face d'elle plusieurs formules, dont elle retiendra celle qui s'adapte le mieux à ses ambitions. Cette décision répond à des exigences stratégiques; elle constitue une réaction à une menace, ou peut s'inscrire dans la réalisation des objectifs poursuivis par la firme.

La présence commerciale préalable ne caractérise qu'une partie des filiales de notre échantillon. Elle suppose une connaissance de l'environnement africain bien avant l'implantation productive. Ainsi, de tels marchés faisaient bien partie des débouchés des groupes enquêtés.

Le tableau 2 présente la forme qu'a revêtu cette présence.

Tableau 2: Les modalités de la présence commerciale

Pays d'implantation Modalités	RCI	Niger	Sénégal	Togo	Total
Agent commercial	-	1	-	-	1
Exportateurs Ind.	2	-	-	3	5
Filiale commerciale	3	4	2	-	9
Total*	5	5	2	3	15

* Effectif par pays des filiales précédées d'implantation commerciale.
Source: D'après l'auteur.

L'enquête[3] menée révèle que 50% des filiales africaines sont précédées de présence commerciale. Ce résultat renferme les proportions suivantes, par pays d'implantation: 71% de filiales nigériennes; 63% de filiales ivoiriennes, 25% de filiales togolaises, et 43% de filiales sénégalaises.

Mais la présence commerciale à l'étranger peut prendre plusieurs formes, suivant la nature des objectifs poursuivis par les groupes. Il faut par conséquent s'interroger sur ses modalités en Afrique de l'Ouest. Nous avons regroupé les diverses voies empruntées par l'exploitation commerciale des marchés africains en trois catégories, en fonction de la nature des activités exploitées.

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3 La présentation des résultats de l'enquête menée auprès des filiales africaines des firmes françaises, notamment les tris à plat, est faite autour de deux séries de pourcentages: les premières appliquées aux implantations africaines, se rapportent à l'effectif total de l'échantillon des filiales enquêtées; les secondes, appliquées au pays d'implantation des filiales, se rapportent uniquement à l'effectif des filiales ayant répondu à notre questionnaire dans le pays considéré.

- Les importateurs et/ou exportateurs indépendants:

Ils n'ont assuré le transfert de la production des firmes françaises vers les pays d'Afrique de l'Ouest que dans 17% des cas. Ce résultat concerne deux filiales nigériennes (l'une exploitant dans l'agro-alimentaire, et l'autre dans le textile) et trois filiales sénégalaises (deux sont situées dans le textile, et une dans le secteur de la chimie et parachimie).

Le recours à des intermédiaires indépendants n'est pas une solution recherchée par les firmes, encore moins lorsqu'elles ont une ambition internationale, dans la mesure où il ne leur permet pas de maîtriser les éléments indispensables à une bonne connaissance du marché.

- L'agent commercial:

Ce n'est guère une formule utilisée dans les échanges entre firmes françaises et les marchés africains. En effet, une seule filiale, implantée en Côte d'-Ivoire et exploitant dans le secteur agro-alimentaire, a vu son implantation précédée des services d'un agent commercial, malgré les nombreux avantages que ce dernier présente face à la modalité précédente.

Ce faible recours peut s'expliquer par la situation réelle des marchés africains: l'importance des affaires traitées, la structure du commerce et surtout l'expérience des opérateurs économiques dans ces pays n'ont certainement pas atteint un niveau de développement suffisant pour justifier l'exercice du métier d'agent commercial; le fait que le seul cas identifié porte sur une entreprise implantée en Côte d'Ivoire conforte cette hypothèse.

- La filiale commerciale:

C'est de loin la modalité privilégiée de présence commerciale sur les marchés africains. En effet, 30% des filiales productives de notre échantillon ont pris la relève des activités exploitées au sein d'une filiale commerciale. C'est le cas pour 43% des filiales nigériennes, 50% des filiales ivoiriennes, et 25% des filiales togolaises. La filiale commerciale est une formule qui caractérise essentiellement deux secteurs d'activité: les industries chimiques et parachimiques et les industries agro-alimentaires.

L'activité industrielle en Afrique de l'Ouest est dans près de la moitié des cas précédée par une présence commerciale. Au nombre des formules qui caractérisent cette dernière, les résultats de notre enquête révèlent une préférence de ces firmes pour l'implantation d'une filiale commerciale.

Notons cependant l'absence des industries de fabrication des matériaux de construction; autrement dit, les firmes exploitant dans ce secteur ont dès le départ implanté leurs structures de production dans les pays qu'elles ont choisis pour étendre leurs débouchés. Une première raison tient à l'impact des coûts de transport sur les prix de revient (dans le cas où la production devrait être exportée du pays d'origine). En outre, il ne faut pas perdre de vue la nouveauté de ce secteur en Afrique de l'Ouest: le développement des

activités du bâtiment et de la construction a commencé réellement après les années 70, du fait de la revalorisation du cours des matières premières qui a permis la réalisation d'importants projets de développement.

Mais l'implantation commerciale est souvent perçue comme une étape qui prépare à une présence productive; c'est en effet le meilleur moyen pour les firmes soucieuses d'étendre leurs activités de production à l'étranger, de se constituer une base d'informations fiables, sur lesquelles les responsables fonderont leur stratégie. Ainsi, la création de filiales industrielles peut d'abord constituer une réponse aux contraintes que rencontrent les firmes dans l'exploitation de leurs débouchés; elle peut par ailleurs traduire une volonté des groupes de saisir des opportunités qui, à un moment donné, ont été identifiées dans l'environnement d'accueil de leurs produits.

La création de filiales industrielles, une réaction face aux préoccupations commerciales des groupes français?

A partir d'un certain stade de développement, les problèmes de débouchés se posent avec acuité pour certaines entreprises, pour diverses raisons: la nature du produit fabriqué, la technologie exploitée, l'évolution de la demande du produit, et surtout la position occupée par la firme sur son marché, etc. Pour toutes ces considérations, les dirigeants peuvent décider de créer de nouvelles opportunités de marché.

La conquête des marchés extérieurs

Elles est à l'origine d'une importante de multinationalisation de groupes français: en effet, 69% d'entre eux justifient leur présence sur les marchés africains par la volonté d'étendre leurs débouchés. Cette décision est guidée par les préoccupations suivantes:

- faire face à un ralentissement de la demande nationale (en voie de saturation), ou même à une réduction de la part de marché détenue par la société du fait du développement de la concurrence;

- standardiser les commandes pour une rentabilité de l'activité,

- réaliser la production à des coûts les plus faibles possibles, et

- tirer profit des économies d'échelle, d'où la nécessité de rechercher un débouché pour le surplus de production.

La solution à ce problème de débouchés consistera pour les entreprises françaises à se tourner vers les marchés des pays les plus facilement accessibles. L'histoire a fait des anciens territoires coloniaux le cadre privilégié d'extension des marchés de la métropole: c'est là une conséquence des relations 'privilégiées' qui sont maintenues entre les deux parties.

Mais la décision d'implanter des industries à l'étranger ne saurait s'expliquer uniquement par la position de la firme sur son marché national. Cela est d'autant plus vrai que ce dernier n'absorbe qu'en partie la production réalisée. En effet, dans la mesure où des exportations sont réalisées, il y

a lieu de prendre en considération les changements qui sont souvent observés dans l'attitude des partenaires étrangers: nous limiterons l'analyse à l'incidence des facteurs liés à la politique économique des Etats sur la création de filiales industrielles.

Dans la mise en oeuvre de leur stratégie de développement, les Etats africains ont conscience des limites du rôle que peuvent jouer les structures nationales, et surtout de l'importance de la contribution que pourraient apporter les investisseurs étrangers.

Des mesures sont alors prises en vue de mieux intégrer les activités des groupes d'origine étrangère dans l'économie d'accueil; elles peuvent prendre une forme contraignante (visant à limiter la présence commerciale) d'une part; elles peuvent d'autre part, comme s'est souvent la pratique, conduire à proposer des avantages divers pour inciter à l'implantation.

La politique d'import-substitution et ses instruments

Dès leur accession à l'indépendance, les jeunes Etats ont affirmé leur préoccupation en matière de développement économique. Il fallait accorder la priorité à l'industrie nationale, ou du moins locale: l'objectif étant, en réalisant les productions sur place, de se passer des importations, et de bénéficier des effets d'entraînement de l'investissement réalisé. Autrement dit, il fallait favoriser une industrialisation de substitution aux importations. Cette orientation de la politique économique ne peut laisser les opérateurs indifférents: 31% des firmes françaises la situent parmi les facteurs qui sont à l'origine de l'implantation productive en Afrique de l'Ouest.

La politique d'import-substitution s'appuie entre autres sur les stimulants fiscaux. Les avantages consentis peuvent prendre plusieurs formes suivant les pays. Ils sont considérables dans les domaines jugés stratégiques pour le développement. On peut citer la double déduction fiscale des dépenses de recherche et développement, les déductions sur dépenses en capital et sur versements effectués au titre des brevets et licences, l'exemption des droits d'entrée pour l'importation des matériels et équipements, l'exonération de divers autres impôts, etc.

Une nouvelle formule d'incitation a vu le jour depuis peu dans les pays africains: elle est consécutive à l'apparition d'une autre modalité d'industrialisation, les 'filiales ateliers' (Delapierre, Michalet, 1976).[4] Les

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4　Dans leur ouvrage intitulé *Les implantations étrangères en France: stratégies et structures*, M Delapierre et C A Michalet distinguent deux catégories précises de filiales productives: Les filiales-relais constituent une extension de la maison-mère sur les marchés extérieurs; leur production est essentiellement orientée vers le marché d'implantation. Ils précisent par ailleurs que «La stratégie sous-jacente à ce type d'investissement est de nature commerciale, nous voulons désigner par là une préoccupation dominée par la prise en considération des marchés étrangers comme débouchés». Les filiales-relais constituent alors une alternative pour toute firme dont les

industries installées n'ont plus comme objectif la substitution aux importations, mais sont orientées vers la satisfaction des besoins 'mondiaux'. En outre, nombreux sont les Etats qui encouragent l'implantation sur leur territoire d'unités productives dont la vocation est de développer leur capacité exportatrice. Ainsi ont vu le jour dans certains pays africains, les zones franches industrielles, qui sont des espaces où les investisseurs étrangers sont invités à installer des unités manufacturières et à produire pour l'exportation; elles constituent des «...enclaves échappant au droit commun douanier et fiscal à l'intérieur d'un territoire habituellement protégé» (René Gendarme, *op. cit*).

Les stimulants fiscaux constituent une pratique dont les investisseurs étrangers ont profité à certains moments de leur présence. Mais beaucoup de travaux de recherche confirment leur faible influence sur la décision d'implantation. Notre expérience des groupes français en Afrique de l'Ouest, si elle ne s'accorde pas avec un tel constat, n'en révèle pas moins la place secondaire qu'occupent les stimulants fiscaux comme facteur d'implantation: en effet, pour 54% d'entre eux, cette motivation a été citée comme faisant partie de celles ayant déterminé la décision de délocalisation de la production.

En fait, ce résultat ne doit pas surprendre. S'il est vrai que ces organisations recherchent des occasions de profit, de meilleurs rendements pour leurs investissements (en ce sens les avantages contenus dans les codes des investissements proposés par les Etats d'Afrique de l'Ouest constituent une opportunité que n'hésite pas à saisir, du moins a priori, toute firme), il est aussi certain qu'il existe des paramètres clés, qui déterminent en définitive la décision à prendre. La notion de risque est tout naturellement présente dans la démarche des investisseurs.

L'activité industrielle est généralement considérée comme une opération risquée. Aux risques économique et financier qui sont traditionnellement mis en avant, l'engagement des firmes à l'étranger les expose à d'autres, aux conséquences diverses. Une étude réalisée par Nord-Sud Export Consultants (Jacquemot, 1990), portant sur le classement en 1988-1989 des PVD selon le risque-pays, révèle que, s'agissant de l'environnement qui a fait l'objet de

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exportations rencontrent des difficultés du fait des mesures inhabituelles que prennent les pays acheteurs. «La filiale atelier est spécialisée dans la production d'une composante d'un produit final ou dans la fabrication d'un bien pour lequel la demande locale est inexistante ou faible.» Dans cette optique, le marché local, en tant que débouché pour la production de la firme, ne constitue nullement le principal facteur d'implantation (même dans la mesure où une partie de la production y est écoulée, il ne jouera qu'un rôle marginal dans la décision de multinationalisation.

nos travaux, le risque-pays est de 2,85 pour le Niger, de 3,01 pour la Côte d'Ivoire, de 3,04 pour le Togo, et de 2,86 pour le Sénégal.[5] Il ressort que la place occupée par ces pays est à la limite, moins de 2,8 des risques prohibitifs.

On comprend ainsi le poids de ceux-ci, et par conséquent l'impact relativement limité des incitations fiscales, sur la décision des groupes français d'installer des unités de production en Afrique de l'Ouest.

Malgré tout, les pays africains continuent à se livrer 'une concurrence' dans ce domaine, en vue de s'assurer une plus grande implantation sur leur territoire. Plusieurs observateurs ont attiré l'attention sur le caractère négatif de cette compétition, de cette 'politique de surenchère' dans l'octroi des stimulants fiscaux: ainsi «*certains experts du FMI estiment [d'ailleurs], que l'utilité des programmes d'encouragement fiscaux reste discutable et que peu d'arguments convaincants peuvent être avancés en leur faveur.*» (Corfmat, 1980).

Les mesures prises par les Etats dans le cadre de leur politique économique ne constituent pas les seuls facteurs d'implantation liés à l'environnement africain. En effet, les autres mobiles qu'il y a lieu, pour la circonstance, de prendre en considération, peuvent se présenter comme des contraintes, que les firmes ont tout intérêt à intégrer dans leur stratégie.

Les avantages liés à la commercialisation de la production
Ils tiennent une place importante dans la démarche des groupes dont l'implantation est précédée de présence commerciale. Cette première étape permet une meilleure connaissance de l'environnement étranger, et des opportunités qu'il présente pour les firmes. En effet, celles-ci ne peuvent rester indifférentes à la main tendue de leurs partenaires des pays de destination de leur production d'une part; elles réagissent d'autre part pour tirer profit des avantages que procurent la proximité de la clientèle.

La demande expresse des partenaires locaux
Dans certains cas, la décision d'installation d'une unité industrielle à l'étranger est consécutive à une initiative des partenaires des pays importateurs. La demande d'implantation a pour objectif principal de faire profiter

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5   La même source rapporte le classement établi par Nord-Sud Export Consultants, dans lequel on relève les niveaux de risques suivants:
de 7 à 5,4: risques assimilables à ceux des pays développés;
de 5,4 à 4,6: risques très faibles;
de 4,6 à 4,2: risques modérés;
de 4,2 à 3,8: risques assez élevés;
de 3,8 à 3,4: risques très élevés;
de 3,4 à 3,6: risques dangereux;
moins de 2,6: risques prohibitifs.

le pays des connaissances technologiques et des méthodes de gestion qui demeurent l'apanage des groupes étrangers. Elle peut avoir pour origine deux catégories d'agents; ainsi, la présence industrielle des groupes français en Afrique de l'Ouest répond à des demandes formulées par les pouvoirs publics dans 31% des cas; par contre, elle a été motivée par les sollicitations des particuliers seulement dans 15% des cas.

En fait, par particuliers, il faut entendre les partenaires privés: ce sont essentiellement les hommes d'affaires nationaux soucieux de profiter de l'expérience, ou même de la sécurité que représentent à leurs yeux les activités des sociétés d'origine étrangère. De telles implantations sont réalisées avec une participation financière locale, et constituent de nos jours une formule très prisée. Les nouvelles unités sont fondées en association avec les partenaires locaux, sous forme d'entreprises conjointes.

La proximité de la clientèle

Du point de vue de la stratégie commerciale, elle constitue pour le producteur un avantage indiscutable: elle permet une meilleure connaissance des attentes de la clientèle et représente pour la firme le meilleur moyen d'adapter son offre en vue de maintenir et/ou d'accroître sa part de marché.

S'agissant de l'activité des groupes hors de leur pays d'origine, la proximité de la clientèle offre un avantage supplémentaire; elle représente un moyen efficace de pallier les conséquences de l'éloignement sur le prix de revient des produits exportés. En effet, en plus des frais de transports (qui sont assez importants déjà sur le plan interne, dans les pays africains, à cause de l'inexistence d'infrastructure), les marchandises exportées sont soumises à divers droits d'entrée qui grèvent considérablement leur prix de revient. Le jeu des tarifs douaniers finit par réduire leur compétitivité sur le marché local. Aussi, l'installation sur place apparaît comme une solution alternative à l'exportation. Cela est d'autant plus vrai que ce sont les marchés d'Afrique de l'Ouest qui sont visés. En effet, tout processus de prise de décision portant sur ces pays doit prendre en considération la réalité suivante: une concurrence existe sur ces marchés; elle est entretenue par les produits importés, qui échappent très souvent aux mesures fiscales frappant normalement toute transaction avec l'étranger. Leur importation est le fait d'intervenants locaux qui, pour la plupart, agissent en marge des dispositions administratives en vigueur et appartiennent à ce qu'on appelle communément le 'secteur informel'. Du fait de la fraude fiscale entretenue le long des frontières, les transactions effectuées par ces opérateurs ne sont que rarement soumises aux droits d'entrée que supporteraient d'autres, similaires, lorsqu'elles sont réalisées par des structures exploitant dans un cadre formel, les entreprises étrangères notamment.

La fraude fiscale, du fait de la perméabilité des frontières, s'est essentiellement développée à partir des opérations menées avec certains pays de la sous-région, le Nigéria principalement. Le gain réalisé sur le taux de change

entre ce pays et ceux de la zone franc (sur le marché noir, la monnaie du Nigéria, le Naira, est considérablement sous-évalué) constitue un autre facteur qui joue en défaveur des produits importés de France.

La compétitivité des produits, dans le contexte ouest africain du moins, ne peut être valablement appréciée si on ne tient pas compte de leur origine. Cependant, malgré l'importance des avantages qu'il offre à l'entreprise, ce facteur ne fait pas l'unanimité au sein des firmes françaises: seulement 31% d'entre elles considèrent la proximité de la clientèle comme faisant partie des motivations qui sont à l'origine de leur implantation en Afrique de l'- Ouest.

Les facteurs liés à l'environnement ouest-africain interviennent de façon limitée dans la décision des groupes français. En effet, la tentation est grande de placer les différents avantages (financiers notamment) que proposent les Etats au premier plan des motivations de ceux-ci; mais, la proportion des entreprises qui se reconnaissent dans ces mobiles est relativement faible.

Il est par conséquent nécessaire de s'interroger sur la dimension 'offensive' de la démarche stratégique des firmes de notre étude.

L'implantation industrielle, une logique dans l'exploitation d'avantages en termes de production

La présence des groupes français en Afrique de l'Ouest, dans ce cas de figure, résulte principalement de motivations qui caractérisent ce qu'on appelle la stratégie agressive d'implantation à l'étranger, connue aussi sous le nom de stratégie productive. Elle a pour fondement l'exploitation d'un avantage particulier, d'essence interne ou relatif à l'environnement de la firme: ainsi, les éléments prépondérants de cette décision tiennent-ils à la disparité des facteurs de production (et/ou des coûts) entre pays, à l'avantage technologique, au sous-emploi des ressources, à l'intégration des activités, etc. Autant de facteurs qui représentent des atouts ou des opportunités que la firme doit saisir pour son développement: d'où la mise en oeuvre de projets productifs dans les pays retenus comme prédisposés à lui permettre de tirer un meilleur profit de ses compétences. Quels sont, pour les groupes français, les facteurs spécifiques qui déterminent cette stratégie?

Le différentiel en matière de coûts de production

Les firmes envisagent de s'implanter sur les marchés étrangers dans le but de tirer avantage de la différence des coûts de production. Celle-ci porte essentiellement sur la disparité des salaires: l'implantation des filiales industrielles est déterminée non pas par les possibilités réelles du marché local, mais plutôt par la dotation du pays en facteur travail.

En raison de l'abondance et du faible coût de la main-d'oeuvre, les unités locales réalisent un différentiel substantiel en matière de coûts. En outre, il faut noter que du fait de la standardisation des techniques de

production et d'organisation du travail, on observe une tendance à l'égalisation des productivités de la main-d'oeuvre, indifféremment du cadre géographique. C'est dans ce sens que certains appréhendent la notion de coûts de production dans un sens beaucoup plus large; il y a lieu alors, en plus des salaires, de considérer les coûts fiscaux et aussi «un ensemble plus large d'éléments qualitatifs et quantitatifs intervenant dans le calcul économique de l'entreprise, à savoir: la durée légale du travail, la flexibilité des horaires, la "fidélité" du personnel à l'entreprise, la paix sociale.» (Michalet, 1976).

Ce sont là des avantages que recherchent les firmes, et qui expliquent l'implantation d'unités de production à l'étranger. Cependant, les résultats auxquels nous sommes parvenu à partir de l'enquête menée auprès des groupes français nous imposent de nuancer notre propos; en effet, seuls 31% d'entre eux se disent attirés par la possibilité de réaliser la production à des coûts relativement bas.

Il faut rappeler que la main-d'oeuvre constitue un des éléments clés de la politique des Etats africains envers les investisseurs étrangers: son abondance, et surtout son faible coût sont des avantages souvent vantés pour intéresser ces derniers; mais on observe qu'ils ont un faible impact sur la décision d'implantation des groupes français.

Pour comprendre ce résultat, il faut s'interroger sur la nature des activités exploitées par les filiales présentes en Afrique de l'Ouest: la technologie utilisée et le type de production réalisée sont des facteurs essentiels qui déterminent l'aptitude de celles-ci à utiliser une quantité plus ou moins importante de main-d'oeuvre, et par conséquent une prédisposition à agir, en vue de tirer profit des avantages que présentent, dans ce domaine, les pays africains.

On peut, dans ces conditions, se demander si les groupes français n'exploitent pas des technologies avancées, donc intensives en capital, plutôt que celles faisant appel à une main-d'oeuvre importante.

L'avantage technologique

La technologie peut se définir comme l'application concrète des connaissances scientifiques et techniques à la conception, au développement et à la fabrication des produits. C'est le résultat de l'effort consenti dans la recherche et développement. L'avantage technologique place les entreprises dans une position concurrentielle favorable dans leur domaine d'activité.

Cependant, l'innovation est une opération coûteuse pour l'entreprise; qui plus est, la technologie mise au point, même en cas de protection légale, ne confère qu'un avantage temporaire «*Une avance technologique ne dure que le temps, pour la concurrence, de se mettre à niveau (ou de faire mieux).*» (Anastassopoulos, Dussange, 1984). En effet, la mise en oeuvre de nouveaux procédés de fabrication place l'entreprise dans une situation de quasi-monopole sur son marché. Compte tenu de l'évolution de la demande, une

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telle situation ne peut durer et la firme a intérêt à exploiter au mieux cette supériorité technique: l'internationalisation constitue une réponse à cette préoccupation; elle se traduit par une diversification des débouchés.

Il y aussi lieu d'apprécier l'impact de l'avantage technologique dans la création d'unités industrielles sur le continent africain. L'enquête menée nous permet d'observer que l'avantage technologique ne constitue pas une motivation dominante dans la décision des firmes françaises; seulement 38% d'entre elles considèrent ce facteur comme intervenant dans leur implantation en Afrique de l'Ouest. Ce constat a le mérite de lever le voile sur un préjugé: ce ne sont pas seulement les technologies dépassées qui sont exploitées par les groupes étrangers, comme le laisserait penser la logique de l'avantage technologique; mieux encore, on observe une tendance dans les PVD en général à ne pas accepter les propositions du 'premier venu'. En effet, ces pays recherchent de plus en plus des technologies de pointe, comme le confirment ces résultats d'une étude parmi d'autres:

> *les pays en voie d'industrialisation font de la technologie le premier critère de choix de leurs fournisseurs d'équipements essentiels au développement ou à l'indépendance du pays. L'expérience montre que ces pays, bien que moins développés, ne sont pas disposés à se satisfaire de technologies dépassées* (Anastassopoulos, Dussange, 1984:61).

Mais la création de filiales de production à l'étranger n'est pas uniquement déterminée par l'avantage technologique. D'autres mobiles (qui constituent dans certains cas les modalités de mise en oeuvre de l'exploitation de l'avantage technologique) ont été identifiés comme étant à l'origine de l'implantation industrielle des groupes à l'étranger: la spécialisation et la diversification.

La spécialisation
Sa première conséquence est de concentrer les efforts de la firme dans l'exploitation de son métier;[6] l'effet de l'expérience constitue à ce propos un facteur important que la firme peut exploiter pour s'imposer sur un marché.

La spécialisation peut suivre deux orientations principales. L'une, dite géographique, pose le problème de la détermination de l'espace géographique-cible de la firme. L'autre est fondée sur le domaine d'activités stratégiques, elle a pour objectif de retenir des couples produits-marchés connexes à l'activité de la firme. Elle est aussi appelée 'diversification

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6 'Le métier' désignerait toute profession dont on peut tirer ses moyens d'existence, mais aussi l'habileté que procure cette profession. Le métier met donc l'accent sur les compétences et le savoir-faire qui sont l'apanage de ceux qui travaillent dans l'entreprise.

marketing', et s'appuie uniquement sur une politique de clientèle et/ou de gamme offerte: *Produits nouveaux pour clients actuels ou clients nouveaux pour produits actuels, telles sont les deux voies d'une diversification marketing, qui reste de la spécialisation dès lors qu'elle ne nécessite pas la mise en oeuvre de compétences nouvelles pour l'entreprise* (Ibidem., p. 145).

L'enquête auprès des groupes français révèle que la spécialisation est une stratégie dominante dans leur implantation en Afrique de l'Ouest. En effet, pour 62% d'entre eux, l'activité africaine s'inscrit dans une stratégie de développement basée essentiellement sur l'exploitation (et/ou l'accroissement) des compétences, du savoir-faire, de l'expérience acquise dans le métier traditionnel de la firme. En outre, 31% des groupes précisent que leur internationalisation a été réalisée par voie de différenciation marketing, l'activité des filiales étant dans ces cas orientée vers la fabrication de produits voisins de ceux de la maison-mère.

En fait, ces résultats ne doivent pas surprendre. L'activité internationale place l'entreprise sur des environnements étrangers, qu'il faut approcher avec méthode pour réussir. Le moyen le plus sûr de parvenir à cette fin est de jouer la règle de la prudence, autrement dit, de se présenter sur un domaine dont on maîtrise les facteurs clés du succès; ce n'est rien d'autre que le métier dans lequel la firme s'est constituée un avantage concurrentiel décisif. D'où l'attrait de la spécialisation de ces firmes dans leur majorité.

Mais d'autres groupes ont préféré adopter une stratégie différente pour réaliser leur expansion à l'étranger, notamment en direction de l'Afrique de l'Ouest.

La diversification

Cette stratégie repose sur l'exploitation de nouveaux domaines d'activité (d'où son nom de diversification stratégique), avec ce que cela impliqué comme exigence: l'entreprise doit au préalable se doter de nouvelles compétences indispensables à la mise en oeuvre de cette stratégie: *alors que la spécialisation repose sur la mise en oeuvre d'un nouvel ensemble de savoir-faire unique, la diversification impose l'utilisation d'un nouvel ensemble de savoir-faire, requis par le nouvel univers concurrentiel dans lequel l'entreprise pénètre.*

Il faut ainsi remarquer que la diversification est une stratégie très peu mise en oeuvre dans l'exploitation des marchés étrangers par les firmes françaises. Cela n'est pas une surprise, quand on considère les exigences que comportent la prise en charge d'activités nouvelles; elles sont encore plus importantes lorsque ces dernières portent sur un environnement étranger.

Mais cette stratégie peut viser d'autres objectifs qui peuvent revêtir trois formes principales:

- La diversification géographique intervient dès que l'entreprise décide d'étendre ses activités hors de son marché traditionnel. Elle s'explique

par la différence naturelle qui caractérise les différents marchés: en effet, même dans le cas où la firme se présente à l'étranger avec les mêmes produits, il n'en demeure pas moins que chacun de ces marchés a ses spécificités, qui, en définitive, détermineront sa politique (productive, commerciale, financière, etc.). Il faut par ailleurs remarquer que la diversification géographique ne se distingue pas fondamentalement de la différenciation marketing.

- La diversification verticale, aussi appelée 'intégration', est consécutive à l'acquisition par la firme de nouvelles compétences en vue de s'assurer une position concurrentielle plus confortable. L'intégration vers l'amont confère à l'entreprise un avantage concurrentiel fondé sur la sécurité des approvisionnements; elle permet un meilleur contrôle des ressources auxquelles l'entreprise accorde une importance capitale pour améliorer sa rentabilité, notamment à partir de la rationalisation des circuits de production (économies d'échelle). Les avantages attendus de cette stratégie ne sont intervenus dans la décision d'implantation en Afrique de l'Ouest que pour 15% des groupes français. La deuxième modalité de diversification verticale, l'intégration vers l'aval, cherche à garantir à la firme une sécurité dans ses débouchés, et à lui assurer un meilleur contrôle du marché de ses produits.

- La diversification horizontale quant à elle conduit l'entreprise à embrasser des domaines d'activité différents de son activité principale, mais souvent connexes. Ceux-ci mobilisent certaines compétences pour partie identiques à celles que requiert l'exploitation du métier initial. Il est dès lors indispensable pour la firme de tirer profit de l'effet d'expérience, du fait de l'existence d'une complémentarité entre fonctions de production. C'est ce que laissent observer les réponses obtenues au sein des firmes françaises: 23% d'entre elles situent leur implantation sur les marchés africains dans une logique de diversification 'horizontale'.

Autant la firme peut fonder son développement à l'étranger sur la concentration de ses compétences dans l'exploitation de son domaine d'activité traditionnel, autant elle peut obtenir de s'engager dans des activités qui lui sont jusque-là étrangères, ou même combiner les deux stratégies.

Ce sont les motivations à caractère 'interne' qui interviennent de façon considérable dans la décision d'implantation des groupes français. En effet, la conquête des marchés étrangers constitue, pour la plupart d'entre eux, un mobile dans leur activité industrielle en Afrique de l'Ouest.

L'activité industrielle des groupes français en Afrique de l'Ouest répond d'abord à des préoccupations commerciales. Ceux-ci agissent pour s'assurer des débouchés à une demande locale qui, pour diverses raisons, ne présente

pas les meilleures perspectives de développement (si elle n'est pas tout simplement en saturation). Cette préoccupation intègre, dans certains cas, le souci de tirer profit des avantages que présentent les Etats d'accueil, notamment en matière de coûts de production et sur le plan financier.

Cependant, l'installation d'une unité de production dans un pays n'est pas une fin en soi. Elle doit intéresser véritablement l'investisseur, présenter les garanties suffisantes à une exploitation 'normale', qui mettrait celui-ci à l'abri de certaines préoccupations. En ce sens, la stabilité de la demande, et surtout le facteur risque (les deux n'étant pas nécessairement indissociables) constituent des variables essentielles, qui déterminent l'attitude de l'investisseur.

Si par le passé le continent africain a réussi à attirer un nombre important de groupes étrangers, c'est principalement du fait de la garantie qu'y trouvaient ces derniers. Après trois décennies d'indépendance et d'expérience de 'gestion autonome', ces pays sont encore à la recherche d'une voie de développement. Les crises économique, financière et sociale qui ont ponctué cette période, et qui secouent actuellement le continent, ont des conséquences directes sur l'appréciation, par les investisseurs étrangers, du risque auquel ils s'exposeraient en y maintenant (et/ou en y effectuant) des placements. Il est certain que dans un tel contexte, les risques administratif et politique sont considérables; cela se traduit logiquement par un refus d'investir, ou même, pour revenir à l'actualité, par la désertion des entreprises étrangères.

On comprend ainsi l'attitude des groupes français présents en Afrique de l'Ouest. Plus que des avantages financiers de nature diverse, les investisseurs étrangers recherchent un environnement stable pour implanter leurs activités. Il faut donc espérer que les bouleversements qui secouent actuellement l'frique ne perdurent pas, pour mettre sur pied de nouvelles bases, saines, sur lesquelles il sera possible d'envisager désormais 'un nouveau départ' pour le continent. Le concours des investisseurs étrangers (si indispensable soit-il),[7] ne peut être obtenu qu'à ce prix; l'attrait de ceux-ci pour les pays d'Europe de l'Est, et l'importance des ressources qu'ils ont déjà réussi à drainer constituent un phénomène qui illustre parfaitement les motivations de l'implantation des entreprises hors de leur pays d'origine.

Il faut donc souhaiter que le processus de démocratisation engagé un peu partout en Afrique favorise la création d'un climat susceptible de rattraper la confiance de nos partenaires d'hier, pour amener les investisseurs étrangers à participer effectivement à la relance économique dans les pays africains.

7　Il est perçu comme le moyen d'accéder à la technologie, de doter les nationaux de connaissances en gestion, bref, de permettre l'éclosion, au plan local, d'une classe d'entrepreneurs capables de participer à l'effort de développement.

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* Docteur en Sciences de Gestion, Assistant à la faculté des sciences économique et juridiques, Université de Niamey, Niger.

Sustainable Development in the African Context: Revisiting Some Theoretical and Methodological Issues

George J S Dei*

Résumé: *L'accent de plus en plus mis sur 'le développement durable' permettra-t-il d'éviter les échecs auxquels ont abouti les paradigmes de développement classiques? Ces paradigmes avaient tendance à reproduire et à intensifier les rapports inégaux de dépendance entre les nations. Ils renforcaient voire maximisaient les structures de contrôle, d'exploitation, d'injustice et d'inégalité entre et dans les sociétés. Les différences hiérarchiques de pouvoir entre les experts et les·spécialistes locaux ainsi que la légitimation et la prioritarisation d'une forme de connaissance sur une autre qui en découle en sont des exemples patents. Le développement durable, pourra-t-il générer un processus de renforcement de l'expertise locale en mettant en place un programme de développement qui part d'une définition par les locaux de leurs besoins et aspirations et qui s'efforce de satisfaire ces besoins par une auto-suffisance et une autonomie des ressources locales? Ou est-il un nouveau programme destiné à écarter notre attention des débats sur les inégalités criardes qui existent entre le Sud et le Nord du fait principalement des relations économiques mondiales d'exploitation? Par ces temps d'environnements naturels et d'économies locales, nationales et mondiales qui évoluent rapidement, le développement durable peut-il tenir compte du contexte changeant de ce problème?*

Introduction

The importance of searching for alternative approaches and solutions to Africa's development problems also calls for a critical examination of what 'sustainable development' means in the African context and what the pursuance of this approach to development can hopefully achieve in terms of improving the lives of local peoples. It is our conviction that any new and alternative approaches to 'development' must speak to the social, spiritual, cultural, economic, political and cosmological aspects of African peoples. If a new wave of theorizing 'sustainable development' issues in Africa is to be helpful in addressing human problems, it must be situated in an appropriate social context that provides practical and social meaning to the African actors as subjects of a development discourse.

It is immoral and incomprehensible from the standpoint of the rural peoples of Africa for anyone to define and articulate a 'sustainable development' agenda in terms relevant to the world capitalist economy and the associated globalization processes at the same time that the daily needs

of these peoples are not being met. It could also be argued that local perceptions, views and ideas on the problems on social development today are essential for a re-theorization and a reconceptualization of the issues, particularly, in the contemporary setting of rapid social change and transformation of indigenous societies.

Definition and Conceptualization
The Brundtland report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) defined 'sustainable development' as: 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (WCED, 1987: 43). WCED's theoretical stance or framework on what constitutes 'sustainable development' has relevance and implications in the incessant discourse on Africa's development 'crisis'. To begin with, it is important to pose some pertinent questions: what is the political project that informs the debates over 'sustainable development'? What way of life does the theoretical discourse on 'sustainable development' speak to? 'Sustainable development' for whom and for what purposes? How does the conceptualization of 'sustainable development' correspond to, or reflect on the reality of the contemporary African development situation? How do these ideas help illuminate our understanding of the lived experiences and social realities of rural peoples (men, women and children) as they struggle to satisfy their basic livelihoods? The impulse for 'development' in Africa is informed by Western hegemonic understandings of what developing societies lack and what they are expected to do or become. In this context then how can it be ensured that the wealth of indigenous alternatives and choices are sufficiently considered in the discourse on 'sustainable development' in Africa?

The above questions also pose additional challenges such as the importance of questioning the appropriateness and applicability of such concepts as 'development' and 'sustainability' framed within Western modes of thought for non-Western peoples. The term 'development', for example, has come to mean different things to different people over the years so much so that purported beneficiaries of the development process have not always seen eye to eye with the protagonists.

It is an understatement to say that the concepts of 'development' and 'sustainable development' are problematic. Arguably the focus on 'sustainable development' had served to direct attention away from debates over the gross inequities between the South and North resulting primarily from exploitative global economic relations. One must be excused for asking whether emerging concerns over the state of the global environment today in Western consciousness are not due in part to Western fears and anxieties over the consequences of global warming. There is also the concern that if the poverty issues relating to environmental abuse are not addressed there

would be no end to the influx of people to the North fleeing deteriorating politico-economic and ecological conditions in the South.

We all have to seriously question how much improvements we can honestly expect in the lives and living conditions of African rural peoples if the approach to 'sustainable development' is pursued within existing conventional development paradigm. We are referring to development paradigms that continually create dependency, strengthen unequal dependency relations between nations, and also further reinforce and maximize the system of control, exploitation, injustice and inequality within and among societies. We should also be wary of an overemphasis on the efficacy of promoting 'sustainable development' in Africa that may contribute to creating a false sense of security and hope for people, not to mention the erroneous sense of accomplishment for many 'development' protagonists.

By being critical of the way the discourse on 'sustainable development' has been carried out we could be doing less harm to many local peoples in Africa. Many development 'experts' and agencies are yet to attain a full understanding of what it takes to have in place an effective developmental agenda that African rural peoples can identify with irrespective of ethnic, class, age and gender differences. In order to reach this understanding a genuinely reciprocal dialogue between the 'experts' and the 'ordinary' peoples is required. However such dialogue would only be fruitful if a recognition of the unequal power relations between the 'experts' and local peoples is matched by a sustained attempt to do away with the hierarchical power distinctions that exist in society between the intellectual 'experts' and the local peoples.

We need to rethink seriously the social harm of legitimizing and prioritizing certain knowledges over and above others in the development process. An example of this is the tendency to privilege men's knowledge about the environment over that possessed by women farmers. Popular culture can play a significant role in local development just as much as the knowledge of local ecology, social economy, and appropriate technology that may be shared by the scientific 'experts'. Development experts must recognize and acknowledge the presence of knowledges and experiences that are challenging and may be inaccessible to the 'experts' own social positions. They must encourage local peoples to assert the legitimacy of their own definitions of 'sustainable development' and the meaning and implications of their actions in their own terms.

'Sustainable development' as defined from the Western perspective has not helped local peoples in Africa in articulating their daily experiences to the outside world. Many views of development have failed to recognize that local peoples do theorize in their communities as part of community life not just to articulate, but also, to interpret their experiences. For the most part, views on 'sustainable development' have not given due recognition to the

fact that local peoples have culturally constructed ways of reflecting on their daily lives and the surrounding natural environment. Local peoples can give their own accounts of what is happening to them and what they are doing, can do, and intend to do about it. Why has it taken so long for development 'experts' to tap this rich source of local knowledges?

We must view the issue of 'sustainability' from a peoples' culture, history, local skills, ethnoecology, local ecosystem and human's role in nature (Sachs, 1987; Matowanyika, 1989:10). 'Sustainable development' entails local peoples identifying their own needs and then development experts assisting them to plan and implement viable programmes and projects to meet the defined needs. The viability of these projects and programmes could be assessed in terms of how they sustainably enhance both the habitat and the socioeconomic status of the majority of the population. This approach requires having to integrate and articulate ecological and environmental issues and problems of social, economic and political development.

An important aspect of the concept of 'sustainable development' is the understanding that environmental degradation is not a problem of the relationships between people and their habitat, but of relationships among peoples competing for access to productive resources (Horowitz, 1988:3). The concept also requires an understanding that 'sustainability' cannot be achieved independent of, or in opposition to the interests of the rural poor majority. Furthermore, the means of achieving 'sustainable development' have to acknowledge the contextual variability of the problem (Matowanyika, 1989:5). Most development experts and analysts agree that any development agenda that contributes to an intensification of rural poverty and a degradation of environmental resources is not sustainable development. However, not many share the conviction that 'development' that neither leads to local empowerment nor comprehensively address the fundamental issues of social justice and social development is not 'sustainable development'.

Poverty and Environmental Degradation

Among the factors that continually hinder effective and sustained development in contemporary Africa, one can point to the interrelated problems of intensified appropriation of wealth from the rural poor majority by the state and its domestic and external accomplices, (i.e., the powerful local elites and transnational corporations) and the resulting effect that the poor are unable to make the kinds of investment in land labour, and capital that will help reverse the rapid deterioration of environmental conditions. Such conditions include deforestation, desertification, soil depletion, poor water quality and quantity, natural resource depletion, loss of biological diversity, and energy shortages.

But the relationship between poverty and environmental degradation has to be understood. Let us illustrate this with the debate over the causes of

deforestation. A major theoretical position in trying to understand the problem of deforestation is to relate poverty to environmental degradation. As argued elsewhere (Redclift, 1987; Dei, 1992a) this approach unduly blames the poor for the problem as if poverty is an independent variable. It does not take into account the fact that for long, rural peoples have been capitalizing on their traditions of sustainable forestry (Richards, 1985; Brokensha, Waren and Warner, 1980). Poverty and resource abuse, it can be argued, are caused largely· by policies of the state and its 'external' accomplices. There are interrelated socioeconomic, ecological, political, and historical factors with both internal and external dimensions that account for the environmental degradation in most communities today.

Environmental degradation and human poverty have resulted not only from distributive and exploitive mechanisms, but perhaps more importantly from structural processes. Rural communities have been drastically transformed as a result of the expansion and contraction of the world economic system. Many rural peoples today cannot change the way they utilize natural resources without a fundamental restructuring of rural production relations. As McKenna (1990) points out, this relationship between ecological-economic factors and social structures are yet to be fully understood. We need to study those institutions that represent maximum concentrations of power in African societies if we are to come up with long lasting solutions to 'sustainable development'.

Although human poverty has serious implications for environmental degradation and, consequently, social and economic development, the specificity of the relationship between structural factors (including the functioning of national political economies) and those of the natural environment has not been fully comprehended. No doubt poverty reduces a people's capacity to use local resources in any sustainable manner. But so does the pursuit of development strategy that denies the poor rural majority access to and control over the fundamental productive resources of societies.

Achieving 'sustainable development' in contemporary society will require both local and national political leadership to redress the problems of social injustice by reallocating societal goods and services so as to benefit the large segment of their populations. Unfortunately, it appears the African state today is unwilling to embark upon this course of action because of the entrenched power of minority interest groups. Rural peoples, particularly women and the poor have to retain their access to and control over their productive resource.

The Issue of the 'Commons' and 'Sustainable Development'
In a discussion on 'sustainable development' one cannot overemphasized the importance of local peoples having access to and control over their own productive resources. It used to be conventional wisdom that resources held in common are vulnerable to overexploitation (Hardin, 1968; Hardin and

Baden, 1977). In the last decade such assumptions have been challenged by research (Berkes, 1989; Berkes, et al., 1989). The examination of the human forces contributing to contemporary resource abuse in many societies have led to a questioning of the view that resource degradation is inevitable unless common property is converted into private property or subjected to government regulations (Peters, 1987). As Berkes, et al. (1989) have argued, communities dependent on common property resources historically have put in place some institutional mechanisms and arrangements to effectively manage their resources and to achieve sustainable use. For example, there are myth and traditions attributing quasi-human qualities to the forces of nature and the physical environment that have been upheld by many indigenous peoples over the years as a means of achieving sustainable use of environmental resources.

These traditions and local myths include safeguards protecting the indiscriminate felling of trees on communal forest lands and the belief in the sacredness of the forest. In many rural societies, communal resource users are compelled by social pressures to conform to carefully prescribed and enforced rules of conduct. Local users have to co-operate to achieve common interests and objectives. There are also long established institutional arrangements regarding who has access to and control over group property, and on what grounds someone is to be excluded within the community.

Unfortunately, the transformation of traditional institutional mechanisms and arrangements in property rights (e.g., privatization of communal lands) are removing community safeguards protecting the forest and its trees, as well as other environmental resources. As already pointed out, when a small, wealthy and powerful minority maintain effective control over large portions of available communal resources, for example, land, the poor majority are forced to depend on and overexploit limited land acreages. With an emerging unequal and differential access to and control over productive resources, coupled with state intervention in the local economy to serve the needs of its allies, the poor find it extremely difficult to respect the customary checks, traditional beliefs and practices essential to the realization of 'sustainable development' (Dei, 1990a, 1992a; Horowitz, 1988.[1]

Resource Conservation and 'Sustainable Development'

An area of usually conflictual interests between local peoples and the state is the conservation of local resources for the benefit of the state. Contemporary economic development have led many rural peoples' to lose faith in the ability of the state to meet its obligations. As the state's loses its credibility

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1   Similarly, we need to understand that it is not really possible to practice land management when individual families and farming households do not have easy access to and control over land.

and legitimacy in the eyes of the rural populace, the latter has questioned the morality of the state to appropriate communal resources. Rural peoples have long been skeptical of the motives behind the resource conservation measures of the state. They recognize the importance of enhancing and sustaining the Earth's natural resource base. They have done so in the past as revealed by most accounts (Brokensha, Warren and Werner, 1980; Richards, 1985, Watts, 1984.).

Unfortunately, contemporary export-led economic growth strategies are extracting huge environmental and social costs in Africa. The necessity to acquire exports earning to pay for manufactured goods from industrialized countries has encouraged the development of export-oriented, cash crop economies without achieving the necessary balance with food production for local consumption needs. Tied to this problem is the massive foreign debts which is literally forcing most governments to commit ecocide by mortgaging their environments to finance the interest on loans (McKenne, .1990; Ankomah, 1987).

Again, let us illustrate this with the appropriation of forest resources by the state. Sustainable forestry demands that we integrate conservation and resource development. But the national forestry development strategies have failed to strike an appropriate balance between competing forces: the need to sustain what is a vital sector of the national economy (production of timber for industrial use and export), an emerging environmental consciousness and agenda (protecting the forest so as to stabilize local ecosystems and preserve biological diversity) and the need to sustain basic livelihoods.

An understanding of local ideas and perceptions about resource conservation is significant in a discussion of 'sustainable development'. The problem is that conservation is rarely locally defined, that is, to take the basic needs of the local populations into consideration first. Local peoples have never received assurances from the state that the resource they help conserve today will be available tomorrow for their own benefit. In the absence of a guarantee that rural peoples can enjoy the benefits of their own restraint, national efforts to promote local conservation are met with skepticism. Normally it would be easier for conservation efforts to be successful depending on the extent to which alternative choices and solutions are readily available to people. For example, local peoples cannot be expected to minimize their dependence on fuelwood if alternative energy sources are not readily available to them.

But the major issue is that if local peoples understand the goal of conservation is to serve the parochial interests of the state, the urban elite, and their external allies then rural communities are not going to embrace the calls for resource conservation. A typical case is when rural peoples have been restrained from cutting forest trees only to realize the state has colluded with private logging companies to appropriate local timber in order to obtain

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foreign exchange to import luxury items for the urban elites (Dei, 1990b; 1992b). Penny (1988, Berkes, et al., 1989:93) have argued that when local peoples have no control over their forests, lack autonomy over available resources, and have no alternative choices to using forest products, they have every incentive to cut down the trees before someone else does.

'Sustainable Development' and Democracy
If 'sustainable development' is to be a credible approach to development then there are other human rights issues that have to be considered as part of the national development process. The discourse on 'sustainable development' must encompass the domains of human rights, participatory democracy and local involvement and input in the decision making processes. 'Sustainable development' in Africa must extend beyond the narrow concerns over the natural environment in national economic development to include genuine and comprehensive democratic reforms as well as a redistribution of social wealth. The rights of women, children and the poor to the satisfaction of the basic needs of food, shelter, clothing, education and health care must be treated as equal components of the struggle for political democracy in Africa.

.One may want to laud current measures aimed at empowering the African rural poor through on-going democratization processes in some countries. However we must also be cautious that this becomes an 'African democracy', that is, democracy which is understood by African peoples and not something dictated to them by transnational corporations and foreign governments. For example, we should critique the inherent contradictions in the national policy measures inspired by the international financial community that cuts social services to the poor (e.g., water, electricity, education, health) and the initiatives towards political democracy in Africa as presently constituted. If democracy is narrowly defined to exclude food, water, shelter, clothing and employment then the talk about the importance of achieving 'sustainable development' for Africa's own good becomes a sham.

Indigenous Knowledge, Skills and Appropriate Technology
The promotion of 'sustainable development' also calls for an understanding of what constitutes 'appropriate technology' in the African context. Talking about technology that is least destructive of the natural environment is insufficient. We have to emphasize the importance of retrieving and interrogating the indigenous knowledges and skills that have served most of these communities over the years for their contribution to the transformation of contemporary society. It is interesting that modern society has now begun to realize the importance of building sustainable and supportive societies that are in harmony with nature. Indigenous communities worldwide have long shared this belief and contemporary society has much to learn from them.

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There is a call today for a renewal and a revitalization of local indigenous knowledges and traditions for social development.

Indigenous knowledge may be defined as the common sense knowledge and ideas of local peoples about the everyday realities of living which form part of their cultural heritage (Fals Borda, 1980). It includes the cultural traditions, values, belief systems and worldviews of local peoples as distinguished from Western scientific knowledge. Such local knowledge is the product of indigenous peoples' direct experience of the workings of nature and its relationship with the social world. It is also a holistic and inclusive form of knowledge in the sense of encompassing the mental, intellectual, spiritual and physical development of the individual self and the interconnections of the self and society with the earth in the spirit of reciprocity and partnership.

Among the major themes emphasized in the African ways of knowing about the world are ideas of community membership, social responsibility, social cohesiveness and the commonalty of all peoples (Dei, 1992c). The knowledge systems of African peoples are expressed in their traditional songs, fables, proverbs, legends, myths, mythologies and traditions of rural peoples. It is no secret that local indigenous knowledges and the cultural resource base of African peoples have been the least analyzed for their contributions to national development processes. Yet it is important to understand how such knowledge forms are utilized by rural peoples to address some of the fundamental problems of daily survival for the insights they do provide for achieving 'sustainable development'.

Discussion

A recommendation in developing alternatives to current development perspectives is for researchers to complement the search for general solutions to human problems with some local specificities (Taylor and Mackenzie, 1992). The integration of localized, empirical research with theoretical, generalized studies demands that researchers accord some importance not only to country-specific research, but also, to research studies that explore grassroot level understanding, discourses on human problems and local strategies to problem solving. While community or locality studies by themselves are insufficient to offer a comprehensive understanding of society, they nevertheless do provide relevant data needed to ground our theoretical discussions in the everyday lived experiences of people. Such studies provide opportunities for willing researchers to hear what people on the ground and at the grassroots have to say, what their everyday thoughts are, and how they make meaning of their social world.

In this light one can hope that perhaps a more appropriate theory and practice on sustained 'endogenous' development could emerge from micro-level studies of the contemporary African crises and how rural communities

are responding to them.[2] This new theory of sustained 'endogenous' development is predicated on the fact that the development agenda is being defined, motivated and controlled by the rural population itself when faced with stressful conditions. Dei (1986, 1992b) and Posnansky (1980, 1984) show that the rural coping strategies involve ecological, economic, social and political response that have always been present in rural Africa. But, in the current situation of economic hardships, they are emerging or re-emerging in new forms that stress the importance of utilizing local creativity and· resourcefulness in the development agenda. The coping strategies are not only dynamic and innovative, but are also raising questions regarding the appropriate role of the modern state and local leadership in African development process (Barker, 1984, 1989).

Rural coping strategies also inform us about the relationship between local production systems, social structures and the ecological base (Rahmato, 1992). It would be useful if we also understood the implications of some of these strategies for 'sustainable development'. For example, the contraction of national economies and the ensuing hardships from the imposition of World Bank/IMF inspired structural adjustment policies since the mid-1980s are encouraging some rural peoples to demand that the local polity reallocates and/or redistributes some of the valued goods and services in their communities (Dei, 1988a). Village action groups under responsible leadership (e.g., women's groups, church groups) can assist in empowering the hitherto silent majority and to articulate their views.[3] Many are realizing the importance of pursuing a genuine approach to development that begins with locally defined needs and aspirations and strives to meet these needs through self reliance and local resource autonomy. Hopefully, this approach can be strengthened if the issues of social justice and respect for fundamental rights and freedoms are simultaneously addressed (Daugherty et al., 1979).

'Sustainable development' in the African context implies finding appropriate answers to such fundamental questions as what to produce, how to

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2   A case can be made for the significance of studying the specific impact of national policy changes on these communities, and specifically, for various constituencies such as women, age and socioeconomic groups in the quest to build a self-sustaining base for African societies. Such micro-level studies may provide important requisite ground data for genuine theory building on 'sustainable development'.

3   Many rural communities today are making specific adjustments in both household and ,community labour force to improve the standard of living. There is also the recourse to hitherto little used food resources and other economic strategies (e.g., hunting and 'gathering) aimed at generating additional income and improve upon household food supply as a noted feature of rural economies (Weiss, 1980; Dei, 1988b; Posnansky, 1980; Scudder, 1971; Ajayi, 1971, Marks, 1976). While all these economic strategies have been useful as part of rural survival strategies we are yet to fully explore their implications for 'sustainable development'.

produce, for whom to produce and who should own and/or control the means of production? These questions must be addressed at the local, regional and national levels of African societies. The failure to address the problem of unequal and differential access to and control over productive resources among social groups in society means that rural poverty would continue to haunt all of us. The implementation of environmental projects such as tree planting and reforestation programmes,[4] the development of reclamation schemes to control land use through checks on overcultivation and overgrazing, and the implementation of soil and water conservation techniques (e.g., small scale irrigation projects, terracing) while important, only speak to the symptom of a bigger problem. 'Sustainable development' is not only about the environment and society. It is also about the interconnections between local and national political economies and global politics.

Let us conclude this discussion with some brief notes on methodological issues in 'sustainable development' research. How can we integrate ecological concerns and problems of development in studies of state-rural economies? The social and natural sciences can cooperate in fruitful research to identify the crucial variables in the development process, particularly, in evaluating the interrelated technical, social organizational, economic and ecological dimensions of the development problem. Interdisciplinary studies of the relationships between natural ecosystems, traditional agroforestry, food production techniques, and the structuralization of rural economic production are extremely important in this regard (Deshmuth, 1986; Heberlein, 1968: Warren, 1986).

The learning objective for those interested in such research should be to study and determine ways and means by which agricultural and other economic activities can become productive while at the same time promoting a self-sustaining ecological base for future generations and their needs. It is important that we obtain an understanding of local, social and natural variables impinging upon traditional food resource strategies. Specialists' assistance are required for collecting bio-climatic data on local climates, soils, soil use and management techniques, wild life and water resources, land clearing methods, choice of cropping techniques, species used, as well as habits and technologies associated with food production.[5]

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4   Elsewhere, Dei (1990b) has argued that while tree planting, for example, is a laudable proposal, the success in terms of fostering sustainable development would depend on the planting of the right tree species, by the right people in the communities, at the right period of time, and in the right places.

5   To illustrate this point a real issue for sustained development is that given the ecological stresses of drought, bush fires, and sometimes, uncontrolled human exploitation, how can some species be preserved for maximum yield? This I believe is an area the sciences can cooperate to find viable solutions.

Finally, sustained 'endogenous' development calls for local involvement, co-operation and regional integration. To secure local involvement in the planning, design, implementation and evaluation of the development agenda, it is important that major research efforts are made to examine the capabilities and concerns of those people who may require and should also manage the elements and processes of change (Holland, 1987; Stohr and Taylor, 1981). Research should focus on identifying socially responsible local facilitators who can best articulate locally defined needs and aspirations. The ultimate learning objective in 'sustainable development' research is to study and assess the viability of an integrated approach to development emphasizing self-help, local creativity, and resource autonomy in contrast to the conventional sectorial approaches to development and international cooperation.

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* Department of Sociology, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Contribution à l'analyse essentielle de la tontine africaine

Jean-Roger Essombe-Edimo*

Abstract: *Known by various names throughout Africa, rotating credit associations are first and foremost embodiments of social relations based on solidarity which function simultaneously as savings associations, credit association and a social good. Perceived within a unidimensional and reductionist perspective by economists these institutions are viewed as remnants which sustain financial dualism. Accordingly a significant feature of the financial stabilization and restructuring of the formal banking system in the context of structural adjustment projects currently underway is the attempt to unify the formal and informal sector in Africa through a reduction of the weight of rotating Credit Association in saving mobilization in Africa. In Sub-saharan Africa faced with the restructuring of the economy, increased unemployment, reduction of social services, decrease of salaries and overall household income, economic actors respond by accelerating socially based survival mechanisms such as rotating Credit Associations. Far from disappearing, therefore, there is a marked increase of financial transfer within these institutions at the expense of the banking systems.*

Depuis la 'découverte' de la tontine par les économistes il y a une quinzaine d'années environ, cette institution a miraculeusement cessé d'être décrite avec des interprétations réductrices telles 'survivances du passé' ou encore 'structures destinées à disparaître avec l'avènement du moderne'. Elle est considérée, de plus en plus, comme faisant partie de ce que P Gourou (1985), dans un autre domaine, a appelé 'un ensemble de faisceaux d'encadrement favorables'.

Toutefois, de la nature profonde de la tontine et de sa dimension plurielle, l'abondante littérature économique qui lui est désormais consacrée n'en retient qu'une seule à savoir, la tontine comme structure de financement. La mise à l'épreuve de ce réductionnisme - que les difficultés rencontrées pour faire des tontines des objectifs de développement font mieux ressortir - s'accompagne désormais d'une remise en cause de ce qui, hier encore, commençait déjà à être considéré comme acquis. Tout ceci invite alors sinon à une (re)définition même de la tontine du moins, à la nécessité d'une considération essentielle de cette structure.

Ainsi donc, après avoir présenté les différentes tentatives d'intégration de la tontine dans le cadre des objectifs de développement, lesquelles en réalité ont donné lieu à une importante controverse théorique, nous essaierons de relever, au regard des manifestations récentes, les insuffisances des ap-

proches qui en ont découlé avant de montrer enfin, en quoi leur échec découle de la non-prise en compte de la nature profonde de la tontine.

Les tontines comme objectifs de développement: le cadre général

Tardivement étudiées par les économistes, les tontines ne seront pas moins intégrées par la théorie comme gisement d'épargne dans les pays africains; ce qui faisait alors rentrer ces structures dans le cadre des intermédiaires financiers. Toutefois, cette évolution elle-même aura été marquée par de nombreuses appréhensions doctrinales. Deux grandes écoles de pensée ont toujours alimenté la controverse dans ce domaine: l'école du 'dualisme financier' et celle de 'l'unification'.

L'approche de l'école du 'dualisme financier'

Souvent qualifiée de 'socio-économique' (Holst, 1985:143) cette école considère que les institutions financières informelles (IFI) en général et les tontines en particulier, ainsi d'ailleurs que les mécanismes financiers qu'elles développent, sont un point de passage obligé des systèmes financiers des Pays en voie de développement (PVD). Il s'agit donc, pour ces derniers, d'une phase financière nécessaire dans leur processus de développement. Ce serait également une étape qui justifie - en même temps qu'elle l'explique - la nécessité elle-aussi de l'existence, dans ces espaces économiques, d'un dualisme financier et où coexistent finalement des structures financières formelles et des institutions financières informelles.

Le caractère dualiste du dit système financier est d'autant plus important et nécessaire qu'il représente l'un des rares canaux par lequel il serait possible d'une part, de collecter un volume d'épargne suffisamment élevé dans ces pays et, d'autre part, de permettre à leurs couches sociales les plus pauvres d'accéder au crédit (Gracia, 1983; de Lancey, 1978; Gagey, 1986; Lefrançois, 1988). Aussi, d'importantes propositions sont-elles souvent élaborées en vue de façonner des attitudes (ou des politiques) à adopter pour améliorer la performance des tontines. Il s'agit entre autres de:

- la mise en place d'une réglementation gouvernementale en vue de protéger juridiquement les tontines (le cas de 'protection' le plus cité en exemple étant celui instauré par le 'Chit Funds Act' de 1982 en Inde (Holst, 1985:146).

- la promotion des liens entre les tontines et des institutions financières formelles. On pense généralement que ces liens pourraient se renforcer si un grand nombre de banques locales par exemple acceptent des obligations liées à une participation en garantie dans une tontine; ou encore, si une partie des fonds tontiniers était déposée comme épargne dans des banques; l'on cite alors à ce propos, les exemples du Cameroun et de l'Inde (Bouman, 1977:203).

Mais, cette approche dualiste n'aura pas été, loin s'en faut, le seul cadre de proposition des politiques à adopter à l'égard des tontines.

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L'approche de l'école de 'l'unification financière'

Se situant à l'antipode de l'analyse précédente, cette seconde approche milite, au contraire, pour une unification des secteurs financiers - formel et informel - des pays sous-développés en général et de l'Afrique en particulier. Ici, l'unification généralement proposée est conçue dans le sens de l'absorption des tontines par les banques. Les hypothèses fondamentales de ce 'modèle' sont d'ailleurs si proches du 'Financial deepenning' naguère développé à la fois, par Shaw (1973) et Mc Kinnon (1973 et 1991) qu'il est quelquefois permis d'y voir comme un prolongement naturel de la 'libéralisation financière' jadis déjà prônée par ces deux théoriciens: d'où l'appréciation qui en est faite, par certains autres auteurs, en termes 'd'approche traditionnelle' (Holst, 1985:143).

Allant d'ailleurs plus loin dans la volonté de substituer totalement les structures bancaires aux tontines, d'autres encore estimeront que l'unification ainsi souhaitée présente en outre l'avantage de permettre un renforcement des institutions financières dans les zones rurales des PVD (Adams, 1978). Au total, l'unification ici proposée se donne pour ambition, d'aboutir à une intégration des tontines dans une logique d'annexion/soumission des banques. Cette intervention est d'autant plus facile que certaines structures tontinières évoluent déjà, comme au Cameroun, vers une transformation en de véritables banques commerciales (Haggblade, 1978).

Ce vaste projet de modernisation des tontines ou d'unification des secteurs financiers - formel et informel - africains s'est, depuis ces dernières années, enrichi en cohérence en s'appuyant sur ce qui est désormais appelé 'l'innovation financière'. L'on estime alors que la persistance du dualisme financier dans ces pays est essentiellement due à la répression financière observée dans le système financier formel et qui empêcherait ce dernier de mobiliser un volume d'épargne domestique aussi important que celui des tontines locales. Et ce dualisme, source de la mauvaise allocation du capital productif manifeste dans ces pays, pourrait dès lors être combattu en encourageant les banques locales à:

- diversifier leurs instruments financiers;
- intégrer des structures d'organisation s'apparentant à celles des sociétés mutuelles;
- ou encore, à développer une collaboration avec les tontines et ce, dans le sens de l'absorption de ces dernières par les banques, seules capables d'une affectation efficiente du capital (De Boissieu, 1988).

C'est donc aussi tout naturellement que cette démarche s'est trouvée englobée dans le vaste programme d'ajustement financier issu des plans d'ajustement structurels (PAS) menés depuis quelque temps en Afrique. Et l'ajustement financier qui y est appliqué, en même temps qu'il recherchera l'assainissement financier et une restructuration profonde du système ban-

caire formel, devrait donc, parallèlement aussi, conduire à une réduction du poids des circuits tontiniers dans la mobilisation locale de l'épargne. Dans le même ordre d'idées, et pour ce qui est de la zone franc par exemple, les mesures prises en vue de restructurer le système bancaire et financier officiel, et par ricochet, de réduire le dualisme financier local concernent entre autres:

- une rationalisation des politiques de taux d'intérêt (ce qui devait conduire à la fois, à une simplification puis à une hausse sensible des taux mais aussi, à une suppression des taux préférentiels);

- la mise en place du contrôle du crédit;

- un accroissement de l'autonomie de gestion des banques;

- et enfin, l'accélération des processus de privatisation, réhabilitation ou liquidation des banques (Essombe, 1991:8-11).

Au total, d'un côté comme de l'autre, l'idée sous-jacente qui semble animer les économistes consiste à faire rentrer les tontines dans ce qu'il faut bien appeler les objectifs de développement. On privilégie donc la fonction financière de l'institution en même temps que l'on cherche à déterminer la part de l'épargne, par elle collectée, et qu'il faudrait réorienter. Mais cette sollicitude, au demeurant compréhensible et heureuse pour cette structure, reste tout de même assez curieuse. Car, elle postule aussi d'emblée, qu'il faut orienter la tontine vers des fins nouvelles et donc enfin, qu'elle doit être modernisée suivant des principes dictés de l'extérieur.

Toutefois, et bien qu'étant encore partielles, certaines constatations et autres manifestations permettent aujourd'hui, d'entrevoir et de souligner les limites de ces différentes approches.

Les insuffisances des réductionnismes et des orthodoxes

Si donc pour d'aucuns, l'amélioration des performances des tontines passe par l'adoption d'une législation organisant l'activité de ces institutions alors que, pour d'autres, l'on devait plutôt encourager l'unification des deux secteurs - formel et informel - au travers des politiques d'ajustement financier mis en place en Afrique, une lecture minutieuse des faits, suite à cet ensemble de considérations, semble plutôt conduire sinon au désenchantement du moins, à la nécessité d'une redéfinition des approches traditionnelles de la tontine.

Car d'un côté, ce qui est proposé rencontre des difficultés d'organisation matérielle en même temps qu'il pourrait aboutir à une bureaucratisation excessive de l'institution tontinière. Pendant que de l'autre, on s'est rendu compte de la persistance avérée du dualisme financier dans les pays africains et ce, malgré l'application de l'ajustement financier.

Le risque de bureaucratisation excessive des tontines

Cherchant en effet à améliorer les performances des tontines, plusieurs champs d'exploration ont été proposés. Les mesures proposées se résument comme suit:

- la mise en place d'un cadre juridique protecteur des structures tontinières, afin de briser la 'contrainte de clandestinité' de ces dernières (Lefrançois, 1988:3421).

- le regroupement des tontines dont l'atomicité observée, dans les différents espaces économiques africains, freine la collecte de l'épargne au-delà d'un nombre déterminé d'individus. Tout ceci doit permettre, mieux encore de dépasser le simple cadre d'octroi des crédits à court terme qui est celui dans lequel se cantonnent généralement un nombre important des tontines.

Le schéma proposé ici caresse l'idée d'un regroupement des tontines au niveau de chaque localité d'un même territoire (on parlerait donc, par exemple, de tontine centrale du village ou du canton...) et qui, avec des possibilités de financement accrues, pourrait alors octroyer des crédits avec des délais rallongés (tableau 1).

Tableau 1: Exemple de regroupement des tontines

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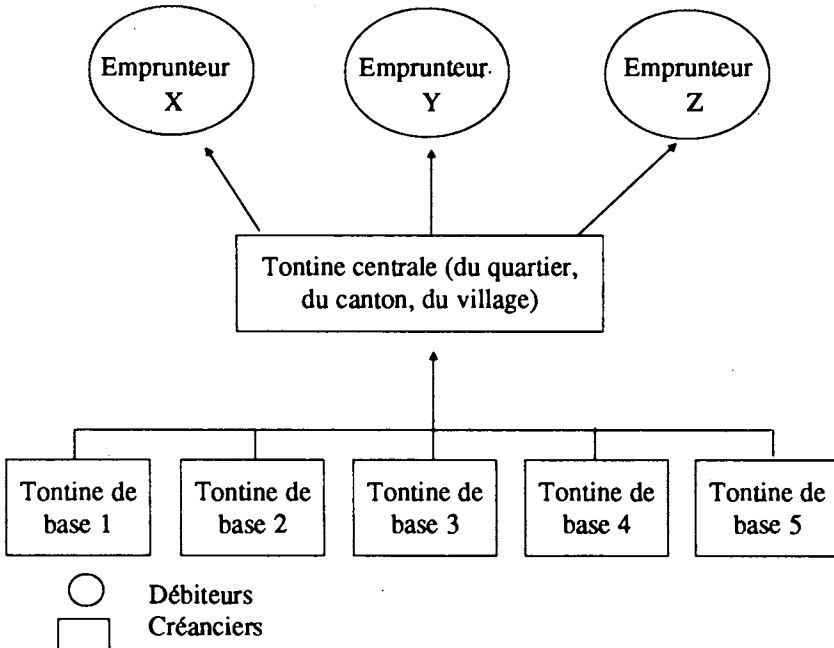
- La promotion des rapports de complémentarité entre les tontines et les coopératives de crédit: l'exemple généralement avancé est celui représenté par la collaboration entre une 'coopérative d'épargne et de crédit' (ou COOPEC) du village congolais de Kingala et l'une des tontines de la même localité (Banque mondiale, 1989:144).

Toutefois, si la mise en place d'un cadre juridique 'protecteur' des tontines et de divers dispositifs d'encouragement au regroupement de ces structures paraît à tout le moins encourageante et séduisante, l'on n'y a pas pour autant défini les modalités de l'organisation matérielle de la préfiguration des tontines en 'tontines de base' et, à un niveau plus élevé, en 'tontines centrales'.

Autrement dit, la question de savoir comment approcher, sans les déstabiliser, des structures qui reposent sur la proximité - celle de l'institution de collecte et d'affectation de l'épargne par rapport à l'épargnant - reste sans réponse. D'autant que, parallèlement, le nouveau schéma de préfiguration spatiale proposé à savoir:

tontines de base ⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯→ tontines centrales

nécessite, pour être efficacement opérationnel, une bureaucratisation accrue de l'institution tontinière. Ce qui présente un risque pour cette structure dont on sait par ailleurs, que la minimisation de sa bureaucratie demeure l'un des fondements de ses avantages comparatifs dans ses coûts de l'intermédiation financière (Essombe, 1990:250-57; Lelart, 1985:62-63).

Parallèlement, les efforts fournis pour la restructuration de leur système financier - à la suite de l'application du PAS - dont on attendait qu'ils permettent l'éviction des tontines dans la mobilisation de l'épargne, ont plutôt conduit à l'accentuation du dualisme financier dans les pays africains.

La persistance avérée du dualisme financier

Dans nombre de pays africains, les différentes mesures prises à travers les ajustements financiers, pour réduire le dualisme financier local et, donc le poids du secteur tontinier, tournent pour la plupart, à l'échec.

Car en effet, malgré les importantes aides bilatérale et multilatérale obtenues pour leur restructuration, les banques africaines ont plutôt accentué leurs activités de financement du secteur import-export. De plus, tenant compte des coûts d'opportunité élevés qui en découlaient, nombre d'entre elles ont entrepris la fermeture de leurs guichets provinciaux, ce qui ajoute à l'éloignement du système bancaire des agents économiques. En outre, dans les pays de la zone franc par exemple, l'épargne privée des ménages ayant été contractée à la suite de la baisse des salaires, le relèvement du taux d'intérêt rémunérateur de l'épargne dans les banques n'a pas pu en entraîner une mobilisation accrue (tableau 2).

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**Tableau 2: Zone franc: évolution du taux d'épargne, du taux
d'investissement et du taux d'intérêt réel (en %)**

Année	1980			1985			1989		
Indicateur	S	I	i	S	I	i	S	I	i
UMOA	10,3	24,9	0	8,6	17,6	10	7,8	15,1	6
BEAC	30,8	22,7	- 2	32,9	23,5	9	19	17,9	4,5

Source: Ph Hugon, 1991, p. 27
  S = % de l'épargne sur PIB
  I = % de l'investissement sur PIB
  i = % du taux d'intérêt réel (nominal moins inflation).

Parallèlement, pour ce qui est des tontines, on note un effet inverse à celui qui était recherché. Car en fait, l'on observe plutôt à la fois, un redéploiement et une diversification des activités des institutions tontinières. Ces dernières tendent de plus en plus à produire des services divers comme par exemple, la multiplication des 'caisses de prêts', ou celle de séances d'enchères..., mais aussi, à institutionnaliser, à leur tour, une rémunération de l'argent.

'Ainsi, la rationalisation et autres mesures d'ajustement observées ici, bien qu'ayant raréfié les ressources financières qui nourrissaient le secteur tontinier, ont paradoxalement renforcé 'les logiques sécuritaires à finalité sociale. Lesquelles ont eu tendance à se développer aux dépens des logiques financières' (Hugon, 1991:28). Si bien qu'au total, la baisse des revenus réguliers des ménages (comme les salaires), ou même seulement, celle des dépenses sociales de l'Etat ont plutôt conduit au renforcement des transferts financiers, au sein des circuits tontiniers aux dépens des circuits bancaires

Il apparait donc, que la restructuration des systèmes financiers - suite à l'application des PAS en Afrique - loin de conduire à la disparition du dualisme financier et, par ricochet à celle des tontines dans ces pays, semble plutôt l'avoir renforcé. Et, pour ce qui est plus précisément des structures tontinières, la diminution des liquidités financières née entre autres, de la baisse des salaires des agents économiques locaux va donner lieu au développement de divers mécanismes d'adaptation dont la rémunération de l'argent, l'augmentation du nombre des enchères et, selon les cas, l'abrègement - ou le rallongement - de la période et du montant des cotisations, ou encore, la multiplication des 'caisses (internes) de prêts'.

D'un côté donc, les mesures de 'protection' semblent insuffisamment explorées au point de conduire à une désarticulation, sinon un ébranlement de la tontine. De l'autre enfin, le 'mal' que l'on cherchait à guérir (à savoir le dualisme financier) demeure plus persistant que par le passé. 'Que

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faire?...'. Telle est la question immédiate que l'on est amené à se poser. Mais que faire par rapport à quoi et surtout, pour qui?

Car en effet, l'impasse qui semble dès lors se dessiner ici tient, en réalité, au fait qu'il n'a pas suffisamment été tenu compte de la *nature profonde* de la tontine. C'est que le réductionnisme qui a, pendant longtemps, servi à entretenir la prescience de la disparition prochaine de cette institution (Thirwall, 1974), n'avait pas disparu avec la reconnaissance, même tardive et unidimensionnelle, de cette structure. Aussi, malgré la multiplication des travaux qui lui seront consacrés, la tontine demeurera-t-elle incomprise.

Cette incompréhension provient essentiellement de ce qu'en règle générale, la tontine n'a été considérée que sous l'angle d'association d'épargne et de crédit (AREC), c'est-à-dire, sous l'angle exclusif de ses fonctions. Dès lors, ignorant ainsi sa nature profonde, les politiques de développement et autres attitudes concoctées à son égard couraient le risque d'être inadéquates puisque l'institution tontinière y est définie, le plus souvent, *non pas par ce qu'elle est*, mais parce *qu'elle fait et/ou devrait faire.*

Pour une analyse essentielle de la tontine

La tontine est d'abord et surtout, par essence, solidarité, institution sociale. Expression d'une dépendance mutuelle entre les hommes dans un village, ou encore, sur un lieu de service..., elle apparaît comme un moyen devant faire obstacle à la division de la communauté. Cette première constatation lui donne, du même coup une fonction centrale qui vient avant toutes les autres à savoir, une fonction 'politique'. Le terme politique est entendu ici, comme élément d'un ensemble de pratiques organisationnelles d'une société.

Comme telle, la tontine nous apparaît sous son vrai jour, c'est-à-dire: organisatrice des rapports entre les individus. Aussi, ses différentes manifestations (moyen d'épargne, rassemblement d'amis pour échanges d'idées, réseau d'influence social, lieu de soutien pour les moments difficiles...) ne sont-elles, en réalité, que l'expression dérivée de cette solidarité fondamentale. C'est ce caractère multidimensionnel de l'institution qui semble le mieux expliquer le développement soutenu des tontines dans une Afrique en proie aux ajustements structurels et financiers et ce, malgré la baisse des revenus et autres salaires des agents économiques locaux.

Or, cette idée de la tontine solidarité-agissante ou vécue est souvent escamotée dans l'abondante littérature économique qui lui est désormais consacrée, au point de n'en faire ressortir que ses fonctions. La culture des apparences qui en découle ne peut que déboucher sur des attitudes inadaptées lorsque l'on veut déterminer quelle devrait être la place de cette institution dans le processus de développement des pays africains. Ainsi, au-delà de ses fonctions apparentes, il convient de rechercher désormais les véritables piliers de soulèvement de la tontine, en poussant le regard 'en-

dedans' c'est-à-dire, dans l'essence même de cette institution. Et, c'est en dernier ressort, cette connaissance notionnelle de la structure qui paraît alors pouvoir éclairer le mieux, sur le choix des attitudes qui pourraient être mises en oeuvre vis-à-vis de la tontine.

Sur l'essence de la tontine

Rechercher l'essence deś choses c'est-à-dire 'ce qui constitue la nature d'un être, d'une chose (ou encore), la nature d'un être, d'une chose indépendamment de son existence' (Petit Larousse illustré, 1985:383). C'est aussi essayer de faire la part entre le 'réel' et 'l'apparent' des choses. Et pour comprendre l'essence de la tontine, il suffit de la regarder vivre dans ses différentes manifestations et à travers les divers espaces économiques africains.

Ainsi, qu'elle s'appelle dans plus d'une quarantaine de ces pays, *Likelemba, Isusu, Esusu, Djanggi, Ndjanggi, Mandjon, Asusu, Teno* ou encore, *Susu, Cotisation, Bank, etc,* (Essombe, 1987:25), cette ubiquité de l'institution tontinière recouvre d'abord la volonté des hommes et des femmes d'être solidaires les uns des autres. Ce qui au demeurant, ne peut paraître étonnant dans des sociétés comme celles d'Afrique noire qui sont des sociétés conviviales et où enfin, la promotion de l'homme se fait non en tant qu'individu, mais en tant que membre d'un groupe (Ardener, 1964).

Tel est par conséquent le substrat, le noyau autour duquel tout tourne et dont tout devrait se déduire. Corollairement, chaque fonction de la tontine (sociale, financière) apparaît bien, du point de vue descriptif, comme les différentes nervures formant l'éventail des expressions de son essence qui est fondamentalement d'être solidarité. Et cette dernière, à son tour, imprime une personnalisation des rapports qui lient les membres et qui peut se manifester de plusieurs façons:

- les réunions sont organisées, à tour de rôle, chez chacun des adhérents, ce qui permet de mieux se connaître, de pénétrer les familles des uns et des autres;

- on prodigue une certaine assistance, laquelle peut aller du simple conseil à quelqu'un (lorsque ce dernier est en proie aux difficultés) à la présence effective auprès des membres frappés par la mort des proches parents, la maladie, etc). En clair donc, on épargne certes de l'argent, mais on comptabilise d'abord des amis;

- aide consentie à un adhérent pour lui permettre de construire sa maison, d'acheter son matériel ou outillage agricole, etc.

Ainsi, mécanisme d'auto-organisation des individus dans la société, la tontine est donc, par essence, solidarité vécue ou encore, incarnation de cette solidarité au quotidien. C'est précisément parce qu'elle est solidarité en soi qu'elle est sans cesse, tout à la fois association d'épargne, association mutuelle, structure commerciale, association de crédit et bien social. Donc,

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quelle que soit la forme ou les priorités qu'elle affiche, le lien entre les obligations relationnelles et financières se trouvent indissociablement maintenu.

C'est cela la tontine. Elle retient les expériences du passé de l'africain, le suit dans son présent et même dans son avenir. Lorsqu'on interroge les 'tontiniers' à cet effet, nombreux sont ceux qui répondent que la tontine perpétue le grenier traditionnel qui, autrefois, servait pour le stockage des haricots et des ignames (Henry, Tchente et Dieumegard, 1991:18) ou encore, que la tontine est aussi indispensable à la vie des hommes que l'est l'éducation des enfants. Mais, parce que la tontine est dans sa nature solidarité, toute considération de cette structure devra alors aussi prendre en compte sa dimension sociale. Vue sous cet aspect, elle devient alors instrument de la solidarité collective.

La tontine: une institution sociale

Ici, la dimension sociale de l'institution s'exprime indépendamment, de plusieurs manières. Et, même adhérer à une tontine devient la satisfaction d'un besoin profond, celui de la sécurité parce qu'en réalité, la tontine institutionnalise même la sécurité sociale. Or il s'agit là, d'un aspect d'une importance capitale dans des sociétés comme celles d'Afrique où à la fois, il n'existe pas de structures de 'sécurité sociale' (comme dans les pays développés) et où, comme au Cameroun, *l'Etat est un décor de théâtre, une structure d'oppression et de prédation [...] qui n'offre plus aux citoyens le minimum de services sociaux* (Nkzana, 1991:9). Dès lors, la tontine apparaît comme une institution destinée à la protection sociale de ses membres.

Cependant, contrairement à d'autres infrastructures destinées à la couverture sociale des individus, il ne s'agit pas ici d'institutionnaliser l'assistanat. Car, dans la tontine, la personne qui reçoit une aide sait pertinemment qu'elle a déjà donné, et/ou donnera à son tour, aux autres. Mais, institution sociale, la tontine l'est encore parce qu'elle permet l'élargissement du cercle des amis. Elle devient donc un espace qui créé - en même temps qu'il permet de les nouer - les relations sociales de l'individu: ce qui ajoute à la protection de ce dernier dans la société. Ainsi par exemple, un 'tontinier' qui a des problèmes avec la loi sur les sociétés commerciales sait qu'il trouvera, dans son association, quelqu'un qui soit l'aidera à y voir plus clair, soit alors l'introduira auprès d'une troisième personne qui, elle, s'y connaît bien. Car, le but de la tontine est d'abord d'unir les hommes et les femmes, de discuter ensemble et de s'aider mutuellement.

Bien que les économistes distinguent automatiquement deux aspects (social et économique) de l'institution 'tontinière', ces derniers n'ont pas moins eu tendance à toujours privilégier l'aspect financier de cette structure alors que cette composante financière elle-même n'est qu'une des expressions de son essence qui est d'être solidarité. Cette dernière imprime alors un cachet particulier, même à l'activité financière, de l'institution; c'est ainsi que par

exemple, le simple prêt accordé à un membre est d'abord perçu comme une façon de voler au secours de ce dernier. Autrement dit, qu'il vienne au premier ou au second plan dans les manifestations d'une tontine, l'argent - que l'on y épargne ou que l'on en retire - ne remplace en rien les devoirs de l'amitié et de la solidarité.

Conclusion

Dans une Afrique noire en proie à la fois à la restructuration de l'économie, à un chômage croissant, à la réduction des services sociaux publics ou encore, à la baisse des salaires et à celle de l'épargne des ménages, les agents économiques réagissent en adoptant des logiques à finalité sociale qui trouvent dans la tontine un terrain naturel de foisonnement ou d'expression.

C'est que l'institution 'tontinière' est, par essence, solidarité. Une solidarité qui, loin de disparaître dans ses différentes fonctions (sociales, financière,...), imprime quotidiennement à ces dernières le substrat autour duquel tout s'organise ou encore, à partir duquel tout doit se déduire.

Par la même occasion, un constat s'impose, troublant, dirimant. Si la nature vraie de la tontine est bien différente de ses fonctions traditionnellement étudiées, alors les politiques faisant de cette structure un objectif de développement n'ont pas de sens indépendamment de la connaissance préalable de sa nature profonde, ainsi d'ailleurs que de celle des bases matérielles et sociales sur lesquelles elle repose. Plus que par le passé donc, l'économiste doit changer de lunettes pour observer des institutions qui, comme la tontine, sont une réalité chaque jour à la fois, toujours plus mouvante et toujours plus proche; à moins alors, de vouloir entretenir la fiction ou de céder à des anticipations gratuites.

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* Chargé de Cours F.D.S.E, Université de Yaoundé, Cameroun

Book Reviews

Samir Amin, *Le tiers monde entre les impératifs de la mondialisation et les nécessités de l'autonomie - Quelques remarques autour de l' 'empire du chaos'*

Hamid Aït Amara

Hakim Ben Hammouda

Au moment où le monde se félicite de la mise en place d'un nouvel ordre international, le dernier livre de Samir Amin arrive à point nommé pour nous rappeler le caractère chaotique des relations économiques internationales et nous invite à une réflexion critique sur ce consensus de façade. En effet en soutenant l'hypothèse que la marginalisation croissante du tiers monde et sa mise au pas autoritaire sont les principales caractéristiques de cette nouvelle *Pax-Americana*, ce livre est une introduction à un débat sur la problématique du développement de la périphérie dans la situation actuelle d'accentuation de la mondialisation et de crise du capitalisme.

Par le tableau de la situation économique et politique internationale dressé et les pistes de réflexion et de travail tracées, ce travail constitue une invitation à un débat qui devient de plus en plus pressant.

Dans cette note nous voulons évoquer quatre questions essentielles soulevées dans ce livre et relatives:

- au phénomène de la mondialisation et à son accentuation;

- aux performances économiques de certaines régions de la périphérie et essentiellement en Asie;

- à la problématique de la déconnexion et aux conditions nécessaires à sa réalisation;

- enfin au combat démocratique dans le tiers monde et au contenu qu'il faut lui donner.

Concernant le phénomène de la mondialisation, issu du mouvement de concentration/centralisation du capital durant la période de croissance d'après-guerre, nous considérons avec l'auteur qu'il constitue le phénomène caractéristique de la crise actuelle. Ce phénomène s'est traduit par une tendance à l'homogénéisation sous la houlette des Firmes Transnationales (FTN) des conditions de production au niveau international et même des structures de consommation et des pratiques culturelles.

Le mouvement de transnationalisation de la production a joué un rôle non négligeable dans le déclenchement de la crise actuelle.[1]

En effet si on analyse la crise actuelle comme un double mouvement de décomposition des structures nationales de production et de recherche de nouveaux espaces de valorisation, il est évident que les FTN ont joué un rôle important dans ce mouvement.

A ce niveau les FTN, à travers le mouvement de délocalisation des activités industrielles intensives en travail dans la périphérie, ont affaibli les structures et l'organisation productives nationales dominantes dans les pays capitalistes développés jusqu'à la fin des années 60.

Or comme l'auteur le fait remarquer le mouvement de mondialisation des structures de production et d'homogénéisation de par le monde des conditions d'exploitation n'est pas linéaire. En effet ce mouvement est contrebalancé par des résistances nationales et les pays capitalistes développés *restent et resteront des économies nationales, l'Etat s'employant ici précisément à maintenir ces structurations nationales tout en bénéficiant, en qualité de partenaires forts, de la construction de l'économie mondiale* (p. 50). Dans cette perspective nous considérons que ce mouvement a connu dans son déroulement deux périodes:[2]

- une première période allant de la fin des années 60 à la fin des années 70 durant laquelle on a enregistré une forte tendance à l'ouverture des économies nationales à travers une intensification des échanges et des mouvements de capitaux dont l'objectif était, à travers la délocalisation des activités intensives en travail, la mise en place de la nouvelle division internationale du travail.

- une deuxième période qui commence à partir de la fin des années 70 et qui se prolonge jusqu'à nos jours, caractérisée *par une régression des échanges* et un reflux des mouvements de capitaux. Cette période dominée par un repli du capital sur son espace national est à l'origine de la crise des modèles exportateurs dans la périphérie.

Comment expliquer ce renversement de la tendance à la mondialisation. Dans l'état actuel de la réflexion deux séries d'hypothèses sont avancées pour expliquer ce reflux:

- la première période de croissance inflationniste a été permise par une convergence d'intérêts au centre entre un capital bancaire qui

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1   D'ailleurs cette hypothèse a été développée par G. De Bemis dans, les FTN et la crise. In: *La crise-ruptures d'un système économique*, (collectif) Paris, Dunod, 1978.

2   Cette hypothèse a été avancée par G De Bemis. *Propositions méthodologiques pour une analyse du travail de crise dans la crise du mode de régulations*, GRRC, 1984. Nous chercherons à développer et à approfondir cette hypothèse.

disposait d'énormes liquidités en quête de placement et un capital industriel à la recherche de nouvelles sources de profit face à l'épuisement des gains de productivité au centre. Cette convergence d'intérêts a été à l'origine de ce que certains ont appelé le Keynésianisme planétaire et du développement de la trans-nationalisation de la production.

Or l'incapacité des gouvernements capitalistes à lutter contre l'inflation durant les années 70 a amené le capital bancaire à changer d'optique et à imposer une logique financière au capital industriel afin de récupérer ses 'billes'. C'est ce changement d'optique, matérialisé par l'arrivée de P Volcker à la tête du Fonds européen de développement (FED) en 1979, qui a été à l'origine de la rupture de la logique la croissance inflationniste des années 70 et du coup d'arrêt du mouvement de transnationalisation et du repli sur les économies nationales.

- la deuxième hypothèse qui pourrait expliquer le ralentissement du mouvement de transnationalisation c'est la révolution technologique en cours qui a permis aux firmes du centre de retrouver les gains de productivité nécessaires à la valorisation du capital. Cette hypothèse nous permettrait de comprendre la tendance actuelle à la chute du mouvement d'investissement directs (IDE) à destination des périphéries et à la relocalisation des activités délocalisées dans les années 70 à nouveau dans les pays du centre.

Le mouvement de transnationalisation de la production qui s'est développé dans les années 70 s'est accompagné au niveau politique par une tentative de mise en place d'un directoire politique commun entre les pays capitalistes développés qu'est le G.7 à partir de 1975 sur proposition de V Giscard d'-Estaing. Cette tentative est importante du point de vue politique car elle signifie que les Etats-Unis ont accepté l'idée de la fin de leur leadership sur l'économie mondiale et leur intention de partager leur hégémonie avec les bourgeoisies japonaises et européennes à travers la délimitation de leur champ d'intervention aux Amériques et la structuration par ailleurs d'une zone pacifique sous domination japonaise et la construction d'un espace productif européen sous domination allemande. La commission trilatérale a constitué dans cette perspective le cercle de réflexion privilégiée sur la con-struction de l'économie mondiale tripolaire.

Or l'arrivée de R Reagan à la Maison Blanche a entraîné une remise en cause de ce projet. En effet à travers une alliance avec la fraction la plus droitière de la bourgeoisie anglaise, la bourgeoisie américaine a cherché, par le biais d'une offensive généralisée contre les peuples du monde entier, à retrouver son hégémonie sur l'économie mondiale en dépit de la forte déstructuration de son appareil productif et de son retard technologique. Cette offensive qui se poursuit et dont la guerre du Golfe n'est qu'un épisode, se trouve intensifiée de nos jours suite à la soumission des bour-

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geoisies européennes et à la disparition du contre-pouvoir que constituait l'URSS dans les relations internationales.

Alors dans ce contexte de mondialisation poussée comment comprendre les performances de certaines économies comme l'Inde ou les Nouveaux pays industrialisés (NPI) d'Amérique latine et de l'Asie du Sud Est? En effet si on est d'accord pour dire que dans ces pays on est en présence *des éléments d'une politique nationale, dans certains Nouveaux pays industrialisés (NPI) au plan de la maîtrise technologique ou financière, dans certains pays au passé nationaliste par le rôle de l'Etat dans l'industrialisation ou la réforme agraire* (p. 47). Nous voulons proposer quelques éléments d'hypothèse à propos des performances de ces économies. De prime abord, nous pensons que les succès et l'évolution rapide du rythme d'accumulation dans ces pays sont le produit de la crise. En effet en analysant la crise comme un double mouvement de décomposition, recomposition des structures de l'économie nous pensons qu'elle se traduit par une affaiblissement et une déstructuration des anciens rapports de domination centre/périphérie et une tentative de mise en place de nouvelles relations de domination. Cette remise en cause des anciens rapports de domination ouvre de nouvelles perspectives d'accumulation pour la périphérie ou du moins pour certains pays et leur accorde certaines marges de manoeuvre.[3] Ces pays profitent de ces libertés pour structurer des capacités productives relativement autonomes et recentrer au niveau national leur procès d'accumulation. Nous pensons que c'est dans ce cadre que nous pouvons comprendre l'émergence de nouvelles puissances capitalistes dans les périodes de crise; l'Allemagne et les Etats-Unis dans la crise de la fin du 19ème siècle, le Japon dans la crise des années 30 et la Corée du Sud dans la crise actuelle.

Irons nous jusqu'à affirmer que les possibilités de développement capitaliste autonome sont toujours ouvertes? Nous pensons que cette hypothèse est encore difficile à soutenir dans la mesure où il faut étudier d'une manière plus fine les conséquences des crises sur la périphérie et les enjeux et luttes sociales qui permettent à certains d'émerger comme nouvelles puissances capitalistes et à d'autres de choisir une intégration mercantile et dominée à l'économie internationale. Par ailleurs nous ne sous-estimons pas le mouvement de recomposition des structures de l'économie dans les périodes de crise et la contre-offensive impérialiste dont le but est l'asservissement des peuples de la périphérie.

Dans cet 'empire du chaos' et face à cette offensive généralisée, quelle alternative pour la périphérie? Là-dessus l'auteur considère que la seule al-

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3   Cette hypothèse a été développée par R. Borrelly, *Dette et avenir du tiers monde*, GRREC, 1987.

ternative *réaliste* pour la périphérie, devant l'incapacité du capitalisme à l'intégrer et face à la marginalisation croissante de régions entières du tiers monde, reste la déconnexion définie comme une déconnexion des *critères de rationalité des choix économiques internes de ceux qui gouvernent le système mondial* (p. 83).

Dans cette perspective nous pensons que la déconnexion, préalable à la structuration d'une cohérence productive autonome, exige la construction de trois normes afin d'assurer l'indépendance et l'homogénéité de l'espace productif national.

La première est la norme monétaire qui, en tant que mode de validation sociale de la production, impose à l'espace productif national des règles contraignantes de production et d'échange et intègre les producteurs individuels dans le même espace monétaire. Dans ce cadre la monnaie joue un rôle important dans la mesure où elle permet de dépasser les hétérogénéités (industries, régions,...) et d'homogénéiser l'appareil productif dans son ensemble.

La deuxième norme à construire dans la périphérie est un *système de prix* qui soit le reflet de leurs structures productives. En effet, le système de prix imposé par le centre dans la périphérie a été à l'origine d'un transfert de surplus et a eu comme conséquence le blocage de l'accumulation dans la périphérie. D'ailleurs les tentatives des pays développés de reformuler le système de prix dans la périphérie en fonction du 'prix mondial' est une dimension importante du dispositif des Programmes d'Ajustement Structurel (PAS) imposés par le FMI et dont le principal objectif reste l'aggravation de l'extraversion de la périphérie et le blocage du procès d'accumulation. Donc il est primordial nous semble-t-il, pour la périphérie, dans le cadre de la déconnexion, de construire une norme-prix en rapport et capable de soutenir le développement autonome des forces productives.

Enfin la troisième norme à mettre en place pour permettre l'autonomie et la cohérence des structures productives dans la périphérie est *la norme technique*. Cette norme assurera la cohérence des techniques au sein d'une même branche et entre les branches et va bloquer la production de techniques non conformes au principe technique dominant. Ainsi l'existence d'une norme technique autonome dans la périphérie, à travers la maîtrise des techniques importées et le développement des capacités locales de Recherche-Développement (RD), conditionnera et remplira par conséquent une tâche de premier plan dans la définition d'une période de croissance stable.

La construction de ces trois normes nous paraît un point de passage obligé à la déconnexion des périphéries du mouvement de transnationalisation de la production et un préalable à la structuration d'une cohérence productive autonome.

James Barnes, *Gabon, Beyond the Colonial Legacy*, Boulder:
Westview Press, 1992 163 pages.

Jerry Komia Domatob*

African books - let alone those on Francophone states - published in English
are scarce. Indeed, they are few and far between. Researchers, teachers,
scholars and even general readers often rely on encyclopaedias, newspapers,
magazines and outdated texts for information on these countries. One of
such micro states with scanty literature in English is the central African
country - Gabon.

Ohio University political science professor James F. Barnes has done a
great service to African studies by focusing on this Francophone African
territory. His book *Gabon: Beyond the Colonial Legacy* provides an analyti-
cal overview of the history, political economy, culture and social structure of
this sparsely populated but mineral rich central African state. In many
respects, he has embarked upon a pioneering mission.

Written in Lucid and vivid language, the book consists of 6 chapters:

1) Early History to independence;

2) THE Post Independence Era;

3) The Economy;

4) The Society;

5) Foreign Relations and

6) Looking to the Future.

A central thesis of the book is that Gabon's identity as a modern state is
indelibly marked by its long-standing relationship with Europe and the
United States. As Barnes asserts:

> *Gabon's transition from colony to nation-state barely disturbed the*
> *pattern of economic relationships with France. At the time of*
> *independence in 1960, the French concluded a number of agreements*
> *with the Gabonese that guaranteed a continuing, preeminent role for*
> *the French in Gabonese economic affairs.*

In a balanced and brilliant style, Barnes addresses burning issues which are
pertinent to Gabon in particular and Francophone Africa in general. Typical-
ly, he sets out to answer fundamental but pertinent questions germane to that
nation. How did Gabon emerge as a modern state? Which were the major
ethnic groups that existed or migrated into Gabon? What role did imperial

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* PhD Student and Research Associate, E W Scripps School of Journalism,
Ohio University, Athens-Ohio.

masters especially the French play in the birth of Gabon? Who were the first leaders of Gabon? How is the Gabonese polity, society, culture and social system functioning in the post independence era? With the aid of photos, current tables, charts, figures and other graphic illustrations, Barnes provides some answers to these questions.

Against the backdrop of a brief geographical description and a detailed historical account, Barnes presents an incisive overview of this country. Gabon, one of Africa's small but mineral rich states, is located astride the equator on the Atlantic coast. With a landmass of 267.537 square km, it is bounded on the east by Congo and on the north by Equatorial Guinea and Cameroon. With a contested population figure of about 1,5 million, Gabon has vast mineral reserves of oil, iron ore, manganese and uranium. This largely explains why the French and Americans have great interest in that country.

After years of inter-ethnic strife among the Mpongwes, Orungus and later on the Fang who emigrated from Cameroon and elsewhere in the south, Gabon finally fell under French colonial tutelage. At the celebrated Berlin Congress of 1884, France which intensified its search for colonies after it's defeat at the Franco-Prussian war incorporated Gabon into its African empire. In 1910 it became a part of the French equatorial federation with headquarters in Brazzaville, Congo.

Gabon attained independence in 1960 under the leadership of Leon Mba amidst political turmoil and dissension. In 1964, military officers attempted to overthrow Lean Mba but French intervened and salvaged his regime. On Mba's death in 1967, his former chief of Cabinet Albert Bernard Bongo took over and has since ruled the country using the carrot and stick. Blending benign facets of an enlighten despot and the ruthless tyrannical tactics of crushing opponents, Bongo has ruled this state for over two decades.

Barnes contends that the Babongo or Pygmies are widely acknowledged to be the first Gabonese. However, the Bantus later emigrated to the region probably due to climatic conditions and the fall of the great empires. He argues that owing to conflicting and fragmentary evidence, it is difficult to evaluate the significance of Gabon's precolonial era on the evolution of contemporary Gabon. A pertinent issue he raises is the degree to which Africans contributed to the obnoxious slave trade. Barnes contends that they were active though in some cases reluctant participants.

Gabon is graphically depicted as a dependent neocolony *par excellence*. While tactfully avoiding the crude jargon which sometimes characterizes neo-Marxists analysis, Barnes nonetheless does justice to the subject through logical arguments and statistical evidence. He submits that Gabon's accession to independence was accompanied by agreements which reinforced its economic dependence.

> *Overall, Gabon's economy developed in direct proportion to the French interests in its natural resources producing an economy that relied until the 1970s almost exclusively on France for capital investments and markets.*

Like most emerging states, Gabon is a major food importer with a weak infrastructure and transportation network. Foreign exchange is earned from the export of petroleum, wood, manganese and uranium. However, manufacturing is at the building stage and represents approximately 7% of the GNP. The 1980s witnessed a sharp decline in exports and an increase in imports. Although efforts are being made to diversify the economy, France remains the main trading partner with a domineering influence in all sectors. Although Gabon has one of the highest literacy rates in Africa, the poor public health system is another major stumbling block to national development.

Gabon: Beyond the Colonial Legacy asserts that the society is a complex entity where ethnic tensions sometimes jeopardize the quest for nationhood. With nearly fifty ethnic groups that fall into eight linguistic families: Myene, Kota, Duma, Tshogho, Mbete, Punu-Eshira and Teke, conflicts abound. The largest group, the Fangs evoke the suspicions and even the hostility of the others. There is the apprehension that they have ambitions of dominating national institutions.

Colonialism and the partitioning of Africa compounded the Gabonese problem. The power and authority of traditional institutions declined and new value systems based on education and money were introduced. Ethnic groups like the Bateke and Batoka were separated by artificial boundaries. Today Batekes can be found in both Congo and Gabon while the Fang straddle Gabon, Equatorial Guinea and Cameroon.

After a period of contest between Catholics and Protestants, the former emerged as victors and Gabon has a large number of Catholics.

> *Despite their attachment to Catholicism, many Gabonese continue to engage in rituals and practices based on traditions of animism that vary from forms of ancestor worship to secret male societies whose members believe in their power to transform themselves into lions and leopards.*

Although westernization holds sway in the region, many Gabonese still believe and practice sorcery.

An admirable trait of this book is the incisive analysis based on the history, politics and sociology of Gabon. His critical assessment of why Bongo was selected as a successor as well as the *raison d'être* for French intervention after the 1964 military coup are eloquent examples of the authors competence. Although Barnes is objective and cautious, he is occasionally blunt and frank. He claims that Gabon's quest for stability has been at the high

price of human rights pulverization, citing arrests and deportation arising from mild criticisms as being commonplace.

> *The regime's congenial public face conceals a system of power and privilege that has maintained itself through intimidation and, possibly murder and assassination.*

The book cautiously predicts a bright future for Gabonese suggesting that pluralism and democratization are crucial components for success. Barnes concludes that the future of the Gabonese state is partly in the hands of France, the United States and the international monetary community. According to him, Gabonese authoritarian system survived because the outward signs of stability and order pleased those who rate their investments higher than political and economic justice. If the Gabonese fail in their efforts to implement a multiparty democracy, the fault will not be solely theirs.

Even if certain facts in the book are outdated, owing to the fast pace of events in Gabon, these do invalidate the fact that this is a splendid book. The historical account on the emergence of modern day Gabon is just superb. Using primary and secondary sources, Barnes provides an indepth history of Gabon. The socio-political analysis too is excellent. With the aid of facts, illustrations and corroborative evidence, the reader is introduced to all facets of Gabonese life.

More than anything else, the book is a profile of this rich central African state which has been the victim of loot and plunder by imperial overlords and today is still under the yoke of neocolonialists. Barnes has written a brief but leading text with a plethora and wealth of information on Gabon in a trenchant, persuasive and readable form. He deserves commendation for an outstanding job.

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Notes to Contributors

Manuscripts should be double-spaced with notes, references, tables and charts on separate pages. Camera-ready copies of maps, tables, charts, graphs and other illustrations will be welcome. An abstract of 150 to 200 words stating the main research problem, major findings and conclusions should be sent with the articles for translation into English or French.

Authors should indicate their full name, address, their academic status and their current institutional affiliation. This should appear on a separate covering page since manuscripts will be sent out anonymously to outside readers. Manuscripts will not be returned to the authors.

Articles submitted to *Africa Development* should be original contribution and should not be under consideration by another publication at the same time: if an article is under consideration by another publication the author should inform the editor at the time of submission.

Authors are entitled, free of charge, to two copies of the issue in which their article appears and 20 off-prints of their article.

Avis aux Auteurs

Les manuscrits doivent être tapés en double interligne avec les notes, références, tableaux et graphiques sur des feuilles séparées. Nous souhaiterions recevoir les prêt-à-photographier des cartes, tableaux, graphiques et autres illustrations. Un résumé de 150 à 200 mots indiquant le problème fondamental de recherche ainsi que les principaux résultats et conclusions doit accompagner les articles pour des fins de traduction en anglais ou en français.

Les auteurs doivent indiquer leur nom au complet, leur adresse, leur situation académique ainsi que leur rattachement institutionnel actuel. Ces informations doivent figurer sur une feuille à part puisque les articles seront envoyés aux arbitres à l'extérieur dans l'anonymat. Les manuscrits ne seront pas retournés aux auteurs.

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Les auteurs reçoivent gratuitement deux exemplaires du numéro dans lequel leur article est publié ainsi que 20 tirés-à-part de leur article.

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