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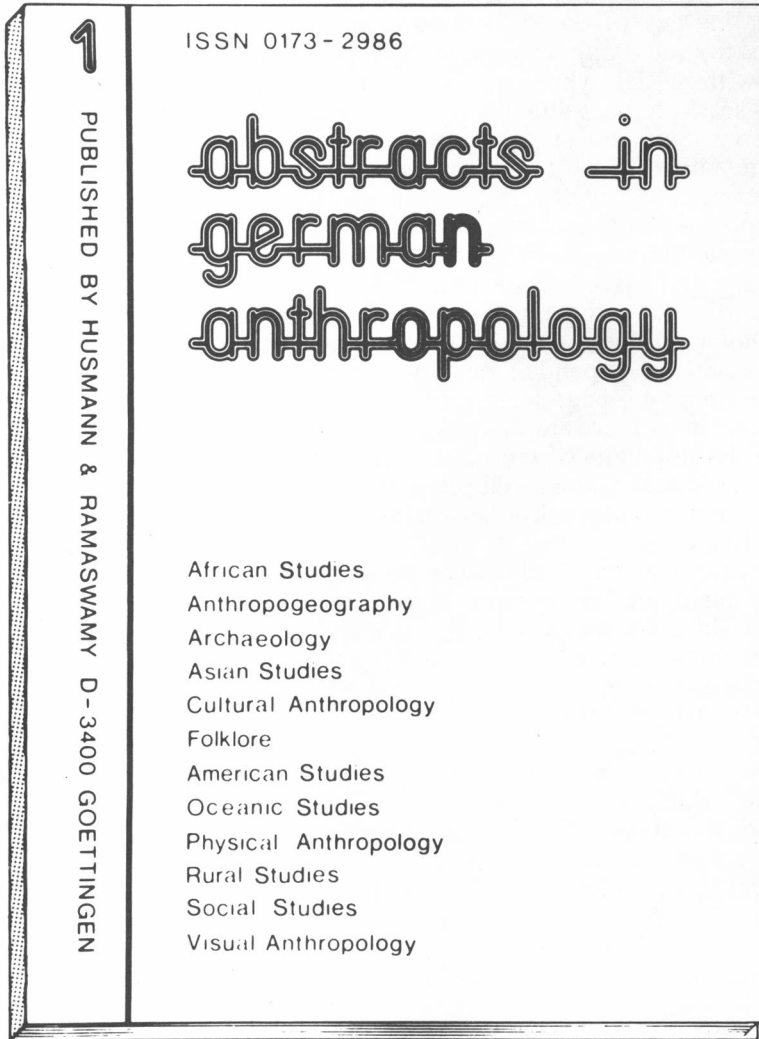
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A NEW DIMENSION IN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
ASSISTANCE: THE ROLE OF THE ORGANISATION OF
PETROLEUM EXPORTING COUNTRIES (OPEC)

By

*F. Akin OLALOKU **

I – INTRODUCTION

With the Second Development Decade now approaching its end, the international development programme in retrospect, does not seem to have achieved the desired objective of improving the living standards of the masses in developing countries. If anything, the developing countries have continued to become poorer and poorer, while the so called developed ones have continued to be richer and richer. Thus the gap between the poor and the rich has widened than ever before.

Despite the almost two decades of concerted efforts on the part of the United Nations to make the developed countries assume part of the responsibility for making the poor countries develop economically, by the offer of assistance in the form of direct transfer of resources, response on the part of the former group of countries has been rather disappointing. In addition the hope that the economic mechanism for effecting an equitable distribution of world resources between the developed and developing countries would improve in favour of the latter has not materialised. On the contrary, due to the persistent unfavourable world economic conditions of the last ten to fifteen years, the mechanism has operated in a continuous adverse manner for developing economies. The resulting situation has reached the stage where the need has become greatly felt for working out a strategy for a new world economic system, by which the developing countries would have what appears to everyone and all as an equitable share of world resources.

The above has been the task in the last few years of various international organisations such as the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and more recently, the Conference on International Economic Co-operation (CIEC), more commonly known as the North-South Dialogue. These bodies have provided forums through conferences and meetings for debates and dialogues on the important issues of development as they affect the developed and developing countries alike.

The foregoing efforts, despite the enthusiasm which they have generated on the part of everyone concerned, have not succeeded in bringing about a positive solution. The ensuing disenchantment, especially among developing countries, has led the latter to organise and cooperate with one another. The logic underlying such organisation and cooperation is that the ever deteriorating terms of trade for primary products could be reversed if prices can be raised by combining to control supply. One important organisation that has emerged in the last few years as a world economic force in this connection is the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).

* *Department of Economics, University of Lagos, Lagos, Nigeria.*

Although organisations of this type for other major primary products exported by developing countries have been rather ineffective in the past, the OPEC, being a cartel and because of its monopoly power has been able to control the price of oil very effectively. Thus, in 1973, what has now come to be regarded in popular discussions as the «oil crisis» was caused as a result of OPEC increasing the price of crude oil almost four-fold. It was in fact this event that led to a new dimension in the international development assistance effort. Given the increasing interdependence of the world economies, the increased price of oil created for non-oil developing countries a new problem of large adverse balance of payments resulting not only from higher oil import bills but also from higher prices paid for machinery and equipment imported from the industrialized countries where the increased price of oil has pushed up production costs.

In order to relieve the non-oil developing countries of the above problem, OPEC member countries have felt obliged to offer assistance in the form of loans and grants to aid the former's development programmes. This new role of OPEC in the international development assistance effort is the focus of attention in this paper. In Section II of the paper, we shall take a look at the whole question of international development assistance past and present as well as assess the result of the efforts on the part on the developed countries which have been offering assistance to the developing countries over the last two decades or so. In Section III, an examination of the nature and pattern of OPEC's new role in development assistance will be undertaken, while Section IV will give a summary and conclusion of the paper.

II — BACKGROUND: THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCENE PAST AND PRESENT

Living standards in most of the developing world at the beginning of the 1960's, by which time many of the former colonies in this part of the world has attained political independence, were very low. Per capita income, the usual measure of living standards ranged from just over N50 in Nigeria, N70 in India to between N90 and N100 in Ghana. On the other hand, in many developed countries, the per capita income was as high as twenty times these figures and even higher in some.

It was the foregoing appallingly wide gap in living standards between the developed (rich) countries and the developing (poor) ones, which led the United Nations to proclaim in 1961, the decade 1961–70 as the Development Decade. During this period, it was hoped that the former group of countries would be reconciled to their obligations towards the latter. Given the enormous resource gap for economic development which exists in developing countries, the rich nations' obligation towards the poor would take the form of direct transfer of resources in aid of economic development. Towards this end, a target came to be set as to what level of aid was needed to accomplish this task, or at least make an appreciable contribution towards doing so (1).

Results of the efforts on the part of aid donors at the end of the decade was disappointingly far from the target set (2). Infact, if anything, there was a decline as can be seen clearly from Table I. For example, as a percentage of GNP, total aid flows to developing countries from DAC member countries on the whole declined from 0.52 in 1960 to 0.34 in 1970. When looked at individually, the pattern is generally the same with most countries, though, the level of assistance varied from country to country. Infact, it was only in the case of five or six of the sixteen DAC member countries (Canada, Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland) for which the ratio of aid to GNP increased appreciably during the decade.

TABLE I
*The Net Flow of Aid from DAC Member Countries
as a Percentage of GDP – 1960 and 1970 **

DAC Member Countries	Aid Flows as % of GDP	
	1960	1970
Australia	0.38	0.59
Austria	—	0.13
Belgium	0.88	0.48
Canada	0.19	0.43
Denmark	0.09	0.38
France	1.38	0.65
Germany	0.31	0.32
Italy	0.22	0.16
Japan	0.24	0.23
Netherlands	0.31	0.63
Norway	0.11	0.33
Portugal	1.45	0.45
Sweden	0.05	0.37
Switzerland	0.04	0.14
United Kingdom	0.56	0.37
United States	0.53	0.31
Total	0.52	0.34

* *Flow of aid here refers to Official Development Assistance (ODA).*

Source: DAC, *Annual Review, 1971*, p.174. Reproduced from John White, *The Politics of Foreign Aid*, (London: The Bodley Head 1974), p. 232.

In consequence of the above, the developing countries were still confronted at the end of the decade with the problem of an enormous resource gap for development. As a matter of fact, the problem by this time was seriously compounded by other developments. In the first place, with the growth of comprehensive development planning in the developing countries, the absorptive capacity of these countries for external resources had increased very rapidly. Secondly, with a continuous deterioration in their terms of trade, most developing countries were faced with severe balance of payments problems which absorbed an appreciable proportion of the external resources available to them for promoting economic development (3). Apart from the oil-producing developing countries, export earnings had stagnated generally in all developing countries due to the slack in demand in the industrialized countries which account for close to four-fifths of world's import of primary products (4).

Thirdly, due to the considerable short fall in official aid flows which were characteristically given on «soft» terms, developing countries were increasingly forced to borrow from private sources in order to augment (5). Towards the latter years of the decade, such private borrowing, which were usually on «hard» terms had accumulated into large sums, with its attendant servicing problems and resulting balance of payments difficulties (6). Additionally, the gradual hardening of official aid flows and the expiration of the grace periods for those that were given earlier on in the decade, created formidable difficulties in the form of accelerated servicing obligations. These debt servicing obligations were estimated to have increased over the years by as much as 17 per cent per annum and in 1970 alone, they rose by 18 per cent (7). Put somewhat differently, their rate of increase was such that, they were eating up quite a substantial proportion of new flows of aid. For example, when looked at from this perspective, debt service obligations on the average amounted to 87, 73, 52 and 40 per cent of new aid flows in Latin America, Africa, East Asia and Middle East respectively between 1965 and 1967 (8). These developments further accentuated the external resource gap problem. As the Pearson Report aptly puts it, «. . . repayment burdens have caused many debtor governments to deplete their reserves and suffer liquidity crises which have forced them to adopt stringent exchange controls» (9).

In spite of the above militating factors against development, economic growth performance in developing countries was quite impressive. For instance, the average rate of growth of output per year was over 5.5 per cent, while the average increase in per capita income was slightly above 3.0 per cent (10). But this does not mean that the usual indicators of economic underdevelopment have completely disappeared in these countries. By the end of the 1961–70 decade, the economies of developing countries were still characterized by an increasing burden of poverty as well as «. . . severely skewed income distribution, excessive levels of unemployment, high rates of infant mortality, low rates of literacy, serious malnutrition and widespread ill health» (11). These problems of economic underdevelopment still remain largely unsolved. While a good deal was accomplished by the mobilization of resources from within, a big

constraint was imposed by the inadequate complementary inflow of external resources, either through trade or aid (12).

The above circumstances as well as the failure of the second UNCTAD Conference in New Delhi in 1968 to reach any concrete and definite agreement between the developed and developing countries on trade and aid, generated a general sense of disappointment and disillusionment with the whole question of international development viewed against the whole background of the record of the decade. It was in this context that the World Bank in August 1968, appointed the Commission on International Development under the Chairmanship of Mr. Lester B. Pearson. This commission among other things, was « . . . to examine the progress and problems experienced in the field of international aid and development assistance over the last twenty years, and to make recommendations on the best policies and methods to promote economic growth of the developing world in the years to come . . . » (13). It was hoped that the work of the Commission would help to counter the general disillusionment over the effectiveness of development assistance during the decade of the 1960's, which had by this time become widespread. It was also expected that the recommendations of the Commission would provide the framework for developing a new strategy for an effective development assistance in the 1970's which was named the Second Development Decade beginning in January 1, 1971.

The idea of a Second Development Decade carries the implication that the 1960s, being the First Development Decade was too short to accomplish the enormous task of development in poor countries. Thus, it was thought that the following decade would offer another opportunity for all concerned to adopt a more positive approach towards this task. Accordingly, the Pearson Commission noted in its report that it was possible to conquer poverty world-wide without any revolutionary changes if the rich countries would set aside just 1 per cent of their GNP in aid and remove all trade barriers against goods from developing countries (14). If such improvements could be accomplished, the Commission firmly believed that the problems of world poverty would be virtually solved. These and other proposals included in the United Nations strategy for the Second Development Decade such as a growth rate of 6 per cent per annum during the decade in developing countries, were ratified by most developed donor countries. It was in this regard that the Pearson Commission was looked upon as a milestone in the history of international development. But trends on the international development scene since the publication of the report are far from vindicating the hopes of the Commission.

As already pointed out above, although the Pearson aid targets were adopted by most donor countries, and with the deadline of 1975 for meeting the target well behind us, there is still a considerable gap between the target and the amount of aid actually committed not to talk of actual disbursements which are usually lower than commitments. The trend in real official aid flows between 1971 and 1975 confirms this assertion. For example, whereas in 1971, Official Development Assistance (ODA) from all DAC member countries was 0.35 per cent of their GNP, in 1972 and

1973, it fell to 0.34 and 0.30 respectively (Table 2). While it picked up from 0.33 per cent in 1974 to 0.36 per cent in 1975 the level was still just about half of the actual target.

TABLE 2

*DAC Member Countries: Trends in ODA as
Percentage of GNP, 1971 – 1975*

Years	ODA (billion dollars)	Percentages
1971	7.69	0.35
1972	8.54	0.34
1973	9.38	0.30
1974	11.32	0.33
1975	13.61	0.36

Sources:— Compiled from *World Bank Annual Report, 1976*,
op. cit., p. 10.

The record, with regard to total development assistance, i.e. both ODA and private inflows of aid was more encouraging as it moved gradually closer and closer to the 1 per cent target during the first half of the decade and in fact exceeding it at the end of that period. This can be seen clearly from Table 3. For example, total development assistance increased from 0.80 per cent of donors' GNP to 1.02 per cent between 1971 and 1975. This performance at a glance looks rather impressive, but the growth was due largely to the non-ODA component of aid flows. The component which consists largely of export credits, have more than anything else aggravated the debt problems of developing countries. As already observed, since this component of aid is usually on relatively «harder» terms, they cause debt servicing obligations to accelerate, thereby eating up a substantial part of new inflows of aid. On the whole therefore, it will appear that the external resource needs of developing countries in the form of aid from the rich countries is still far from being met and in the present circumstance, it is difficult to see how the UN strategy for the Second Development Decade will succeed in alleviating poverty from the world. Given the key role of foreign exchange in economic development, the availability of external resources in the right amounts still remains a critical factor in the economic development of poor countries. As the World Bank Report for 1976 puts it, «... the availability of external resources on concessionary terms has been, and continues to be a major factor in permitting the poorest countries of the world to implement their long term development programmes» (15).

TABLE 3

*Total Development Assistance from DAC Member Countries
as Percentage of GNP, 1971 – 1975*

Years	Total Assistance Official and Private* (billion dollars)	Percentages
1971	17.85	0.80
1972	19.69	0.77
1973	24.66	0.79
1974	27.98	0.82
1975	38.83	1.02

* Includes Official Development Assistance (ODA) export credits extended by official and private sectors, direct and port folio investment as well as grants by private voluntary agencies.

Sources:— As for Table 2 above.

But if the foreign exchange constraint cannot be removed through adequate inflows of aid, perhaps, the obvious option is to earn foreign exchange through exports. Exports constitute a potential source of foreign exchange earnings. But there are also limitations in this respect. For example, considerable trade barriers still exist in the developed countries against the imports of both primary products as well as manufactures from developing countries. Despite the many discussions on the commodity trade problems of developing countries through international forums such as the UNCTAD and the CIEC (the North-South Dialogue), only a few countries have taken measures to remove, or at least lower trade barriers against exports from developing countries. One other major factor has been the slack in the demand of the developed countries for exports from developing countries. Thus, export earnings may stagnate or at best increase rather slowly, if productive capacity in developed countries rises only very slowly.

While growth in developing countries as a whole, has been encouraging during the first half of the Second Development Decade, with the growth rate of GNP reaching the 6 per cent UN target on the average, given all the above factors, the future of international development, though, not bleak is rather uncertain. It is against this background, that we wish to examine the role of OPEC in the international development assistance effort in the following section.

III — THE ROLE OF OPEC COUNTRIES IN THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE EFFORT *

With the foregoing uncertainty about the future of international development, considerable pressure has been mounted on the part of developing countries against the developed ones for a just solution to the problem of international development. The former group of countries have come to see the declining trend in official development assistance (ODA) and the barriers imposed on their trade by the latter as a deliberate strategy against development in poor countries. The present pattern of world trade they argue, and correctly too, is inimical to a just distribution of world resources. They therefore demand, and rightly too, a more rapid and just redistribution of world resources to effect a more rapid development of their economies.

Developing countries have consistently pressed the above issues on several international fronts. For example, the UN in May 1974, at a plenary session on raw materials and problems of development adopted the «Declaration on the Creation of a New International Economic Order». Also, in the same year, at the regular autumn session of its General Assembly, the UN passed a resolution on a «Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States. In 1975, the UNCTAD's secretary general submitted a draft proposal for a comprehensive raw materials programme which was put forward for consideration before UNCTAD's Committee on raw materials. In September 1975, the UN in another plenary session passed another resolution embracing all aspects of development and international economic co-operation. Finally, during the first half of last year, the Conference on International Economic Co-operation (CIEC), otherwise known as the North-South Dialogue between producers and consumers of raw materials, discussed a number of issues affecting the international economic relations, between the rich industrialized nations and developing countries, ranging from the problems of world commodity prices and that of the huge international debts of developing countries.

The atmosphere of the discussions in these international forums has always been one of antagonism between the parties concerned. The state of affairs has been due to the general attitude of approaching every issue from the point of view of self interest and the result has usually been protracted arguments and interminable debates. Thus, positive results, if any, from the various deliberations have been very limited. The ensuing lull and the resultant dissatisfaction, have made developing countries (which are most of the time demanding concessions) adopt strategies to protect their interests. One such strategy has been the action of OPEC countries to increase the price of their crude oil from time to time beginning with the four-fold increase in September 1973. Although, the measure was directed against the rich industrialized countries, which are the

(*) *The 13 OPEC countries are Algeria, Ecuador, Gabon, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Nigeria, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Venezuela.*

major consumers of the product, the poorer non-oil producing developing countries came to be affected very adversely. Due to higher import bills for their oil and other essential imports, these countries were plunged into unprecedented balance of payments crisis which cut into their foreign exchange resources very severely (17). It was in these circumstances that the OPEC countries decided to help these countries by the offer of financial aid in a relatively big way.

One of the major effects of the big increase in the price of crude oil in September 1973, has been the enormous accumulation of foreign exchange reserves through balance of payments surpluses accruing to OPEC countries. For example, OPEC countries' surpluses rose about nine-fold from 4.8 billion dollars in 1973 to 44.7 billion dollars in 1975 (18). This new source of wealth has enabled OPEC countries to implement their decision to aid their poorer sister countries at a time when a combination of factors which we already enumerated (including the action of OPEC countries themselves to increase the price of oil) have severely limited the availability of their foreign exchange resources. Thus, after about two decades of the exclusive confinement of aid giving to the industrialized countries of the West, the OPEC countries decided to join the league under different circumstances.

1. *The General Picture of OPEC Aid Flows:—*

While a few members of OPEC have been giving aid in the past on a rather restricted scale, the concerted effort on the part of a majority of OPEC countries to give aid to developing countries on a systematic and relatively large scale, started when the price of oil quadruppled in September 1973 (19). Until then, some limited amount of aid from a few oil-producing Arab countries went to a few non-oil producing Arab countries, mainly for budgetary support (20). The proportion of this aid going to direct economic development was relatively small (21).

Since the big jump in the price of oil in September 1973, total aid flows from OPEC countries to developing countries both on concessionary and non-concessionary terms have increased very significantly, with commitments rising from 1.5 billion dollars in 1973 to 8.1 billion dollars in 1974 and to 9.2 billion dollars in 1975. Corresponding disbursements rose from 0.9 billion dollars in 1973 to 4.7 billion dollars and to 5.9 billion dollars in 1974 and 1975 respectively (Table 4). With the creation of OPEC Special Fund in 1976, the capital sum of 800 million dollars was made available for disbursement that year (22). Finally, in its recent meeting in Stockholm some few weeks back, the Finance Ministers of OPEC countries approved funds to the tune of 148.7 million dollars in long-term interest – free loans to finance development projects in various developing countries, covering highways, irrigation and hydro-electric power, with 42 of such projects already accepted for funding (23).

It will appear from the above that OPEC aid to developing countries is on the decline, starting from last year. This is not surprising since the level of past OPEC countries' aid commitments have been related to the level of their balance of payments surpluses on current account. With these surpluses now running down fast, OPEC aid is bound to decline in sympathy (24).

TABLE 4

*OPEC Countries: Total Aid Flows to Developing Countries
1973 - 1975 (billion dollars)*

Years/Type of aid	Commitments	Disbursements
1973 Concessionary	„	„
Non-concessionary	„	„
Total	1.5	0.9
1974 Concessionary	3.9 (48.1)	2.5 (53.2)
Non-concessionary	4.2 (51.9)	2.2 (46.8)
Total	8.1 (100.0)	4.7 (100.0)
1975 Concessionary	4.9 (53.3)	2.7 (45.8)
Non-concessionary	4.3 (46.9)	3.2 (54.2)
Total	9.2 (100.0)	5.9 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses represent the percentage share of each aid type.

„ = not available.

Source:— *DAC Annual Review, 1976*, (Paris: OECD, 1976).

2. Sources of OPEC Aid Flows

OPEC aid flows to developing countries come from different sources, the most important being bilateral. This source in 1974 and 1975 accounted for 80.4 and 86.0 per cent respectively of all concessionary assistance (Tables 5 and 6). This pattern is also reflected generally in the aid flows of individual OPEC countries, except in a few cases like Algeria, Nigeria and Venezuela. However, in the case of Nigeria, it was only in 1974 that its bilateral assistance was relatively small being only 8.0 per cent. By 1975, the situation had altered drastically, with as much as 68.8 per cent being in the form of bilateral assistance.

The remainder of OPEC's development assistance goes through multilateral institutions, with the UN agencies, the Third Window (24) and Arab institutions such as the Islamic Development Bank (IDB), the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (ABEDA), the Special Arab Fund for Africa (SAFA), the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) Special Account and the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD) accounting for the bulk of commitments and disbursements (25).

In terms of source by donor countries, the major part of OPEC assistance comes from five Arab countries – Saudi Arabia, Iran, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates and Iraq in that order. These countries between them accounted for 85.9 and 91.4 per cent in 1974 and 1975 respectively (Tables 5 and 6). The rank of Nigeria in the level of assistance is particularly striking, being the last but one donor in 1974 and the last in 1975 with its level of assistance representing 0.6 and 0.3 per cent in these years.

One other source of OPEC assistance, though it is an indirect one, is the Eurocurrency market through which OPEC countries' surplus funds have been made available for lending through European banks and other financial institutions for the financing of projects in developing countries. More recently, this source has provided developing countries with a readily accessible source of finance to supplement their adequate traditional sources of borrowing. In 1974 alone OPEC's placement of funds on this market reached a level of 21.0 billion dollars or 30 per cent of their surplus funds (26). At the end of 1975, developing countries lodged 28 per cent of the total placements on the Eurocurrency market and of this 38 per cent came from OPEC countries (27).

3. The Nature and Character of OPEC Aid Flows:

Given the relatively recent entry of OPEC countries into the aid-giving league, the level of achievement so far has been encouraging. For example, the level of assistance in 1974 and 1975 stood at 1.35 and 1.36 per cent of their combined GNP (see Tables 5 and 6). This compares with the level of 0.33 and 0.36 per cent for DAC countries in these same years. It is also encouraging to note, that, whereas the concessionary component of OPEC aid commitments was less than one-half of the total (48.1 per cent) in 1974, by 1975 it had increased to 53.3 per cent. On the other hand, it is rather discouraging to observe that for actual disbursements, this trend is reversed with concessionary aid representing 53.2 per cent of total assistance in 1974 and 45.8 per cent in 1975 (Table 4). This gives an indication of increased hardening of terms. For example, when compared with the performance of DAC member countries, OPEC countries compare rather unfavourably (28). This is due to the declining trend in the grant element (29) of OPEC bilateral aid, which stood at 85, 74 and 65 per cent in 1973, 1974 and 1975 respectively – a situation arising from the equally declining trend in the grants component of OPEC commitments. These were 74, 58 and 38 per cent in 1973, 1974 and 1975

Table 5

OPDC Countries: Concessional Commitments and Disbursements of
Aid Flows to Developing Countries by Source and Donor, 1974

Donor Country	Commitments (\$ million)					Disbursements (\$ million)					
	(1) Total	(2) Bila- teral	(3) Multi- lateral	(4) % as % of (1)	(5) % as % of (1)	(6) Total	(7) Bila- teral	(8) Multi- lateral	(9) % as % of (6)	(10) % as % of (6)	(11) % as % of (6)
Algeria	60.7 (1.6)	4.8	55.9	7.9	92.1	42.7 (1.7)	2.8	39.9	6.6	93.7	0.3
Iran	799.7 (20.6)	777.3	22.4	97.2	2.8	332.7 (13.4)	310.3	22.4	93.3	6.7	0.7
Iraq	492.6 (12.6)	427.0	65.6	86.7	13.3	405.6 (16.3)	372.0	33.6	91.7	8.3	3.1
Kuwait	494.8 (12.7)	392.2	102.6	79.3	20.7	274.8 (11.0)	225.0	49.8	81.9	18.1	2.2
Libya	235.8 (6.1)	135.2	100.6	57.3	42.7	117.6 (4.7)	88.5	29.1	75.3	24.7	1.0
Nigeria	9.9 (0.3)	0.8	9.1	8.0	92.0	9.9 (0.4)	0.8	9.1	8.0	92.0	0.0
Qatar	128.1 (3.5)	97.8	30.3	76.3	23.1	86.5 (3.5)	76.0	10.5	87.9	22.1	4.3
Saudi Arabia	1,012.9 (26.1)	812.1	200.8	80.2	19.8	870.0 (35.0)	790.0	80.0	90.8	9.2	2.4
UAE	541.8 (13.9)	459.4	82.4	84.8	15.2	291.9 (11.7)	260.0	31.9	89.1	18.1	3.8
Venezuela	111.0 (2.9)	20.0	91.0	18.8	81.2	56.0 (2.3)	15.0	41.0	26.7	73.3	0.2
TOTAL	3,887.3	3,126.6	760.7	80.4	19.6	2,487.7	2,140.4	347.3	86.0	14.0	1.3

Figures in parentheses are individual countries' percentage shares.
Source: - As per Table 4 above.

Table 6

OPEC Countries: Concessional Commitments and Disbursements of
Aid Flows to Developing Countries by Source and Donor, 1975

Donor Country	Commitments (\$ million)					Disbursements (\$ million)					
	(1) Total	(2) Bilateral	(3) Multilateral	(4) % of (1)	(5) % of (1)	(6) Total	(7) Bilateral	(8) Multilateral	(9) % of (6)	(10) % of (6)	(11) % of GNI
Algeria	31.5 (0.7)	5.8	25.7	18.4	81.6	15.7 (0.6)	2.0	13.7	12.7	87.3	0.12
Iran	1,272.3 (27.2)	1,267.9	4.4	99.7	0.3	485.4 (17.7)	481.0	4.4	99.1	0.9	0.85
Iraq	320.3 (6.8)	294.8	25.5	92.0	8.0	224.8 (8.2)	190.0	34.8	84.5	15.5	1.48
Kuwait	612.7 (13.1)	500.0	112.7	81.6	18.4	330.5 (12.0)	250.0	80.5	75.6	24.4	2.75
Libya	124.6 (2.7)	56.3	68.3	45.2	54.8	175.7 (6.4)	100.0	75.7	56.9	43.1	1.72
Nigeria	29.7 (0.6)	20.4	9.3	68.6	31.4	29.7 (1.1)	20.4	9.3	68.6	21.4	0.15
Qatar	203.2 (4.3)	177.6	25.6	87.4	22.6	152.0 (5.5)	125.0	27.0	82.2	17.8	6.61
Saudi Arabia	1,676.4 (35.8)	1,438.8	237.6	85.8	14.2	906.4 (33.0)	675.0	231.4	74.5	25.4	2.60
UAE	399.4 (8.5)	338.2	61.2	84.7	15.3	403.7 (14.7)	345.0	58.7	85.5	14.5	4.64
Venezuela	11.5 (0.2)	-	11.5	-	100.0	24.9 (0.9)	-	24.9	-	100.0	0.08
TOTAL	4,681.6 (100.0)	4,099.8	581.8	87.6	12.4	2,748.8 (100.0)	2,188.4	560.4	79.6	30.4	1.35

*Figures in parentheses are individual countries percentage shares. 1.50 per cent if Nigeria is omitted.

Source:- As for Table 5 above.

respectively (Table 7). Although, as already observed, the level of Nigeria's assistance is low, in fact one of the lowest, her performance from the point of view of aid terms is about the best with 100 per cent of overall grant element (30). One remarkable feature of OPEC aid is the almost complete absence of tying. Except for the few cases of oil and fertilizer sales on credit, virtually all OPEC aid is untied. This is an advantage over DAC aid for which tying has been a major disadvantage.

TABLE 7

*OPEC Countries: Terms Performance of
Concessionary Commitments, 1973 - 1975*

Element	Percentages		
	1973	1974	1975
Grants as % of total Commitments	74	58	38
Grant element of bilateral Commitments	84	68	59
Grant element of loans	41	39	43

Source:— *DAC, Annual Review, 1976, op. cit.*

The most spectacular feature of OPEC aid flows is their geographical distribution. This is given in Table 8 below. From this table, the geographical concentration of OPEC assistance is unmistakable. In 1974 for instance, the bulk of total OPEC concessionary commitments (90.0 per cent) went to the Arab countries, India and Pakistan. Out of this, 65.9 per cent (59.3 per cent of the total) went to the Arab countries alone, with Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Oman in that order accounting for the greater part. The pattern is pretty much the same for 1975. India and Pakistan have benefitted greatly as recipients of OPEC assistance. In 1974 23.9 per cent and 7.8 per cent of total OPEC aid went to Pakistan and India respectively. In 1975, the order was reversed with India accounting for 23.2 per cent and Pakistan, 3.5 per cent. The geographical distribution of OPEC non-concessionary aid is the same as that of the concessionary aid. In this connection, it is pretty clear that political rather than economic basis has been the overriding factor in the distribution of OPEC aid — a situation that is likely to persist for as long as the Arabs are in confrontation with some states. This development is not a healthy one for the future of international development.

Finally, OPEC aid flows to developing countries have gone mainly into the financing of budgetary support and war relief (31). The level of project aid, though rising, is low when compared with that of DAC countries (32).

TABLE 8

OPEC Countries: Geographical Distribution of
Aid Flows, 1974 and 1975

Recipient Countries	Percentage Shares	
	1974	1975
Arab Countries	59.3	60.2
Egypt	21.6	24.0
Syria	9.7	12.2
Jordan	16.2	6.5
Oman	4.8	3.6
Others	17.0	13.9
India	7.8	23.2
Pakistan	23.9	3.5
Others	9.0	13.1

Source:— Compiled from *DAC, Annual Review, 1976, op. cit.*

IV — CONCLUSION

Against the background of the general dissatisfaction and disillusionment on the part of developing countries, with the unsatisfactory working of the international economic system, the OPEC countries emerged as a major aid donor group being second only to the DAC group of countries.

While they are relatively new in this international development assistance effort, the level of achievement of OPEC countries is very encouraging, given the fact that their efforts in real terms have now surpassed that of the DAC countries. As a percentage of their GNP, OPEC countries are now offering more in aid than the DAC countries.

There are however, certain trends in the OPEC effort which are not encouraging. First, most of their offer of assistance is based on political rather than economic criteria as was brought out clearly in our analysis of the geographical distribution of their aid. Second, the bulk of OPEC assistance has been on a bilateral basis with the result that certain aid deserving developing countries have been neglected. This is the case with developing countries which have no special relationship with the major donor countries of OPEC. For example, when OPEC aid flows are viewed in relation to the big deficits of the poorer developing countries due to the higher cost of oil, the foregoing point comes clearly to the fore. It is rather unfortunate to note that the bulk of OPEC aid flows have not been going to those countries which have suffered most by the recent oil price increase.

From the foregoing, OPEC aid flows would be contributing more positively towards the international development assistance effort, if steps are taken to move in the direction of a higher degree of multilateralization in their offer of development assistance. For this same reason, it will be desirable, if in the future the OPEC countries give their offers of aid on the basis of economic rather than political motives.

NOTES

- (1). At its inaugural meeting in Geneva in 1964, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in its Recommendation on «Growth and Aid» set the «one per cent target» (i.e. one per cent of aid donor countries GNP) as the desirable level of aid that would meet the external resource needs of developing countries. This was endorsed by DAC and the failure to meet the target resulted in another resolution to the same effect during the second meeting of UNCTAD in 1968. Cf. Lester Pearson, *et. al. Partners in Development*, (New York: Praeger, 1969), p. 144.
- (2). The aid donors are mostly the 16 member Development Assistance Committee (DAC) countries of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), which account for well over 95 per cent of total aid flows to developing countries. These are Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom and United States. The remainder of foreign aid to developing countries come from communist countries.
- (3). *World Bank International Development Association, Annual Report, 1968*, (Washington D.C.: World Bank, September 1968), p. 31.
- (4). *Ibid.*, p. 32.
- (5). Lester Pearson, *et. al., op. cit.*, pp. 76 – 77.
- (6). *Ibid.*, p. 76. Private lending consists mainly of short-term loans such as suppliers credits and contractor finance. An excessive reliance on this type of loans to satisfy long-term investment needs, which are more common in developing countries, tend to aggravate debt servicing problems.
- (7). *World Bank, International Development Association, Annual Report, 1972*, (Washington, D.C.: September 1972), p. 7.
- (8). Lester Pearson, *et. al., op. cit.* p. 74.
- (9). *Ibid.*, p. 76.
- (10). *World Bank Report, 1972, op. cit.*, p. 5.
- (11). *Ibid.*, p. 5.
- (12). *Ibid.*, p. 5.
- (13). *World Bank, International Development Association, Annual Report, 1969*, (Washington, D.C.: September 1969), p. 24.
- (14). The one per cent of GNP target refers to all forms of development assistance, i.e. both private and official. The Pearson Commission also recommended an aid target of 0.70 per cent of GNP for all Official Development Assistance (ODA) from the developed countries. Cf. Lester Pearson, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

- (15). *World Bank Annual Report 1976*, (Washington, D.C.: June 1976), p. 9, italics mine.
- (16). *The Economist*, (London: September 20, 1975), p. 83.
- (17). For instance, between 1973 and 1974 alone, the balance of payments of non-oil developing countries rose by 9.0 billion dollars of which close to one half was directly due to the higher oil price. Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 84.
- (18). *Ibid.*, p. 84.
- (19). This concerted effort is limited to ten of the thirteen OPEC countries. These are Algeria, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Nigeria, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Venezuela.
- (20). Such aid which came from Kuwait, Libya and Saudi Arabia, averaged about 400 million dollars annually between 1970 and 1973, going to Egypt, Jordan and Syria. Cf. *DAC, Annual Review, 1976, op. cit.*
- (21). Only about 40 to 60 million dollars went for direct economic development purposes. Cf. *Ibid.*
- (22). *Ibid.*
- (23). OPEC Press Release.
- (24). The Third Window is a recently established facility by the World Bank – the Intermediate Financing Facility, whereby a fund created with contributions from the World Bank member countries is made available to subsidize interest rate payments on the Bank's loans to developing countries.
- (25). *DAC, Annual Review, 1976, op. cit.*
- (26). Edith Hodgkinson, «OPEC Aid: The Programme of the Newly Rich», *ODI Review*, No. 2, Vol. 1975, pp. 15 – 25.
- (27). Kevin Pakenham, «The Growth of Euromarkets», *Crown Agents Quarterly Review*, No. 1, (June 1976), p. 24.
- (28). In 1973, the concessionary element of OPEC aid commitments was 85 per cent as against 87 per cent for DAC aid. Cf. *DAC, Annual Review, 1976, op. cit.*
- (29). Defined as the nominal value less the discounted value of the amortization and interest payments.
- (30). This is because Nigeria's total assistance has taken the form of grants only.
- (31). Edith Hodgkinson, *op. cit.*, p. 21.
- (32). *Ibid.*, p. 21. See also *DAC, Annual Review, 1976, op. cit.*

RESUME

La seconde décennie pour le développement tire à sa fin et les différents programmes d'aide internationale n'ont pas donné les résultats escomptés. Au contraire les pays en voie de développement deviennent de plus en plus pauvres alors que les pays riches deviennent de plus en plus riches. Il fallait donc revoir les stratégies de développement, ce qui a été l'activité principale des organismes tels que la Banque Internationale pour la Reconstruction et le Développement (BIRD), la Conférence des Nations Unies pour le Commerce et le Développement (CNUCED) l'Organisation de Coopération et de Développement Economiques (OCDE) et à

date récente le Dialogue Nord-Sud. Toutes ces organisations ont été un forum où on débattait des importants problèmes de développement qui concernaient aussi bien les pays développés que ceux en développement. La désillusion qui a été le résultat des échecs enregistrés au niveau de ces organisations a conduit les pays en développement à s'organiser entre eux pour une meilleure coopération économique. Il s'agissait pour ces pays de désormais fixer le prix de leur matières premières en contrôlant l'offre. C'est ce qui a fait de l'organisation des Pays Exportateurs de Pétrole (OPEP) une force économique mondiale avec laquelle il fallait désormais compter. C'est ce nouveau rôle de l'OPEP dans l'aide internationale que l'auteur se propose d'analyser.

Dans la deuxième partie il nous parle du problème de l'aide au développement en général dans le présent comme dans le passé et de l'appréciation du résultat des efforts des pays développés qui ont aidé les pays en développement depuis deux décennies. Dans la troisième partie il examine la nature et le modèle du nouveau rôle de l'OPEP dans l'Aide Internationale. Dans la quatrième partie il résume et tire quelques conclusions pratiques.

II — *Le Contexte du Développement International : Présent et Passé*

C'est le fossé agrandissant entre le niveau de vie dans les pays développés et ceux en développement qui a fait proclamer le décennie 1961–1970, Décennie du Développement par l'Organisation des Nations Unies. Mais les résultats auxquels on s'attendait n'ont pas pu être atteints pour les raisons suivantes :

(1) — Avec la mise en place de plan de développement global dans les pays en développement, la capacité d'absorption de ressources extérieures de ces pays devint plus grande.

(2) — Avec une détérioration des termes de l'échange continue la plupart de ces pays durent faire face à une balance de payment qui absorbait une proportion non négligeable des ressources extérieures disponibles pour la promotion du développement économique.

(3) — Par suite d'une baisse importante dans l'aide officielle des pays développés, aide caractérisée par ses conditions souples, les pays en voie de développement étaient de plus en plus obligés de faire recours à des sources de financement privées à des conditions souvent très dures.

Cependant malgré ces facteurs, les pays en développement eurent une croissance tout à fait impressionnante.

III — *Le Rôle des Pays de l'OPEP dans l'effort de Développement International*

Dans cette partie, l'auteur nous donne plus de détails sur les raisons qui ont amené les pays producteurs de pétrole à s'organiser en pays exportateurs de pétrole. Les devises accumulées par suite de l'augmentation du prix du pétrole brut leur a permis d'avoir une balance des paiements largement excédentaire. Ainsi, après deux décennies d'aide au développement pendant lesquelles seuls les pays occidentaux industrialisés participaient à cet effort de développement, les pays de l'OPEP venaient

ainsi de les rejoindre mais dans des circonstances différentes. L'auteur consacre ensuite le reste de cette partie à l'étude d'une vue globale de l'aide des pays de l'OPEP, des directions qu'elle prend, de la nature et du caractère de cette aide. En conclusion, il souligne certaines tendances que l'aide des pays de l'OPEP est entrain de prendre à savoir qu'elle devient de plus en plus basée sur des critères politiques et qu'elle est de plus en plus bilatérale. Pour plus d'équité et d'efficacité, les pays de l'OPEP devraient faire des aides plus multilatérales et baser sur des considérations qui ne soient pas uniquement politiques.

X
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SOUS-DEVELOPPEMENT DE L'AGRICULTURE ET PAUVRETE D'UN PAYS PAUVRE (CAS DU ZAIRE)

Par

Kankuenda M'BAYA

A. INTRODUCTION

Le Zaïre est généralement considéré du point de vue économique comme l'un des plus riches pays d'Afrique. On le classe deuxième après le géant Nigéria à l'exception de l'Afrique du Sud. On a d'ailleurs dit souvent qu'il était un scandale géologique et agricole.

En ce qui concerne le secteur minier, le pays est en effet premier producteur mondial du diamant industriel et du cobalt, sixième producteur mondial du cuivre, exportateur du zinc, du manganèse, de l'or, du germanium, de l'étain, du cadmium, du wolfram, du tantalum-columbite, etc. Il produit le pétrole et le charbon. Il possède des gisements non encore exploités de minerai de fer, de nickel, de l'uranium, de beauxite, du gaz méthane, etc.

Sur le plan agricole, la taille et la situation géographique du pays le gratifient d'une gamme de climats et de sols, en bref, de zones écologiques assez diversifiées pour lui permettre d'offrir aux marchés nationaux et internationaux tous les produits végétaux et animaux représentatifs de zones équatoriales, intertropicales et même tempérées comprenant les cultures pérennes, les cultures annuelles non vivrières ainsi que les cultures vivrières.

Le deuxième atout du pays sur le plan agricole, c'est le partage de son espace entre les deux hémisphères qui régularise l'offre des produits agricoles dont les campagnes agricoles s'alternent de part et d'autre de l'Équateur, permettant par ailleurs une navigation fluviale sans difficulté pendant toute l'année.

Il faut dire enfin que le Zaïre possède une riche forêt équatoriale, couvrant 44 % de son territoire, soit environ 105 millions d'hectares, ce qui représente 47 % des forêts denses d'Afrique tropicale.

Et de fait, en plus des produits vivriers (céréales, tubercules, légumineuses ...) consommés sur place, le Zaïre exportait jusqu'il y a peu d'années, du manioc, du maïs, des bananes, du café (Robusta et Arabica), du thé, de l'huile de palme (il en fut le premier exportateur africain pendant longtemps), de l'huile des palmistes, de l'huile d'arachide, du coton, des tourteaux, du caoutchouc, du rauwolfia, du pyrèthre, du quinquina, du copal, du cacao, de la citronnelle, de la papaine, du bois, etc. Il faut ajouter à cela qu'en ce qui concerne la production vivrière, le pays couvrait pratiquement l'ensemble de ses besoins.

L'image qu'on se fait des richesses fabuleuses de ce pays n'est donc pas sans fondement. De sorte que malgré la détérioration de l'appareil de production consécutive aux chaos et troubles politiques qu'à connus le Zaïre au cours des premières années de son indépendance, la Banque du Zaïre pouvait encore écrire : « Avec 77 dollars en 1967 au lieu de 94 dollars (à la fin de la période coloniale), le Congo se place encore maintenant parmi les plus riches pays d'Afrique » (1).

Or aujourd'hui, dix-sept ans après l'indépendance et en fait depuis lors, les estimations les plus optimistes situent le PIB per capita au Zaïre à près de 100 dollars. Le Zaïre se trouve ainsi, conformément à la catégorisation des Nations Unies, dans le groupe des pays les plus pauvres — *least developed* — du continent, et cela sans compter le fait que dans la répartition réelle, les inégalités sont devenues plus criantes qu'auparavant. De plus, ce qui correspondrait d'ailleurs à la situation de la plupart des pays africains de cette catégorie, le Zaïre est pratiquement un pays sans accès côtier.

En effet, la grande partie des exportations zaïroises transitent normalement par les ports de Mombassa (au Kenya via l'Ouganda), Dar-es-Salam (en Tanzanie), Béira et Maputo (au Mozambique), Le Cap (en Afrique du Sud) ainsi que Lobito (en Angola). Le reste passe par la « voie nationale » en empruntant le bref terminal du fleuve Zaïre. Or cette voie, sans compter de nombreuses ruptures de charge qui la rendent peu économique, doit passer par les eaux territoriales angolaises avant de se lancer dans la haute mer. Nous pouvons donc à juste titre considérer le Zaïre comme un pays sans accès côtier, au moins jusqu'à la construction et l'utilisation du futur port en eau profonde à Banana qui est encore au niveau des études et donc de projet.

Mais comment le pays en est-il arrivé à pareille situation malgré ses fabuleuses richesses et son potentiel économique enviable ? De manière générale cette situation signifie qu'au cours des seize dernières années, le taux de croissance annuel restait pratiquement le même que celui de la population, c'est-à-dire autour de 3 %. Il y a eu certes des années où il était supérieur à celui de la population, des années où il lui était égal ou inférieur, devenant parfois négatif, mais dans l'ensemble il a gardé le niveau moyen de celui de la population.

Néanmoins les différents secteurs ont évolué de manière très divergente. Nous mettrons de côté les secteurs de l'énergie et des transports dans la mesure où ils sont très tributaires de l'évolution de l'activité de production dans les autres secteurs.

L'industrie manufacturière est le secteur qui a connu une croissance soutenue jusqu'en 1974 avec un taux annuel au moins égal à 7 %. Des fois il approchait 20 %. L'industrie minière et métallurgique a connu d'abord une période de stagnation au cours des sept premières années de l'indépendance où elle avait plus ou moins maintenu son niveau d'avant 1960, et puis une période de croissance réelle assez soutenue jusqu'en 1974, avec un taux moyen annuel d'environ 6 % (2).

De façon générale ces deux secteurs ont donc connu une évolution satisfaisante (leur niveau de production ayant largement dépassé celui d'avant 1960), et ceci aurait dû en principe amener le PIB à soutenir un taux de croissance d'au moins 6 %, qui était d'ailleurs l'objectif des pouvoirs publics. Ce qui, selon les mêmes sources devait conduire à une croissance annuelle du PIB par habitant de près de 3 %. Or comme nous l'avons dit, ça n'a pas été le cas. Et de fait le secteur agricole a connu une évolution qui a sérieusement affecté l'évolution générale de l'économie.

La production agricole avait en effet fait une chute de 40 % au cours des sept premières années de l'indépendance. Pendant les sept dernières années, l'agriculture avait d'abord commencé une reprise entre 1968

et 1970 avec un taux moyen annuel d'environ 7 % (après les mesures de réforme monétaire de 1967), et puis une stagnation et finalement une régression entre 1971 et 1976. C'est dire que de façon globale pour l'ensemble de la période, la production agricole n'a jamais atteint son niveau d'avant l'indépendance, et en fait son taux moyen annuel de croissance est resté inférieur à celui de la population. Ce secteur constitue à notre avis le point le plus faible de l'économie zairoise et c'est ici que nous prétendons trouver la réponse à la question que nous nous posons au départ, celle de savoir pourquoi un pays aussi riche pouvait être aujourd'hui l'un des plus pauvres du continent.

B. IMPORTANCE DE L'AGRICULTURE DANS L'ECONOMIE ZAIROISE.

Pour que la régression de la population agricole affecte l'évolution générale de l'économie zairoise à ce niveau, il faudrait qu'elle soit d'une importance non négligeable dans l'économie de ce pays. Le tableau No. 1 ci-dessus nous indique le poids de l'agriculture dans l'économie du Zaïre et son évolution — régressive — depuis la fin de la période coloniale.

TABLEAU 1 : Contribution des différents secteurs au PIB
(en % du PIB au coût des facteurs)

Secteurs	: 1959	: 1964	: 1969	: 1974
1. Primaire	: 48	: 43	: 37)
dont Agric	: 38	: 33	: 25	: 18)55
2. Secondaire	: 30	: 23	: 30)
3. Tertiaire	: 22	: 34	: 33	: 45
Total	: 100	: 100	: 100	: 100

Source : *Calculé d'après les Rapports annuels de la Banque du Zaïre 67-75.*

La production agricole représentait ainsi 38 % du PIB en 1959. Il va de soi que sa régression ne peut qu'affecter dangereusement la croissance du PIB et surtout du PIB par habitant, étant donné la détérioration des conditions de vie dans le milieu rural, l'exode rural qui s'ensuit nécessairement et en conséquence la diminution de la population active à la campagne.

En ce qui concerne les recettes d'exportation, l'agriculture apportait au pays plus de 41 % des recettes totales avant 1960. Ce pourcentage n'était plus que de 29,6 % en 1964, de 14 % en 1969 et 1974. Or cette

évolution régressive est due plutôt à la chute de la production, c'est-à-dire des quantités (comme on le verra) qu'à celle des cours sur le marché mondial. L'on comprend déjà pourquoi une simple négligence d'un secteur aussi important (40 % aussi bien du PIB que des recettes d'exportation) ne peut avoir que des effets néfastes sur l'évolution générale de l'économie.

C. POLITIQUE AGRICOLE COLONIALE.

Pendant la période coloniale, la croissance de l'agriculture zairoise était en fait une « réussite » de l'administration coloniale. Cette dernière avait plus ou moins réparti les tâches. La production d'exportation était laissée principalement aux soins des entreprises et des colons à l'exception du coton. Mais en dernière analyse, même dans ce cas, nous pouvons affirmer que cette culture était aux mains des entreprises dans la mesure où le paysan qui la pratiquait jouissait d'une situation inférieure à celle d'un ouvrier franc, et qu'en conséquence on peut valablement le considérer comme un ouvrier des compagnies cotonnières qui « achetaient » sa production (4). La production vivrière était l'œuvre des paysans zairois, ce qui permettait de faire supporter les frais de production du mode de production capitaliste par les modes de production locaux. Mais nous n'allons pas nous étendre sur ces aspects. Néanmoins ce qu'il faudrait dire c'est que l'administration coloniale avait une politique conséquente et s'était montré efficace du point de vue de ses objectifs.

En ce qui concerne la production vivrière, « l'objectif de l'administration était d'approvisionner en abondance et à bon marché les centres urbains (en recourant au minimum aux importations) et, dans ce but, de dégager de l'agriculture traditionnelle un surplus à commercialiser » (5). La préoccupation majeure portait ainsi beaucoup plus sur les conditions du marché du travail que sur le revenu agricole. Puisqu'il fallait réaliser un certain équilibre alimentaire, l'intervention de l'Etat colonial fut de type militariste : imposition des superficies à emblaver, imposition de certaines cultures, imposition parfois des quotas à atteindre, introduction dans certaines régions des cultures vivrières riches en matières nutritives et même vulgarisation — à basse échelle — de la pisciculture (6). Ceci sur le plan direct de la production.

De manière indirecte, le pouvoir colonial avait également poussé les paysans à produire davantage et réaliser un certain surplus. Il y a eu d'abord la politique des bas prix aux producteurs agricoles qui en fait était contradictoire avec l'objectif d'une grande production vivrière à commercialiser, mais qui ne pouvait réussir que moyennant outre les contraintes administratives déjà citées, l'imposition en argent qui était aussi un mécanisme de ce qu'on a appelé le mode de production colonial.

Certes le système de transports et communications était essentiellement un réseau d'exportation, et remplissait aussi d'autres fonctions du point de vue du contrôle administratif, mais il était tout de même assez diversifié et surtout régulièrement entretenu pour servir la commercialisation des produits sur les marchés locaux, ce qui était une mesure indirecte en « faveur » de l'agriculture paysanne.

Un enseignement agricole formait des cadres d'encadrement assez efficaces pour apprendre aux paysans les techniques culturales les plus élémentaires. Peu ou pas grand chose en ce qui concerne la recherche agronomique sur les produits vivriers, le crédit agricole, l'investissement agricole, l'articulation avec une industrie fournisseuse ou débouché, le développement des techniques, etc.

La « réussite » de la politique coloniale dans ce secteur - production vivrière - était donc en fait une grande fragilité dans la mesure où elle reposait fondamentalement sur l'efficacité de l'appareil coercitif de l'administration, particulièrement pendant la période du mode de production colonial. Au cours de la dernière période de la colonisation, les contraintes administratives n'étaient plus une nécessité car l'impôt en argent, les prix bas au producteur agricole, ainsi que le fait que bon nombre de prestations propres aux modes de production traditionnels se faisaient déjà en grande partie en argent, c'est-à-dire en passant par le marché avaient entraîné le paysan dans la production marchande. Apparemment ceci était une réussite pour la commercialisation « libre » des produits agricoles. Mais ceci était également une grande fragilité parce que l'existence parasitaire du mode de production capitaliste sur les autres modes de production - en laissant à leur charge la reproduction de la quasi totalité de la force de travail sociale - consistait en l'intégration du paysan en l'appauvrissant davantage. Ceci a pour conséquence qu'à un niveau donné de détérioration des termes d'échange, et des conditions de vie à la campagne, le paysan va réagir par la fraude fiscale, le repli sur la subsistance, l'exode rural et peut-être une insurrection populaire. C'est ce qui d'ailleurs s'est passé au Zaïre.

En ce qui concerne la production agricole d'exportation, l'administration était toute à leur service. D'une manière générale, l'administration coloniale orientait les investissements des colons et des entreprises vers les productions agricoles de grande rentabilité. Ses propres investissements dans le secteur étaient de l'ordre de 15 % du budget des dépenses en capital, ce qui est déjà un encouragement pour les colons. Une politique de larges concessions leur permettait d'acquérir de vastes domaines presque gratuitement. Le réseau des transports et communications était naturellement extraverti et bien entretenu dans l'intérêt de ces producteurs. La politique salariale et celle de prix agricoles (vivriers) leur offrait une main d'œuvre presque gratuite.

L'Institut National pour l'Etude Agronomique du Congo (INEAC) fut le plus grand institut de recherche agronomique en Afrique centrale. Toutes ses stations étaient spécialisées dans les cultures d'exportation. Cet institut - public - consacrait donc les travaux et les résultats de ses recherches au progrès de la production agricole d'exportation. Une politique de crédit - par des organismes spécialisés ou par les banques - leur offrait des conditions de crédit particulièrement avantageuses. Enfin, la constitution des caisses de stabilisation ou de soutien aux exportations et surtout la politique fiscale de l'Etat colonial accordait des faveurs aux exportateurs agricoles. Par exemple des exonérations ou des réductions des taxes sur les importations des machines agricoles, sur les bâtiments agricoles, etc. Le cas le plus typique est celui des droits de sortie sur les produits agricoles. Les exportateurs avaient l'autorisation officielle de ne

pas payer ces taxes, mais de les faire figurer quand même sur leurs comptes en les récupérant sur les paysans qui pratiquent les cultures d'exportation et ou sur les ouvriers au niveau des prix d'achat ou des salaires.

On se rend ainsi compte de « l'efficacité » de la politique agricole de la période coloniale. Ici en jouant sur les mécanismes et les rouages de l'économie libérale – sous forme de capitalisme monopoliste d'Etat – pour stimuler la production agricole d'exportation. Là d'abord en utilisant la contrainte administrative et ensuite en jouant sur la technique de l'impôt en argent et de la fixation des prix agricoles soi-disant minima, alors qu'en pratique ils deviennent toujours maxima pour l'encadrement du paysan.

Cette politique avait pu ainsi faire jouer à l'agriculture zaïroise un rôle de premier plan dans l'économie du pays non seulement en assurant le nécessaire équilibre alimentaire, l'équilibre sinon l'excédent de la balance des paiements, mais aussi le financement de l'infrastructure de mise en valeur coloniale et même en bonne partie l'industrialisation du pays (7).

Mais comme nous l'avons indiqué, le succès n'était possible que grâce à un appareil d'Etat colonial. Et que même dans ce cadre la réussite du système avait des limites. Ce qui fonde la fragilité des bases de cette politique et de son succès.

Les faiblesses de la politique agricole post-coloniale – qui venaient d'ailleurs après une période de troubles politiques –, la pauvreté des milieux ruraux ont démontré par ailleurs la réalité de cette fragilité. Et c'est là que se situent le point crucial et névralgique de l'économie zaïroise et l'explication de la stagnation du PIB par habitant. Certes la baisse de l'agriculture concomitante à la hausse de la production minière et métallurgique a donné une grande importance à ce dernier secteur au point que l'économie du pays dépend énormément de l'exploitation des minerais et particulièrement du cuivre. Ceci est effectivement un autre point névralgique de cette économie, mais nous estimons que le secteur agricole reste primordial, dans la mesure où la solution efficace de son problème permet d'alléger en grande partie les difficultés dues à la dépendance du pays des exportations minières. Du reste on connaît des pays qui sont essentiellement agricoles mais qui ne sont pas des plus pauvres d'Afrique.

D. POLITIQUE AGRICOLE POST-COLONIALE.

La baisse de la production agricole au cours des premières années de l'indépendance est due non seulement à la fragilité du système colonial dont nous venons de parler, mais aussi aux troubles politiques qui ont marqué la naissance de la nouvelle République.

Mais peu après, lorsque la pacification et l'unification du pays ont été réalisées, c'est nous pensons, la politique agricole suivie par les instances dirigeantes qui est à la base de la détérioration de cette activité.

Les contraintes directes du type colonial n'était plus possibles étant donné les conditions socio-politiques post-coloniales. C'est donc sur les autres leviers de commande que les pouvoirs pouvaient agir.

En ce qui concerne les transports et les voies de communication, le simple cas du réseau routier est significatif. En effet, les premiers troubles politiques avaient complètement détérioré les routes, ponts et bacs. Un office fut créé pour remettre en bon état tout le réseau routier (145.000 Km). Jusqu'ici cet office n'a pu rétablir que 45.000 Km d'intérêt général sur 68.000 Km. Nombreux sont les ponts et bacs qui ne fonctionnent pas. Cet état de chose n'est certes pas de nature à encourager la production dans les milieux ruraux.

La recherche agronomique qui se faisait sous le nom de l'I.N.E.A.C. et aujourd'hui sous celui de l'I.N.E.R.A. n'a pas changé ses activités - recherche axée sur les cultures d'exportation -, mais ses activités ont sensiblement baissé. Des stations de recherche ont dû être fermées. Les crédits à cet institut sont destinés essentiellement au paiement des salaires et l'achat des fournitures de bureau.

La recherche est ainsi restée inactive pendant très longtemps. Des conventions d'assistance technique semblent indiquer l'intention de faire quelque chose dans le sens de la relance, mais l'état général de l'économie ne semble pas faciliter l'importation des produits chimiques nécessaires et du matériel de laboratoire.

On ne va donc pas se plaindre que la recherche agronomique ne s'est pas orientée vers la production vivrière paysanne puisque même celle pour laquelle elle était outillée, elle n'en a plus été capable.

Le deuxième volet de la recherche, c'est la diffusion de ses résultats. Cette dernière exige un nombre suffisant d'encadreurs ou de vulgarisateurs bien formés. Selon les normes admises, il faut, pour que les paysans soient bien encadrés, un maximum de 300 à 400 paysans par moniteur et de 5 à 10 moniteurs agricoles par agronome (entendez assistant), et de plus ou moins 10 agronomes par ingénieur agronome. Or, au Zaïre, les moyennes nationales sont deux ou trois fois supérieures. En partant des tableaux 2 et 3 suivants, nous avons estimé le nombre de paysan à 5.900.000 à raison de deux paysans par ménage. Nous avons également estimé à 5.000 le nombre de moniteurs agricoles et à 150-200 celui des agronomes, le reste étant des bureaucrates aux différents échelons (gouvernement central, divisions régionales, etc). Il faut d'ailleurs remarquer que les ingénieurs agronomes sont inexistantes dans les milieux ruraux, exception faite de ceux qui travaillent dans les sociétés de plantation, de l'élevage ou dans les programmes spéciaux. Bon nombre d'entre eux se trouvent souvent d'ailleurs dans les bureaux.

En nombre insuffisant et avec des conditions de travail peu encourageantes, ces cadres sont ainsi mal placés pour encadrer correctement les paysans. Par ailleurs, le type même d'enseignement qu'ils ont reçu, loin des stations de recherche, ne les arme même pas suffisamment bien pour le travail d'encadrement. De plus, à part les encadreurs formés avant l'indépendance, ceux formés après ont eu un programme (- après la suppression des cycles de deux à quatre années d'études secondaires agricoles), qui «insistait davantage sur la formation générale. Par le fait même (...) ce type d'enseignement perdit sa raison d'être car il ne visa plus en fait à former des agronomes adjoints (ou assistants agricoles), mais à

préparer aux diverses sections scientifiques de l'université. En pratique cela aboutit à un vaste gaspillage intellectuel, car la plupart des élèves des ETSA (Ecoles Techniques Secondaires Agricoles) passés à l'université entrèrent dans d'autres sections que l'agronomie» (8).

Dès lors, même s'ils sont employés par le département de l'agriculture, leur efficacité est douteuse.

TABLEAU II : Personnel du Département de l'Agriculture par Région : 1973

Région	Sous statut (1)	Sous contrat (1)	Total
Gouvernement central	203	112	315
Kinshasa (ville)	20	26	46
Bas-Zaïre	94	224	318
Bandundu	105	311	416
Equateur	116	480	596
Haut-Zaïre	122	741	863
Kivu	91	759	850
Shaba	140	412	552
Kasaï-Oriental	181	749	930
Kasaï-Occidental	42	845	887
Total	1.114	4.659	5.773

Source : Département de l'Agriculture.

- (1) *La distinction entre personnel sous statut et sous contrat a été abrogée depuis 1973 et actuellement il y a un statut unique du personnel de carrière des services d'Etat. Sur ces 5.773 agents, 44 seulement ont fait des études supérieures, 757 ont fait des études techniques secondaires agricoles tandis que tout le reste a suivi une formation d'apprentissage. Sur ce même chiffre, 1.726 agents ne sont pas payés par le département des finances parce que travaillant dans les offices agricoles ou autres programmes et parmi eux, 27 universitaires et 84 agent du niveau des études secondaires agricoles.*

**TABLEAU II : Population agricole et nombre des exploitations
dans le secteur traditionnel en 1970**

Région	Population tot.	Population agricole (1)	Nombre de ménages paysans (2)	Nombre de personnes par ménage
Kinshasa	1.323.039	—	—	—
Bas-Zaïre	1.504.361	1.151.217	215.584	5,34
Bandundu	2.600.556	2.180.356	387.964	5,62
Equateur	2.431.812	2.079.858	366.172	5,68
Haut-Zaïre	3.356.419	2.738.714	570.565	4,80
Kivu	3.361.883	2.896.765	145.656	6,50
Shaba	2.753.714	1.841.928	368.386	5,00
Kasai-Oriental	1.872.231	1.469.268	290.369	5,06
Kasai-Occid.	2.433.861	1.767.723	296.598	5,96
Total	21.637.876	16.125.829	2.941.294	5,48

Source : *Département de l'agriculture : Statistiques agricoles, présentation de quelques résultats provisoires du recensement de l'agriculture.*

- (1) *Données obtenues d'abord en soustrayant du chiffre de la population totale celui de la population des 79 principales villes et centres, et ensuite en multipliant ce résultat par 0,95 pour tenir compte de la population rurale non agricole.*
- (2) *Chiffres obtenus en partant de l'estimation du nombre de personnes par ménage.*

Par ailleurs la part de l'enseignement agricole dans le réseau de l'enseignement national est très faible et représente en fait la situation réelle de l'agriculture dans les préoccupations de la politique économique du pays. En effet, sur un total de 730 écoles secondaires, 216 sont du type enseignement secondaire général, 323 du secondaire normal et 131 du secondaire technique professionnel parmi lesquelles 31 seulement (4,2 % de l'ensemble) sont des écoles agricoles et vétérinaires.

En ce qui concerne les investissements dans le domaine agricole, disons d'abord qu'il y a eu purement et simplement un mouvement de désinvestissement au cours des sept premières années qui ont suivi l'indé-

pendance à cause de l'insécurité et du chaos politiques qu'a connus le pays. Peu après «les investissements agricoles auxquels on a assisté ... ont été pour la plupart des projets à participation gouvernementale. Les privés étrangers se désintéressant ..., c'est désormais aux nationaux et à l'Etat qu'il appartient d'investir. L'effort qui a été fourni en ce domaine par les uns et par les autres demeure insuffisant. Si l'investissement est insuffisant, la production en souffrira» (9).

En effet, les investissements dans l'agriculture entre 1968 et 1973 sont passés de 7 % à 2 % du budget des dépenses en capital, et même si on ajoute les montants des investissements directement financés grâce à l'aide extérieure, le pourcentage atteint à peine 8 % (10), alors qu'il était de 15 % avant l'indépendance.

Même la Société de Financement de Développement (SOFIDE), l'organisme qui finance les projets de développement du Zaïre, n'a pas échappé à cette politique. Ses interventions annuelles dans l'agriculture proprement dite sont restées en-dessous de 1 % de l'ensemble de ses interventions, et ceci depuis la fondation jusqu'à ce jour, à l'exception de l'année 1974 où effectivement elles ont atteint ce pourcentage de 1 % (11).

Un autre levier qu'il faut évoquer ici, c'est la politique des prix au producteur. Nombreuses sont les études qui ont déjà montré que les paysans zaïrois planteurs de coton sont moins bien payés que leurs collègues d'autres pays africains. Quant aux prix des produits vivriers, ils sont à la campagne généralement deux, trois et même quatre fois inférieures à ce qu'ils sont en ville. La marge étant évidemment accaparée par les commerçants intermédiaires.

Par ailleurs, le fait de reconnaître des monopoles à des usiniers ou des exportateurs en leur accordant des zones d'achat est à la base de beaucoup d'abus de la part de ces derniers. Les prix minima par l'arrêté départemental — déjà bas — sont généralement des prix maxima. Sous prétexte que les produits agricoles offerts par les paysans sont de mauvaise qualité — par exemple —, les acheteurs offrent des prix plus que dérisoires. Rien de plus pour décourager complètement les paysans (12).

L'inexistence d'un système de crédit aux paysans pour révolutionner les techniques de production en agriculture (outillage, inputs) et la détérioration des anciennes structures de crédit aux entreprises agricoles exportatrices ont également ajouté à cette négligence de l'agriculture par les pouvoirs publics (13).

Les entreprises agricoles ont d'ailleurs exprimé à plusieurs reprises leurs plaintes aux autorités responsables. Elles se plaignent particulièrement de la politique fiscale et financière du pays et sollicitent une série de mesures et de facilités qui peuvent les aider à relancer leurs activités (14).

Enfin l'absence d'une politique de développement industrielle en articulation avec l'agriculture soit en amont (en fournissant du matériel et des inputs agricoles) soit en aval (en traitant et transformant la production paysanne) à laquelle s'ajoute l'absence d'un plan de développement fût-il indicatif sont des preuves supplémentaires du peu d'intérêt que les autorités ont porté à l'agriculture du pays et finalement de l'anarchie qui a régné dans ce secteur.

Les conséquences de cette situation c'est que le Zaïre autrefois exportateur des vivres et qui n'importait que 1 % de sa production alimentaire pour couvrir les besoins internes, importe aujourd'hui plus que le tiers de sa consommation. Ensuite c'est que même pour les cultures d'exportation, si elles n'ont pas disparu du tableau des exportations zaïroises, elles ont au moins diminué en quantité, sauf, rares exceptions. Dans le premier cas on trouve le coton et ses sous-produits, l'arachide et ses sous-produits, le rauwolfia, le pyrèthre, etc., tandis que dans le deuxième on trouve tous les produits du palmier, le bois, le caoutchouc, le café, etc.

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Samir AMIN a divisé en trois catégories le groupe des pays moins avancés (least developed) (15).

«Premièrement il y a, dans ce groupe hétéroclite, des pays qui n'appartiennent pas à la périphérie du système mondial. Ces pays, qui n'entretiennent pas de relations avec le centre du système mondial, n'exportant rien, ni produits, ni main d'œuvre, et n'important pas davantage ni produits ni capitaux ne sont pas sous-développés, mais méritent d'être qualifiés de traditionnels (pré-capitalistes)» (...).

«Un second groupe est constitué de pays intégrés au système mondial, donc appartenant à la périphérie et sous-développés au sens propre du terme, mais y remplissant les fonctions spécifiques dans le cadre du développement inégal de la périphérie elle-même. Il s'agit des pays, ou des régions, qui fournissent à la périphérie principale soit une main d'œuvre, soit des marchandises».

«Un troisième groupe enfin de pays «moins avancés» présente des caractères totalement différents. Il s'agit de pays, ou de régions, intégrés très tôt et très fortement au système mondial et minés de ce fait, de zones dévastées».

Le cas du Zaïre que nous venons de présenter se classe difficilement dans ces catégories bien qu'il s'agisse bien d'un pays périphérique. Nous pensons donc qu'un pays même potentiellement riche peut se trouver «moins avancé» simplement du fait d'une politique de sous-développement suivie par ses dirigeants, soit au niveau global de la politique économique, soit au niveau d'un secteur important donné.

NOTES

- (1) Banque du Zaïre, Rapport annuel 1967, p. 42.
- (2) idem différents rapports annuels.
- (3) DUPRIEZ, P., La production d'exportation, in IRES, Indépendance, Inflation, Développement, Moutou, Paris, 1968, p. 653.
- (4) KANKUENDA, M., Les industries du pôle de Kinshasa, Réflexion sur la stratégie des pôles de croissance en pays africains, les Cahiers du CEDAF, Bruxelles, 1-2/1977.
- (5) RYELANDT, B., L'inflation en pays sous-développé, Moutou 1970, p.159.

- (6) NDONGALA, E., La production vivrière au Congo pendant la période 1960-1966, in IRES, *Indépendance...* op.cit. Chapitre IX.
- (7) KABEYA, T., L'industrialisation et le développement agricole au Zaïre (1885-1975), logique d'une articulation, Communication préparée pour le colloque afro-asiatique sur les relations entre l'industrialisation et le développement agricole, Tananarive, juillet 1975.
- (8) DE FAILLY, D., Histoire de l'enseignement agricole au Congo, in *Cahiers congolais de la recherche et du développement*, vol. XIV, No. 2, mai-juillet 1970, p. 45.
- (9) LUMPUNGU, K., Les problèmes actuels de l'économie agricole zaïroise, in *Cahiers économiques et sociaux*, vol. XII, No. 2, 1974, p. 15.
- (10) BIRD, L'économie du Zaïre, Tome III, tableaux 5.10 et 5.11, Kinshasa, 1975.
- (11) SOFIDE, L'activité de la SOFIDE dans le domaine agricole, document présenté à la 4e Foire Internationale de Kinshasa, juillet 1976.
- (12) DIEBO, D., Commercialisation des produits agricoles et développement rural au Kivu, in Section de recherches économiques et financières, *Développement rural au Kivu*, ronéo, IRS, Kinshasa, 1976.
- (13) KANKUENDA, M., Organisation de la production agricole au Kivu, in Section de recherches économiques et financières, *Développement rural ...* op.cit.
- (14) TSHIMUANGA, M., et KUBUIMANA, Quelques considérations sur les entreprises agricoles établies au Zaïre, ronéo, ONRD, Kinshasa, 1973.
- (15) AMIN, S., Impérialisme et sous-développement en Afrique, *Anthropos*, Paris, 1976, pp. 152-154.

SUMMARY

The author attempts to explain the paradoxical situation of the Zairian economy with its immense agricultural potential on the one hand and stagnation and underdevelopment of its agricultural production on the other hand. In the introductory part, the author shows the importance of agriculture to the Zairian economy in both the colonial and post-independence period.

In the colonial period, agricultural production experienced rapid growth and at the time of independence it accounted for 38 per cent of GNP which is high considering the importance of mineral production in Zaïre. Colonial agriculture was based on a dualistic division of labour in which white settlers and foreign firms (backed by the colonial governments which provided them the necessary physical infrastructure) specialized in export crops and the Africa small farmers specialized in staple food production usually under some form of coercion.

Since independence agricultural production has declined dramatically. Given the significant weight of agriculture in Zaïre, this retrogression has had adverse effects on the overall performance of the economy. The author argues that the decline in agriculture was not only due to the inherent fragility of the policies pursued by the colonial governments and

the weakness of the structures inherited by the new government but was also a consequence of policies pursued by the post-independence government. After independence, the direct means of coercion available to the colonial government were no longer applicable nor did the political instability facilitate the maintenance of the infrastructure left behind by the colonial government. However, in addition to these constraints, there was a set of policy measures adopted by the government which was to ensure stagnation. In the first place, agricultural research continued to favour export crops although the level of allocation of funds to research institutes declined. Secondly, the prices paid to peasants were very low. Thirdly, adequate credit facilities were not extended to farmers. And, finally, there was no industrial policy clearly related to the policy of agriculture either by providing agriculture with essential inputs or by transforming its output.

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WORKING PAPERS OF CODESRIA RESEARCH PROJECTS

Continued from page 23

3. *Project on Transnational Corporations, Mineral Resources and Industrialization in Africa.*

- a) Ressources Minières Africaines et Division Internationale du Travail by F. Yachir
- b) Uranium Industry in Africa, Its World Significance, Present Problems and Future Perspectives. by G. Hamid
- c) Transnationals and the Nigeria Oil Industry. by Akin Fadahunsi
- d) The Exploitation of Mineral Resources in Africa. by G. Hamid
- e) Les Multinationales et l'Exploitation du Fer Mauritanien. by A.M.Ould Cheikh
- f) Perspectives de l'Industrie de l'Aluminium en Afrique. by A. Fahri
- g) The proposed United Nations Code of Conduct on Transnational Corporations: an African point of view. by T.M. Ocran.

See page 66 for other Research Projects.

SOME THOUGHT ON THE «TRUST» SYSTEM IN EASTERN NIGERIA

By

O. N. NJOKU *

Contact between Europe and the coast of Nigeria dates back to the middle of the 15th century. Sustained by seaborne traffic, small and tenuous at first, this contact developed rapidly with the years. For more than four centuries, the trade between West Africa and Europe was based essentially on «trust». This was a system of credit in which trade goods were advanced against promised delivery of returns in goods within a specified time. Understandably, the trust system has been widely commented on by most writers interested in the trade between West Africa and Europe and America before the 20th century.

But, critical reading of comments on the system reveals that knowledge of certain aspects of it remains patchy and ample scope for further enquiry exists. Among the issues which still merit serious scrutiny, perhaps, are the origin of the system, the responsibility of African and European traders for the evils that befell it and the question of who lost or gained in the process. These issues will be attempted in this paper.

The focus is on Eastern Nigeria, where the trust system appears to have reached its apogee in the 19th century. However, examples will also be cited from other parts of West Africa as may be deemed relevant. We are conscious that there can be no single right analysis of socio-economic change, for often the data are either so complex or paltry and the tool so crude that we must expect to work with various hypotheses and many types of extractions. Nevertheless, it is hoped that the analysis presented here will throw more light on the complex trust system.

I

It is not clear when and how the trust system of trade started in Nigeria. However, indirect evidence provides reasonable ground for an informed deduction. The earliest recorded mention of the offer of trust or credit in the external trade of Nigeria with Europe was probably in 1553, when the *Oba* of Benin indicated his willingness to extend credit in pepper to Captain Thomas Wyndham and his crew «until the next voyage should their goods not cover the full cargo» (1). The readiness with which the *Oba* offered to give credit to traders whom he had never met before or had an earlier business contact with suggests that the practice may have already been in vogue with earlier European traders, the Portuguese.

* *Department of History and Archeology, University of Nigeria, NSUKKA.*

It is not clear if Wyndham and his crew accepted the offer. What is certain, however, is that despite the harrowing experience of Wyndham, the venture turned out to be so profitable and the prospects so bright as to encourage another trade voyage to Benin in 1554 (2). Trade in pepper was later superseded by that in cloths, slaves, ivory, etc. The trade between Benin and Europe developed rapidly, and this in turn resulted in the fast growth of the trust system which had become firmly established by the 17th century.

The general description of «trust» is that it was a system of credit under which European merchants advanced on trust considerable amount of goods to African middlemen for a specified period during which the middlemen were expected to repay to their European creditors the equivalent in such goods as slaves, palm oil, cloths and ivory (3). This description is inaccurate and misleading, although it accords well with the stereotype which tends to attribute all initiatives and innovations in the Afro-European trade to European traders. The false impression is created that, with regard to the trust system of trade, the European trader was always on the giving end while the African middleman was always on the receiving end.

It may be appropriate to preface comments on the above impression by pointing out that the giving of credits in West Africa ante-dated the coming of Europeans. As A. G. Hopkins has indicated, credits were usually provided by established indigenous lenders in the long distance domestic trade (4). Such credits were arranged in the presence of witnesses and were guaranteed by such collateral as livestock, house and even a pawn. Alan Ryder has also observed that in the Benin region (and possibly in the Niger Delta too), there existed in the 16th century a practice akin to the trust of later period (5).

The Portuguese, who first visited Benin adapted the existing indigenous system by adding their own system of fixed prices in place of indigenous bargaining method. They then probably exported this new method to other areas on the West African coast. G. I. Jones is also of the view that the granting of credits in Old Calabar by European traders was a deference on indigenous system upon which trade depended (6).

In some places on the West African coast, it was the Africans who initiated the giving of trust to European traders, in others it was the other way round. In the Benin area, as Ryder has noted, «credit was extended by the Edo to Europeans, not vice-versa, as happened in the later phase (of the trade)» (7). In 1783 J.F. Landolphe, a French sea Captain and merchant, requested the *Oba* of Benin to supply him, on credit, yams and other items with which he would feed his slaves *en route* to America (8). In the late 19th century, Charles Patridge, a British official was impressed by the fact that the Cross River indigenous traders were «extraordinarily credulous in giving credit» (9). It is also said that in the Gold Coast, some indigenous traders sometimes sold their produce on credit to European traders when the latter did not have the particular goods they desired (10). It was not unusual for an European agent, when he had run short of imported trade goods, to borrow his immediate needs from one of the local African Chiefs or rich traders whose wealth comprised non-perishable goods like Holland gin, lead bars and gun powder (11).

Apparently the Bini people anxious to see that the infant trade with the Europeans blossomed; hence their readiness to give credit without security. Trade between the West African communities and the European traders appears to have proved a classic case of the vent-for-surplus theory in international trade (12). The Benin Kingdom, for example, was richly endowed with pepper but it would seem that before the appearance of European traders in the Benin Kingdom in the late 15th century the Bini pepper producers had little or no «vent» to dispose of their surplus produce for want of effective demand. This contention is suggested by the relative ease with which the *Oba* assembled 80 tons of pepper within 30 days (13). The Bini people may have hoped that, by giving liberal credits to European traders, they would encourage the trade between them. However, it would appear that in due course, after the trade had caught on, the European traders became more committed to it than the Bini people. The *Oba*, therefore found himself in a stronger bargaining position to insist on the prerogative of giving trust to every ship that traded with his kingdom, even against their wish.

In places where European traders took initiatives to give trust to African middlemen, the chief aim was to cultivate and secure the goodwill of African chiefs and influential merchants. Before the imposition of colonial rule in West Africa, trade between West Africa and Europe depended largely on the goodwill of African coast middlemen. European traders and supercargoes, therefore, sought and cultivated the friendships of local potentates with gifts.

Of course, it was in the interest of the European traders to do so. For one thing, their fortunes appear to have been far more tied up with the trade than those of the Africans. Sailing to West Africa on ships heavily laden with trade goods meant taking considerable risks. They had, consequently, to justify the risks by ensuring that the trade flourished. For another thing, the hostile environment which took heavy tolls on the lives of Europeans impelled them to stay on the West African coast as briefly as they could. Since the export commodities were not usually assembled before hand, trust had to be given by the European traders to ensure ready supplies of export produce in a subsequent trip.

Until the 19th century, credits were, as a rule, given by European traders to only Africans of worth, such as kings and heads of Houses in the Niger Delta and in Old Calabar. Enterprising young traders could also be recommended for trust by well known merchant princes, who stood as guarantors. At Old Calabar, in return for trust advanced to Efik traders, some European traders often took as security a hostage known as a «pledge» or a «pawn» (14), usually one of the debtor's sons or close relatives. But in most other areas, no security was usually involved and no legal instrument of recovery existed. Trust given, the African middleman distributed his trust goods to his agents who scoured the interior exchanging the goods for local export commodities such as cloths, slaves, ivory and timber.

The trust system was fraught with abuse of defaulting as there was no legal instrument binding the giver and receiver of trust. And, recovery of trust was often the cause of conflict between African middlemen

and their European counterparts. The Dutch West India Company traced one of the roots of their soured relations with Bini to the trust issue, and as early as 1715 the company made a futile attempt to have the system abolished (15). Also in the Niger Delta and Old Calabar areas recovery of trust debts by European traders from defaulting African middlemen was a familiar source of trouble.

Although some African traders did not honour their trust agreements, indications are that, on balance, the system worked fairly smoothly before the 19th century and that occasional abuses were adequately checked and kept within reasonable limits. The *Oba* of Benin is said to have burned the village of Arbo a little before 1700 for not abiding by a trust arrangement with some European traders (16). It was also not for nothing that King Eyo of Calabar earned the enviable epithet, «Honesty» to his name. Of the Efik chiefs of the 18th century, this has been said:

. . . these chiefs are really splendid merchants. Hard in making their bargains, but strict in their payments, they approach very near, in their commercial transactions to their brethren of Europe and the civilized parts of Asia and America (17).

Why the trust system appears to have worked reasonably well prior to the 19th century can be traced to one major cause: the discreetness which African chiefs exercised in recommending their peoples for trust as well as the circumspection with which the European traders gave out trust to African aspirants.

II

The 19th century was a century of change in West Africa characterized by turbulence. It witnessed a deplorable phase of the trust system which became subjected to flagrant abuses. African debtors defaulted at an alarming rate while their European creditors and officials were prepared to under-mine legitimate African authorities in their bids to recover trust debts. The stage for the melodrama was set by two developments — the replacement of slave trade with «legitimate» commerce and the advent of the steamship.

The slave trade was a capital-intensive business. Consequently, it could only be undertaken by the privileged, affluent few in the society who could afford the capital outlay. The trust system which operated during the slave trade era helped to reinforce this small group of wealthy merchants who enjoyed liberal credits with European traders and controlled considerable wealth and power.

The oil palm industry was different. For one thing, the oil palm was diffused in Southern Nigeria. For another, palm produce is a divisible commodity and, for these reasons, palm produce could be produced and marketed by all and sundry in either small or large quantities according to one's ability. Thus, the oil palm permitted wealth to be made and diffused among the larger group than was hitherto the case. On the demand side, too, because the palm produce trade was less-capital intensive than

the slave trade, small scale European operators entered the trade. The result in both cases was a challenge to the *status quo ante* by the new entrants.

The conflict situations brewing up was exacerbated by the advent of the steamship and shipping companies in 1852. The effect of the appearance of the steamship on the West African external trade has been discussed by others and need not be reiterated in detail here (18). It should suffice to mention, first that the new development created a great opportunity for the small scale trader to take advantage of the shipping facilities provided by the shipping companies. Second, the steamship which was by far faster and more commodious than the sailing vessel hitherto in use, reduced the cost of freight and also effected a quicker turn-over which was very crucial to the small trader with meagre trading capital.

Unable to monopolize trade as before, the supercargoes resorted to the retrogress strategy of ruthless price war and indiscriminate giving of trust (19). Sometimes the established firms entered into market sharing agreements designed to restrict the operations of the new comers. In 1899, the Niger Company did exactly this with the African Association, the Company of African Merchants and others (20). The aim was to preempt and corner the market to themselves by excluding the new entrants. The new comers in turn responded by giving trust at even more liberal terms to both tested and untested African middlemen.

The trust system of trade had entered its evil days. For, indiscriminate dispensation of trust meant that this facility was extended to men of straw and slim means. Is it any surprise that failure to honour trust arrangements became rampant? Hitherto, the giving of trust was contingent on a number of considerations including the experience of the dealers, the availability of export produce and the prevailing state of trust. But under the situation of ruthless competition, these considerations were ignored. For example, in the Calabar river, the supercargoes intentionally gave out trust in one year that amounted to twice the amount of palm oil that experience had shown the area to be capable of producing (21). By so doing, the supercargoes pre-empted trade in the area for at least two years while those who had received trust mortgaged their freedom of trading for the same period.

Increased rate of failure to honour trust agreement resulted in distressing turmoil in the West African trade. Trust enabled European traders to claim a say in local politics. Because of the more attractive credit terms offered by the new entrants, some African middlemen were enticed to receive «double trust», while the aggrieved European traders sometimes responded by «chopping oil» (22). The European supercargoes were as rough a lot as the old slave traders and it was not for nothing that they were called the «palm oil ruffians».

Ability of indigenous political authorities to maintain law and order was not aided by consular interference which helped to whittle away their traditional power base. The demands of the trust system in themselves tended to encourage defaulting. To be successful, an African trader had to be seen to be credit-worthy. This condition tended to place a premium on ostentatious display of wealth by way of gorgeous dressing,

elegant house and lavish entertainment (23). The situation in turn led to rivalry between indigenous traders in the display of opulence to justify more trust being given.

It was very clear to all – Africans and Europeans alike – that the trust system had run into inclement weather. Various efforts were made to improve or abolish the system but with hardly any success. A British Consul on the Bights of Benin and Biafra, John Beecroft entered into an agreement with some Niger Delta chiefs to abolish the system, but this came to nothing. Consul Burton and Vice-Consul Johnson, each in his time, tried and failed, too (24). A few European firms introduced the issuing of tokens, certificates and testimonials to eliminate unreliable middlemen (25). It is not very clear what degree of success attended these measures. Indications are that such firms received little patronage from African traders. In Old Calabar, some Europeans joined the *Ekpe* secret society in order to be able to recover trust debts, through the auspices of the society, one of whose functions was the recovery of debts for its members (26). The unofficial «Court of Equity», established in Bonny in 1854, and aimed at minimising abuses in the trust system, achieved no worthy success (27). So, the trust question remained. And, as we shall see presently, this was so because the dynamics of the trade did not conduce to a significant success of the measures adopted to check the abuses in trust.

There seems to have been a general belief among European traders and officials that the trust system of trade would die a natural death on the establishment of colonial rule in Nigeria. Existing literature on the colonial economy is surprisingly silent on the trust problems, apparently assuming also that the system vanished on the establishment of the colonial regime.

There is sufficient evidence to the contrary. In fact, the system apparently continued to flourish right up the 1930s to such a disturbing extent that the Secretary, Southern Provinces of Nigeria, in a memorandum dated 10th November, 1930 instructed his Residents to report to him on the trust system (28). The instruction was sequel to an article by a group of Nigerians entitled «The Ruinous Trust System and the Middlemen of Opobo . . .», which appeared in the 18.10.30 issue of the *Dawn* (29). The Senior Resident, Calabar Province reported that «the old *Trust System* is still in vogue . . .» in parts of his province (30). From Senior Resident, Owerri Province, came also the disturbing report that the system was still very much alive in the province (31).

By the mid 1940s, the old trust system was fast on the wane, in spite of the boost the World War II years gave it. A new version, which was destined to replace the old, was already coming to the fore. In this new version, European firms, most of which had established factories in the major towns, advanced goods to well known indigenous traders who retailed the goods either within the towns or in surrounding local markets and adjusted with the firms once a week or a month (32). This practice appears to have been little abused and, although no longer as popular as in the 1950s, it has not completely died off.

III

Commentators on the trust system of trade agree that it did not conduce to the advancement of efficient commerce. Other assessments appear to touch on two main questions: who to blame for the evils of the system and who gained or lost among the participants.

Popular opinion tends to lay the blame at the door of those debtors who defaulted. One commentator, for example, opined that the chiefs were to blame while another allegedly made mention of dishonesty of African traders (33). No one would doubt that African traders who received trust but failed to live up to their words were culpable especially if such failures were deliberate, for they were morally bound to honour arrangements which they apparently entered into without coercion. Ability and willingness to honour commercial arrangements are necessary if trade is to grow and flourish.

On the other hand, we should remember, as noted earlier, that when trust was given with circumspection, before the 19th century, trust abuses were kept within reasonable limits. It was to be expected that dispensing trust indiscriminately to men of straw and unproven character would result in rampant defaulting by the receivers. Like every human society, Eastern Nigeria had its own dregs, and it amounted to a culpable act for European supercargoes and firms to give trust to such men, particularly in spite of the admonitions of the chiefs.

Sometimes refusal to honour trust arrangement arose from the realization of the exorbitant prices put on barter goods foisted on those who had received trust. European supercargoes often fobbed off second-rate goods to Africans who hardly had any standards of comparison (34). Sometimes too, failure to honour trust agreements could be due to factors beyond the debtor's control such the vagaries of the weather and other natural elements as well as political disturbances in the interior markets which would result in a fall in estimated volume of produce. The Senior Resident, Owerri Province, noted that failure to honour agreements by the middleman was often «due to the failure of the farmer to send him produce in exchange for goods . . . given on credit» (35).

In the text-book generalizations, one gets the impression that ultimately the European traders who gave trust came worse off the bargain than the African middlemen who received it said E. FALK, Senior Resident, Calabar Province,

. . . it is almost impossible to argue that the «Trust System» ruins the African middleman. If he fails to meet his obligations it is the European who has given his advance without security who is the loser (36).

It would seem that very occasionally some European firms had to write off unserviceable trust debts and consequently incurred some losses. But this is not to say that, their trading operations taken as a whole, the European traders made a net loss. On the contrary, it is known that they made

substantial profits notwithstanding occasional and partial losses normally expected in business. Apart from the year 1914, during the nineteen-year period (1900-1918), the Niger Company Ltd. paid regular dividends of 10% on its ordinary shares (37). The African Association had it pretty rough from 1889 to 1896, incurring some losses in 1892 and 1895. But from 1897 to 1918, with the exception of 1908, it made substantial profits which gradually improved the yield on its ordinary shares. Between 1917 and 1918 dividends on ordinary shares had risen from 20% to 30% (38). During its first year of operation, the African and Eastern Trade Corporation declared a 30% dividend, nothing in the second and thereafter maintained its dividend at 8% until the crash of 1928. On their own side, enterprising Africans – men and women – made good use of the opportunity of credit facilities provided by European traders to attain enviable heights of affluence. Some were appropriately referred to as merchant princes and merchant queens (39). However, as will be indicated below, there were some African middlemen who were ruined by the system.

The point is that the operation of the trust system was much less simple than met the eyes. As G. E. Brooks remarked, the mechanics of the trust system were deceptively simple (40). Another observer commented with remarkable reflection:

The «Trust» system is a sort of secret society the members of which alone know its «Pass Word». The secrets of the society... are well guarded by the members who will always tell the inquisitive enquirer that they have been trading at a loss for many years and yet would not give up a method of business so detrimental to their interest (41).

Not much is recorded of African opinion about trust. But available evidence indicates that, contrary to the general text books most African traders did not like the trust system which tended to hamstring their freedom of trade and appears to have inflicted pecuniary disasters, on a few resulting in their bankruptcies (42). As we have noted earlier, a group of Nigerians had attacked the trust system of trade very vehemently in a daily. They condemned it as being «undoubted (sic) responsible for the downfall and ruin of many. . . of the chiefs and middlemen. . .» They admitted that a time was when the trust system had a lot to commend it, but insisted that «the situation today is simply scandalous». They appealed to «the Great Combine, the United Africa Company Ltd., to take a lead... to do away with this iniquitous. . . and antiquated business method» (43).

Taking a trust was not usually an enviable choice for a middleman. The middleman who had received trust did not get the same consideration as an independent trader. If the price of oil fell while the trader was still up-country, he may have bought oil at a higher price before he got news of the fall in price. If he was an independent trader, he could hold his oil waiting for a rise or he could arrange with a firm prepared to buy at the old price. The trust trader, on the other hand, if he was to keep his agreement, had to accept the current price.

A common complaint by the middlemen was that they were cheated in respect to the weighing of palm oil because excessive tare was deducted to cover the weight of the cask and inaccurate scales were allegedly used in some factories (44). The independent trader, when he was not satisfied with the weighing of his produce, could take it elsewhere. But the trust trader had to accept the weight arrived at by the firm he was indebted to. Reports affirm that sometimes middlemen had to sell their trust goods at a loss in order to get the oil they required to clear their trust debt (45). Furthermore, the independent trader could, and often did, insist on being paid in cash instead of bartering his produce for imported goods. With the cash in hand, he could visit all the European stores at the trading station and hunt around for good bargains. The European firms did not like this because, apart from the fact that they made less profit by this arrangement they had to make special provision to get enough British money to trade with such independent traders (46).

From what has been indicated above, it should be clear that it is futile to insist on a distinction as to who gained or lost between African and European traders, or even the extent of the losses and gains. It is equally pretentious and misleading to see trust givers as victims and receivers as victors. We may speculate that those who benefitted from the system on both sides far out-numbered those who lost, otherwise the system should probably have met an early demise. As it is human, complaints would be loudest when the going was rough, but nobody would proclaim it so when it was good.

However all this may be, it cannot be said that trust was a modern and good method of trade. It was condemned in most quarters, not without sound arguments. Most people advocated the abolition of the system but none seems to have suggested a better alternative beyond vaguely advocating «a modern business method». Of course, it is so much easier to criticize than to prescribe an effective practical remedy. Our suggestion here is that, given the prevailing economic circumstances of the 19th century and the early part of the 20th, there was no better practical substitute for the trust system.

Trust was not inherently objectionable, providing discreetness was exercised in dispensing it. As Allan Mcphee pointed out, the real snag in the system was reposing confidence on untrustworthy middlemen (47). G. I. Jones did not exaggerate when he noted that «Trust is such an essential part of the trading system of the Oil Rivers states that it is difficult to see how it could operate without it» (48).

Attempt to abolish trust was, therefore, fore-doomed to fail. First, as we have noted earlier, increasing consular interference coupled with the emergence of a corps of *Nouveau riche* helped to undermine traditional authorities which had checked trust abuses. With the collapse of the House Rule in the Oil Rivers, most of the middlemen were no longer backed by the resources of a House, responsible for the liabilities of its members. Second, the coast middlemen were great protectionists and did all they could to effectively bar European traders from penetrating inland. The European traders on their side were not enthusiastic in going inland until late in the 19th century. So trust was mutually tolerated under the

circumstance. What was more, European traders were not agreed among themselves regarding the abolition of the system. In fact, at the opening of this century, some firms led by the Niger Company Ltd. were alleged to have «pledged to maintain the barter system (of trade).» (49) If some agreed to abolish it while the others did not, the latter group would have lost trade to the former. Third, in the 19th century and for a part of the 20th, there was no commonly accepted medium of exchange. Even after colonial rule had been imposed and a British currency introduced, this circulated *pari passu* with the manilla in Eastern Nigeria until the latter was banned by an administrative fiat in 1949. All this meant that premium was placed on barter.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the African middleman did not have sufficient capital to carry on trade without trust. On the other hand, the European trader, even when he had established in the hinterland, realized that the middleman was indispensable in the export/import trade. The middleman often pushed trade up-country and sought out producers who numbered in their tens of thousands in remote and scattered villages and settlements with very poor transport and communication means. Large scale capital was the essence of the trust system. But as J.F.A. Ajayi has noted, the capital imprisoned those who gave it and those who received it. (50)

The situation was enigmatic. Firms which tried to minimise giving credit painfully realised that those who gave trust most attracted the largest number of customers. For instance, the popularity of German firms in Nigeria before the 1914 – 19 war is said to have derived from their willingness to give trust. (51) That was the root of the issue: there was no way out of the dilemma of giving too much trust and losing some, or being too restrictive and losing trade to rivals.

IV

In conclusion, the trust system of trade which operated in West Africa was fraught with abuses. These abuses were contained within reasonable limits before the 19th century, but thereafter they became glaringly scandalous. Of course, neither African middlemen nor European traders really cherished the system. However, attempt to abolish it was vitiated by the non-existence of a practicable alternative. The crux of the problem, perhaps, was that most African middlemen – indispensable link in the trade between Nigeria and the Western World – had no capital of their own to do trade without resorting to receiving trust from European traders. Its shortcomings notwithstanding, the trust system contributed immensely in fostering trade between Nigeria and the Western World.

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RESUME

Dans cet article, l'auteur se propose de réfléchir sur les aspects suivants du trust dans la partie Est du Nigéria: Ses origines, la responsabilité des commerçants africains et européens dans les difficultés du système et la question de savoir qui a profité et qui a perdu dans ce système. Il justifie le choix qu'il porte sur la partie Est du Nigéria par le fait que le système y avait connu son apogée au 19^e siècle.

Abordant la première partie de son exposé consacrée aux origines et au développement du système, il commence par rappeler la définition courante qu'on donne au mot trust. «Le trust est» dit-il «un système de crédits par lequel des commerçants européens avancent sous forme de crédit d'importantes quantités de marchandises à des commerçants africains intermédiaires pour une durée déterminée, durée à la fin de laquelle ils devront rembourser les commerçants européens en nature (esclaves, huile de palme, habits et ivoire). Il fait ensuite remarquer que la pratique de ce système est bien antérieure à l'arrivée des commerçants européens dans cette partie du Nigéria. Car, comme l'a souligné A. G. Hopkins le système de crédit sous cette forme y existait déjà et était habituellement consenti par des prêteurs indigènes professionnels. Ce système a dans l'ensemble bien fonctionné jusqu'au 19^e siècle et l'auteur en attribue la réussite à la discrétion dont faisaient preuve les chefs africains en recommandant leurs protégés aux commerçants européens et à la prudence avec laquelle ces commerçants européens donnaient les crédits.

Mais à partir du 19^e siècle, ce système commença à connaître des difficultés. Ces difficultés tiennent à deux facteurs :

- (1) Le remplacement du commerce des esclaves par un autre commerce dit légal ;
- (2) L'avènement des bateaux à vapeur.

Avec le remplacement du commerce des esclaves par celui de l'huile de palme, le système de trust changea de nature. Il n'était plus entre les mains des seuls africains puissants et riches qui pouvaient disposer d'esclaves et des rares commerçants européens mais aussi entre les mains de tous ceux, riches et moins riches qui pouvaient obtenir de l'huile de palme.

Grâce aux bateaux à vapeur il devenait possible à un plus grand nombre de commerçants européens de pratiquer ce commerce augmentant ainsi l'offre des marchandises venues d'Europe et disputant aux premiers commerçants européens ce que le nombre croissant de commerçants africains intermédiaires leur proposaient.

Quant à la question de savoir qui a profité et qui n'a pas profité du système, l'avis de l'auteur est qu'en réalité aucune des deux parties n'était vraiment satisfaite de ce système. Il y a certes eu des tentatives d'abolition de ce système mais elles ont toutes échoué parce qu'il n'y a pas eu d'alternative acceptable. L'un des aspects positifs de ce système a cependant été qu'il a au moins contribué à développer les liens commerciaux entre le Nigéria et le monde occidental.

SOINS DE SANTE PRIMAIRES ET MEDECINE
TRADITIONNELLE — A PROPOS DU DEVELOPPEMENT
DES CONCEPTS DE SANTE PUBLIQUE EN AFRIQUE *

Soins de Santé Primaires — une stratégie nouvelle

Par

*Dr. BICHMANN Wolfgang ***

En 1953 déjà, l'O.M.S. souligna la nécessité de renforcer les services sanitaires de base dans les pays en voie de développement. Mais c'était seulement au début des années soixante-dix qu'on pût assister aux efforts pratiques dans ce sens. La 28ème Assemblée Mondiale de la Santé approuva le concept des Soins de Santé Primaires (SSP) comme politique officielle de l'OMS en 1975 (1) et en 1978 les gouvernements présents à la Conférence Internationale sur les SSP ont lancé, avec la «Déclaration de Alma Ata», un programme détaillé en 22 recommandations (2). Cette nouvelle stratégie des SSP s'inscrit dans le cadre d'une nouvelle stratégie de l'OMS à long terme, connue sous le titre «Santé pour tous jusqu'à l'année 2000» (3). Sont à retenir les éléments les plus importants de cette stratégie :

- une réflexion sérieuse des standards d'usage de formation et des techniques appliquées dans les services médicaux ;
- la délégation des tâches aux «agents de santé communautaires», qui n'ont suivi qu'une formation pragmatique de courte durée ;
- la décentralisation des services de santé publique, qui vise en même temps à un renforcement de la participation des communautés concernées en ce qui concerne le planning et les décisions, ainsi qu'une contribution au financement des services de santé ;
- le personnel de santé est à former et recycler d'après les priorités de la pratique quotidienne ;
- des mesures écologiques qui contribuent à la prévention des maladies sont à élargir et planifier au niveau central - surtout l'approvisionnement en eau potable (4) ;
- la planification de la santé sera intensifiée par l'application de la «Programmation Sanitaire par Pays», qui s'adapte aux conditions spécifiques des différents pays.

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La recherche des modèles alternatives de l'organisation des services de santé, qui est à la base de ce concept, amena à une re-considération de la fonction des systèmes de médecine traditionnels. Une des raisons pour cette nouvelle attitude était le manque permanent de ressources budgétaires dans les pays en voie de développement, qui empêcha l'implantation d'un système de santé publique d'après les standards de la médecine du type «occidental» (c'est-à-dire la médecine qui se développa dans les pays industrialisés de l'Europe et aux Etats-Unies). L'exemple de développement rapide que donna la République Populaire de Chine – mentionné à maintes reprises par le Directeur Général de l'OMS, Dr. Mahler – a beaucoup influencé les réflexions sur la revalorisation de la médecine traditionnelle ainsi que la prise en considération de son intégration aux structures du système de santé national (5).

Nous allons maintenant considérer l'importance de la médecine, dite traditionnelle, dans les soins de santé des populations dans les pays Africains.

Les Soins de Santé – Structure Sociologique Complexe

La notion «médecine traditionnelle» fut souvent employée incorrectement pour indiquer les différentes formes de soins de santé qui n'appartiennent pas à la médecine universitaire occidentale ou «moderne». Dans la discussion qui suit, nous allons distinguer quatre types différents de soins médicaux qui ne sont pas toujours très bien distingués dans la réalité (6) :

1. Médecine familiale ou domestique
2. Médecine populaire
3. Systèmes médicaux traditionnels
4. Médecine cosmopolite.

Médecine familiale/domestique : Ce terme définit une forme de soins de santé pratiqués à la maison par des membres de la famille, basés sur des connaissances générales des soins médicaux. Ceci comporte également l'auto-traitement avec des remèdes de bonne-femme et aussi, de plus en plus, avec des médicaments modernes.

Médecine populaire (7) : Celle-ci est dérivée de la forme sus-mentionnée et représente une fonction déjà professionnalisée qui reflète la croissante division du travail dans la société (8).

Systèmes médicaux traditionnels (9) : Par contraste à la médecine populaire, ils représentent des systèmes structurés de classification et d'interprétation des maladies, qui comprennent également des traitements élaborés (10). Dans ce sens quelques auteurs distinguent entre «grandes» et «petites» traditions de la médecine (11). Les grandes traditions se sont développées avec les sciences écrites, avec un haut niveau de professionnalisme, normes de formation et codes éthiques.

Médecine cosmopolite : La médecine moderne, universitaire, qui s'est développée sur la base des sciences naturelles, qui – à leur tour – se sont développées pendant le progrès scientifique et technique en Europe et en Amérique du Nord, est appelée par DUNN «Médecine Cosmopolite». Au milieu du 19ème siècle, l'approche biologique et scientifique s'établit comme concept théorique de base de la médecine cosmopolite, qui quand-même n'a pas laissé tomber tous les contenus non-scientifiques (12). Par contre, comme cela a été prouvé par les fréquents traitements par «placébos», vitamines et ampoules buvables, jusqu'à nos jours les éléments pré-scientifiques coexistent avec ceux qui sont dérivés des données scientifiques.

Pendant l'ère coloniale et «l'exploration du monde», le concept médical prédominant dans les métropoles coloniales fut introduit en Afrique, également en théorie, comme structures institutionnelles (13). Il faut souligner, que le succès de l'implantation de la médecine cosmopolite ne fut que marginalement supporté par ses succès thérapeutiques, car, à la fin du 19ème siècle, les résultats chirurgicaux et chimiothérapiques furent encore assez insignifiants – surtout en médecine coloniale. Par contre, la diffusion et le succès de la médecine cosmopolite résulte (14) :

1. des intérêts et contraintes de l'administration coloniale – en Afrique surtout la tentative de lutte contre épidémies et endémies (15) ;
2. des interrelations entre médecine et missions (16) ; et
3. du fait que les élites autochtones et les classes au pouvoir dans les pays colonisés, avaient accepté et promu la médecine cosmopolite (17).

Les quatre catégories des soins médicaux sus-mentionnées coexistent dans des systèmes culturels et sociaux différents. Leur influence varie d'après le degré atteint dans le professionnalisme médicale. Ainsi l'importance de la médecine domestique diminue en fonction du degré de la division de travail dans les sociétés (18). Or, l'influence des différents niveaux ne dépend pas seulement du développement historique. Elle change aussi dans des cultures différentes, ou, respectivement, dans une société donnée, dans les sous-cultures (19). C'est-à-dire, pour une maladie spécifique donnée, c'est la perception subjective de l'état de santé individuel qui mène à la consultation d'un des quatre types mentionnés de médecine, quelle que soit la maladie spécifique (20).

Il existe même des communautés qui n'ont aucune notion de «maladie» – dans le sens propre du mot –, mais qui connaissent seulement une conception d'infortune, qui explique en même temps les maladies individuelles et collectives, ainsi que d'autres inconvenances individuelles et collectives, comme par exemple mauvaises récoltes, malchance en chasse ou en guerre, ou bien une tempête. UNSCHULD en conclut (21), qu'un savoir médical conceptualisé comme «médecine» – de la façon conçue dans la culture occidentale – n'était ni nécessaire ni connu.

La médecine domestique est exposée aux changements permanents, ce qui fait que ses techniques sont de plus en plus remplacées par l'utilisation des comprimés et des injections. La médecine populaire succombe également aux influences externes. Les succès de la médecine occidentale moderne par suite de l'introduction des substances antibiotiques et chimiothérapeutiques ont mené à la compétition au sujet des malades. Dans les pays en voie de développement on ne trouve pas aujourd'hui les traditions pures de la médecine populaire — à l'exception des régions très isolées. Par contre, on assiste à la création de nouvelles formes de la médecine populaire, qui sera composée d'un conglomérat du savoir traditionnel et des techniques de la médecine cosmopolite (22).

La Médecine Traditionnelle en Afrique

Encore aujourd'hui, la couverture des populations rurales n'atteint que quelque 30 % en Afrique. Devant cette insuffisance du système de santé publique, ou bien de la médecine cosmopolite, les populations ont toujours recours aux méthodes traditionnelles pour la satisfaction de leurs besoins médicaux (23). On peut ranger ces méthodes traditionnelles dans la catégorie de la médecine populaire. Les «grandes traditions de médecine» avec une importance qui dépasse le cadre régional — comme définit par LESLIE — n'existent pas en Afrique Noire.

La richesse du savoir pharmacologique et technique en Afrique en temps pré-coloniaux est bien démontrée par les récits de voyages anciens et par les études ethnographiques (24). Il existe des rapports sur des sutures des vaisseaux chez les Massai, sur des changements de la position des fœtus chez les femmes en travail (Hottentots), ainsi que sur des sections césariennes (Uganda) (25,26). Pansements, extractions des dents, tonsillectomie, uvulectomie et incisions des abcès furent pratiqués largement. Soins infirmiers, traitement des maladies internes par les herboristes, vaccinations et anesthésie par l'emploi des extractions des plantes formèrent part du savoir de la médecine traditionnelle Africaine, en étroite association avec des pratiques magiques et préventives contre les maladies contagieuses, bien qu'il existait de nettes différences régionales du niveau de développement de cette médecine (27). FORTES souligne, qu'à la fin du 19^{ème} siècle tous les anthropologues, avec ou sans formation médicale, étaient obsédés par des questions concernant les théories autochtones sur la causalité magique présumée à l'origine des modes de traitement, et par leur contraste avec d'autres formes de traitement qui furent considérées comme empiriques et fondées. Et il conclut, que par cette attitude l'étude de la santé et des maladies était réduite aux études de sorcellerie, de magie et, en général, de pratiques rituelles. La diagnose, le traitement et la prophylaxie des herboristes, fondés sur l'empirisme ne furent considérés que comme des catégories accessoires (28).

Pendant longtemps le corps médical Européen ne s'était intéressé qu'à la pharmacopée Africaine, tout en négligeant les autres aspects de la médecine Africaine. Encore en 1976 un Comité de Experts de l'OMS dut souligner, que la médecine traditionnelle Africaine consiste essentiellement de l'ensemble de «médecine» et «pharmacopée» (29). Un aspect très important de la médecine Africaine fut pendant longtemps inclus dans

le champs de la « magie » par les Blancs, qui ne pouvaient pas le comprendre : c'était l'aspect de la restauration du consensus social par la pratique rituelle en cas de violation de normes sociales. La maladie n'est pas, dans la conception Africaine, seulement un événement individuel, mais plutôt la perturbation des relations sociales (30). Une telle étiologie des maladies n'était presque plus connue dans la médecine occidentale. Elle fut re-découverte seulement par les recherches dans le domaine psycho-somatique. Ce ne fut pas facile pour la médecine scientifique, de comprendre le sens de la maladie ou bien le langage des symptômes, parce qu'elle s'était penchée sur le recensement des paramètres à mesurer objectivement (31). La médecine Africaine ne traite d'abord pas les maladies, mais les gens malades. Pour cette raison, on ne peut comprendre la médecine Africaine à travers ses concepts de pathogenèse et sa nosologie, mais plutôt à travers sa cosmopolite, ça veut dire, la hiérarchie des forces conçues comme appartenant à chaque être, vivant ou mort (32). La contribution de la médecine Africaine aux questions de médecine, dépassant le contexte Africain, fut par conséquent reconnue en premier lieu par la psychiatrie (33). Contrairement à ces aspects positifs de la médecine Africaine il existe des effets négatifs qui ont cependant reçu trop d'attention pendant longtemps. L'aspect d'intégralité de la médecine Africaine n'est que relatif et on observe ces pouvoirs d'intégration sociale au mieux dans des communautés rurales — c'est-à-dire, dans la culture même dont elle représente un sous-système. Par conséquent ce n'est pas possible de la transférer tout simplement dans un contexte social différent comme « système technique ». Cependant, en Afrique, dans les conglomérations urbaines en expansion rapide, des formes tout à fait nouvelles de la médecine populaire à caractère parfois spirituel, apparaissent (34). Elles sont composées de la médecine populaire traditionnelle à qui s'associent des connaissances de la médecine cosmopolite. Souvent elles utilisent les symboles de la médecine moderne, comme par exemple des blouses blanches, stéthoscopes, etc.

Le Dilemme de la Santé Publique

Avant 1970 les services de santé publique existants dans les pays Africains pauvres étaient insuffisants et l'objectif qui était fixé de mettre sur pied des services de santé d'après le modèle Européen n'était pas prêt d'être atteint — au moins pour des raisons économiques. On sait depuis longtemps, qu'on pourrait s'attaquer aux deux tiers des maladies qui prévalent dans les pays Africains en voie de développement facilement par des mesures préventives. Ces faits ont constitué la base du changement de la politique de l'OMS sus-mentionnée. Le but de cette politique est de recevoir des résultats optimales concernant la levée de l'état sanitaire des populations entières, en faisant appel aux ressources locales non encore touchées (35). C'est-à-dire que le concept de SSP essaie d'initier des services de santé en contact étroit avec la communauté périphérique et en même temps supportés par la communauté, ce qui ne nécessite que des ressources gouvernementales minimales. Ces services devraient satisfaire les besoins médicaux élémentaires (36) des communautés et également contenir des effets de l'éducation sanitaire.

Les moyens mis en œuvre comportent :

1. Des agents de santé communautaires ou secouristes, formés à court terme et équipés avec une trousse de premiers secours, considérés comme bénévoles, dont la rémunération ne revient pas au gouvernement, mais à la commune (37) ;
2. Les matrones ou accoucheuses villageoises, formées dans les principes de base de l'hygiène (38) ; et
3. La création de Comités Villageois de Santé qui supervisent le travail des secouristes et assurent leur rémunération. Ces comités sont en même temps responsables de toutes les activités préventives et promotrices de santé de base, de la gestion des pharmacies villageoises, et c'est dans leurs sein que sera accomplie la participation de la communauté à la planification, la décision et l'évaluation des services de santé (39).

Cette nouvelle politique favorise également la réanimation et revalorisation de la médecine traditionnelle et son intégration dans les services de santé publique.

Le concept des SSP fut approuvé en principe par chaque Etat, membre de l'OMS, — bien que la question de la participation de la communauté locale aux décisions n'ait pas été supportée largement par tous les pays. Par contre aucun concept de l'intégration de la médecine traditionnelle ne reçut l'accord unanime.

Au mois de septembre 1976 les discussions techniques de la 26^e session du Comité Régional pour l'Afrique de l'OMS furent consacrées à «la Médecine Traditionnelle et son rôle dans le développement des services de santé en Afrique» (40). On pût remarquer des positions différentes dans ces discussions. On reconnut à l'unanimité qu'il existe certains aspects positifs dans la médecine traditionnelle, comme il y a de nombreux cas guéris sans aide de la médecine moderne. Mais il n'y eût pas d'accord concernant les relations désirables entre ces systèmes médicaux qui, de toute façon, sont complémentaires. Après la définition de la «médecine traditionnelle Africaine» et du «guérisseur traditionnel» (41) les participants proposèrent les mesures suivantes :

- le recensement de tous les guérisseurs traditionnels ;
- la création d'organisations des guérisseurs traditionnels qui veillent sur leur compétence ;
- la légitimation des tradipraticiens sur la base des tests ;
- la promotion de la recherche concernant les connaissances de la médecine traditionnelle ;
- l'intégration éventuelle des guérisseurs traditionnels dans les équipes de santé (42).

Après la période de conception initiale, on pût assister à des activités dans les pays différents comme par exemple la création des instituts de recherche s'ajoutant à ceux déjà existants. Ils dirigèrent leur attention

principalement sur la pharmacopée herboriste (43). Dans certains pays il existait déjà des législations : d'après une enquête dans 9 pays (44) en 1975 la médecine traditionnelle était légalisée dans 5 pays et nulle part officiellement considérée comme illégale. Dans la plupart des pays, elle était reconnue informellement, parfois il exista même une coopération entre les deux systèmes.

Après cette première période on n'entendait plus beaucoup des mesures entreprises par les gouvernements Africains (45). Les programmes autres que les recherches pharmacologiques et botaniques n'avaient apparemment pas été promulgués. Ils semblaient même abandonnés. Le rapport du Directeur Régional pour l'Afrique de l'OMS, donné à la Conférence Internationale des Soins de Santé Primaires à Alma Ata (URSS) en Septembre 1979 fait seulement mention de l'existence dans quelques pays de guérisseurs traditionnels formés, qui sont intégrés dans les services de santé générale, et il insiste sur la nécessité de la recherche continue en médecine traditionnelle. En tout cas, il ne semble pas évaluer la médecine traditionnelle comme facteur important dans le développement des soins de santé primaires au sein des services de santé nationaux (46).

Pour cette raison il nous semble justifié de regarder d'un point de vue théorique le concept d'intégration de la médecine traditionnelle aux services de santé modernes.

Intégration ou bien Subordination ?

Les recherches de UNSCHULD sur la possibilité de la coexistence entre les médecines traditionnelle et cosmopolite (47) montrent qu'on trouve une intégration complète seulement pour médicaments, techniques et connaissances empiriques, ce qu'il appelle «ressources primaires». Il n'a pas trouvé d'exemples d'intégration totale en ce qui concerne le personnel sanitaire — seulement une «coopération structurée» dans des systèmes de référence réciproques. En ce qui concerne les «docteurs à pieds nus» chinois, souvent cités, ils reçoivent une formation pragmatique qui s'appuie sur les médicaments et techniques dérivés de la médecine cosmopolite, mais qui emploie en même temps ceux traduits par les traditions médicales chinoises (48).

La coopération entre docteurs exige qu'ils connaissent leurs compétences et leurs limites et qu'ils acceptent leurs collaborateurs comme équivalents. Une coopération entre représentants des sous-systèmes médicaux différents, qui se disputeraient les clients, n'est pas facilement imaginable dans un marché libre des soins (49). En plus, une intégration complète des guérisseurs, représentants de leur système de connaissances médicales, est presque impossible parcequ'ils adhèrent à des conceptions médicales différentes, conséquence de leur socialisation professionnelle. Par exemple, la notion de la dichotomie chaud/froid dans les systèmes médicaux Asiatiques ne diffère pas seulement de la médecine occidentale à cause d'une terminologie différente, mais parceque ses structures cognitives sont incompatibles. Une pareille incompatibilité existe pour les paradigmes en médecine traditionnelle Africaine, différents de ceux en médecine occidentale (50). Pour cette raison le problème «d'intégration» des deux systèmes médicaux se réduit en réalité à une question de subor-

dination sous le concept médical dominant. Comme le souligne UNSCHULD, dans les pays en voie de développement l'intégration des guérisseurs traditionnels dans les systèmes de santé nationaux vise toujours à une incorporation du savoir médical traditionnel en les regroupant et les supervisant comme catégorie du personnel auxiliaire.

En obstétrique, cette intégration du personnel médical traditionnel ne semble pas être trop compliqué : la délégation de tout un ressort médical – l'accouchement normal – est faisable. La formation des accoucheuses traditionnelles dans les techniques d'asepsie, dont la supériorité se révèle par le simple empirisme, améliore leur qualifications comme matrones en même temps que leur statut social. Pour cette raison elles l'acceptent et pratiquent ces techniques même si elles entrent en conflit avec les lignes de conduite traditionnelles.

En ce qui concerne les soins primaires en médecine générale, il n'existe pas de problèmes majeurs pour conjuguer la médecine scientifique occidentale avec les techniques du traitement traditionnel dont l'efficacité vient d'être montrée. On connaît beaucoup d'exemples d'une certaine division de travail entre des docteurs formés en médecine cosmopolite et leurs collègues traditionnels en Afrique, par exemple pour le traitement des fractures, morsures des serpent, empoisonnement et psychothérapie (51). Avec UNSCHULD on désigne cela comme «coopération structurée» entre médecine cosmopolite et médecine populaire traditionnelle.

Par contre, la confrontation des paradigmes, mentionnée ci-dessus, existe en ce qui concerne les diagnostics et le choix de la thérapie adéquates. Le traitement d'une maladie par une modification de son mode de vie, par une intervention chirurgicale, par une cérémonie rituelle ou bien par une injection, dépend entièrement du concept étiologique appliqué. Bien sur, les guérisseurs traditionnels ont apprécié les effets immédiats de l'injection des antibiotiques et ils ont souvent recours à cette technique – parfois à la demande de leurs malades. Ils continuent cependant à s'identifier aux concepts médicaux traditionnels (52). La médecine cosmopolite pourtant requiert l'identification au concept scientifique d'étiologie. C'est pourquoi «l'intégration des guérisseurs traditionnels» dans les services de santé modernes n'est estimée possible qu'après une formation initiale et sous supervision continue des activités des tradipraticiens. Eux ne sont pas du tout tous prêts à accepter ces conditions : par contre, le statut social d'un tradipraticien dans sa propre culture dans la plupart des cas est supposé plus élevé que celui qu'il pourrait atteindre après la légitimation par l'administration sanitaire et son intégration au système de santé national comme simple «auxiliaire».

Perspectives du Développement

Compte tenu de ce qui précède, la stratégie du concept des SSP, qui consiste à ne supporter que la formation des accoucheuses traditionnelles au lieu de celle de tous les tradipraticiens et à n'encourager que la formation des «agents de santé communautaires» ou sécouristes, qui sont pour la plupart des jeunes (53), choisis par leur communauté locale, semble être évidente. Bien sûr, on n'a pas exclu qu'un guérisseur traditionnel pourrait être choisi par les populations villageoises comme candidat de

cette formation. Egalement la formation des accoucheuses villageoises sera à la longue complètement assurée par les structures du système de santé officiel, et les jeunes femmes, qui seront recrutées par la suite comme accoucheuses «traditionnelles», formeront aussi une catégorie de personnel médical tout-à-fait nouvelle. Or, les services administratifs de la santé publique cherchent à réaliser cette «coopération structurée» avec la médecine traditionnelle sur le plan national, ce qui à la longue mène à sa subordination. La liste des mesures à prendre, arrêtée par la conférence de Kampala, reflète cette intention par l'appel à la reconnaissance des tradipraticiens et à l'élaboration des codes de la pratique de la médecine traditionnelle, ainsi que par la propagande pour la création des conseils nationaux des guérisseurs. Ces mesures contribuent à restreindre la compétence de la médecine traditionnelle par une réduction du nombre des praticiens ainsi que par leur tendance à contrôler et à intervenir dans un secteur traditionnel qui – jusqu'à maintenant – était indépendant. Tout cela contribue à une accélération du changement social dans les pays en question (54). La raison en est l'approbation sur le plan administratif d'une réorientation qui est déjà adoptée en partie dans les modes de comportement de la population : la réputation de la médecine traditionnelle diminue. De plus en plus les décisions préférentielles des malades se font d'après l'ordre suivant, 1) auto traitement, 2) médecine cosmopolite, et seulement en cas d'échec, 3) médecine traditionnelle (55). Si la médecine traditionnelle ne reste que le dernier refuge des malades, c'est que dans le domaine de la médecine, l'acculturation des populations est accomplie.

Ce changement de conduite n'empêche pas la délégation de certaines fonctions aux représentants de la médecine traditionnelle. Surtout en psychiatrie on retrouve beaucoup d'exemples d'une coopération – celle-ci étant un domaine où la médecine occidentale ne semble pas avoir de moyens supérieurs aux techniques traditionnelles. Puisque beaucoup de facteurs entre en ligne de compte dans les problèmes de santé mentale, la question de savoir si la réussite de la médecine traditionnelle pour la re-structuration de l'équilibre psycho-social dans le cadre strict du village peut être obtenue dans des conditions sociales différentes du genre de celles qu'on rencontre dans les villes anonymes telles que le chômage, la prolétarianisation et les problèmes d'exode rural, reste sans réponse (56). La naissance des mouvements spirituels de guérison, déjà mentionnés, fait partie de ce développement de nouvelles formes de la médecine populaire au sein de ce milieu. De plus, on rencontre de multiples formes de charlatanerie exploiteuse.

La Santé – une Valeur Autonome ?

En guise de conclusion, outre les questions discutées qui sont d'un intérêt plus médical, il nous faut maintenant réfléchir sur la portée politique des SSP. Il faut donc se demander, pourquoi nous observons depuis le début des années 1970 l'intérêt croissant des organisations internationales et des gouvernements nationaux à un meilleur état sanitaire des populations entières – même dans les régions rurales qui n'ont pas un potentiel apparent de développement. Jusqu'à nos jours, des raisons huma-

nitaires ou idéologiques n'ont jamais été à la base d'efforts palpables pour une amélioration réelle de la santé des populations rurales et marginales. Pour expliquer ces efforts, on ne peut donc pas avoir recours aux paroles lancées comme par exemple la reconnaissance d'une identité culturelle ou l'acceptation de la santé faisant partie des droits fondamentaux de l'homme.

Les améliorations de soins de santé publique étaient toujours associées aux intérêts économiques (57). Elles constituent en même temps des améliorations des conditions de reproduction de la force de travail. Une précondition pour le déclenchement des campagnes pour l'amélioration de l'état de santé des populations rurales fut la reconnaissance de l'approche théorique, qui considère les dépenses pour la santé comme un investissement productif en faveur du développement socio-économique et non une dépense non-productive de consommation. Cette approche a pendant longtemps été contestée. L'évaluation de la politique du secteur de santé par la Banque Mondiale (58) semble avoir finalement contribué à son acceptation.

Jusqu'à maintenant il n'existe pas une théorie élaborée de l'économie politique du secteur de santé des pays dépendants (59). De l'analyse des arguments qui considèrent les dépenses pour la santé dans les pays sous-développés comme investissement productif dans le développement socio-économique, il ressort que :

1. Les dépenses pour la santé sont des préconditions nécessaires pour l'augmentation générale de la production, surtout dans l'agriculture.
2. Les dépenses pour la santé sont nécessaires pour une meilleure utilisation des investissements antérieurs en «capital humain», comme par exemple pour l'éducation (60). Cet argument est d'une grande importance surtout dans le processus d'industrialisation et en vue de la spécialisation de la force de travail associée à ce processus (61).
3. Les arguments épidémiologiques sont aussi considérés comme des raisons économiques justifiant les dépenses pour la santé (62). Des dépenses destinées à une réduction de la fréquence des endémies tropicales classiques étaient depuis longtemps considérées très importantes, même dans les régions d'un intérêt mineur pour l'économie coloniale, parce que la lutte contre les maladies transmissibles par vecteurs ne peut pas être restreint aux régions prospères.

La Santé pour tous – ou Paupérisation de la Périphérie ?

On ne trouve pas une explication rationnelle et économique pour les efforts de réalisation de la nouvelle stratégie des SSP dans toute l'Afrique rurale sans analyser l'importance du secteur rural en termes d'économie politique. L'école française d'anthropologie économique (63) nous a montré que son importance ne se limite pas au fait, que ce secteur produit les «cash-crops» et représente un marché qui n'est pas encore entièrement exploité (64). Les recherches effectuées par MEILLASSOUX

démontrent, que la perpétuation de l'existence de ce secteur traditionnel de subsistance est nécessaire en Afrique. Sa contribution à la reproduction de la force de travail constitue un fait essentiel dans le système du «capitalisme périphérique». La chute ou la disparition de ce secteur traditionnel mettrait fin à la «sur-exploitation» qui existe et qui est à la base du «mode de production impérialiste» (65).

En considérant ce contexte pendant notre observation des changements des conceptions des soins de santé actuels, on arrive mieux à comprendre, pourquoi ce n'est qu'à partir des années 1970, qu'on assiste à l'insistance et la détermination politique d'une amélioration de l'état de santé des populations entières : il existe le risque de l'écroulement du secteur rural traditionnel parceque la paupérisation de la «périphérie de la périphérie» s'accroît (66). Pour prévenir ce danger, des «inputs» pour le maintien d'un état minimal de santé de la population rurale s'imposent.

Evidemment, le concept des SSP ne fut pas développé par des économistes à la recherche du maintien du status quo. Il fut développé par des administrateurs sanitaires et des médecins qui ont utilisé à la fois leurs expériences personnelles et l'ensemble des recherches sociologiques effectuées dans les questions du sous développement. Pourtant, les problèmes de la santé publique étaient connus au moins depuis le début des années soixante et une explication satisfaisante n'a pas encore été donnée à la question de savoir pourquoi, depuis dix ans qu'on en parle, le problème de l'amélioration de la santé rurale n'a pas encore eu de salution concrète (67). Parmi les raisons pour le support dont la stratégie des SSP bénéficie de la part des organismes internationaux ainsi que nationaux, on peut noter — outre de la détermination politique d'améliorer les conditions de vie des populations appauvries — le fait, qu'on suppose la relation coût/bénéfice assez favorable. Le concept des SSP utilise une approche de «développement communautaire», et ainsi les dépenses nécessaires sont estimées moins élevées que dans les programmes habituels, parceque une bonne partie des ressources est produite par les communautés !

A l'origine, l'approche SSP contenait aussi des éléments d'émancipation, comme par exemple l'accent mis sur la participation de la communauté. C'est pourquoi nous pouvons dire, en guise de conclusion, que l'approche SSP peut s'appliquer très bien dans le contexte d'une stratégie pour vaincre le sous-développement ; mais il n'empêche pas - en tout cas - un «développement du sous-développement». S'il n'y a que des raisons économiques à la base de la large audience que les organismes officiels ont réservé à cette stratégie, il y a lieu de soupçonner, à juste raison, que l'approche progressive, contenu dans le concept des SSP et dans les tentatives de revalorisation de la médecine traditionnelle ait disparut.

Pour cette raison il est nécessaire de continuer la discussion de la dite stratégie des «besoins élémentaires» dans laquelle s'insèrent l'approche SSP et les tentatives de revalorisation et d'intégration de la médecine traditionnelle. Les problèmes rencontrés dans ce contexte ne sont pas seulement relatifs à l'organisation des soins de santé publique, mais ils soulèvent des problèmes à la fois anthropologiques, sociologiques et politiques et méritent une discussion ample et interdisciplinaire.

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SUMMARY

Traditional health care has received attention lately in connection with WHO's «Primary Health Care»-strategy. This article tries to outline the significance of traditional medicine for the care of African populations. Within each society, differently conceptualized medical systems coexist. As *Unshuld* showed with his theory of professionalization, nowhere does there exist a successful and complete integration of different medical systems. In the African context, apart from different forms of collaboration, we find a deliberate subordination of traditional healers and their knowledge under the dominating concept of cosmopolitan medicine.

As Primary Health Care is thought to provide medical services accessible and acceptable to the local community, the author raises the question: why have there been real efforts to improve health services for rural populations on a nation-wide scale only in the seventies, although evidence has existed for more than ten years? The author advances the hypothesis that the economic function of a traditional rural sector in the reproduction of the labour force has been menaced by progressive degra-

dation of living-standards there, and that the «basic needs»—development approach together with the Primary Health Care-strategy and the attempts at revaluation of traditional medicine, are aimed at preventing a collapse of the traditional rural sector. This would imply, that the emancipatory development approach, inherent in the original Primary Health Care—strategy has been lost.

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traditionnelles. by Adama Kone
- d) Small-Scale Industry and Transfer of
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ECONOMIC INTEGRATION IN WEST AFRICA: SOME CRITICAL ISSUES

By

S. K. B. ASANTE *

I – INTRODUCTION

In recent years economic integration among developing countries, in its various forms, has become one of the more topical issues in the field of economic development, and the subject has increasingly attracted the attention of policy-makers in the developing countries, as well as that of international organisations and various governments among developed countries. This general trend towards some form of regional economic cooperation in both developed and developing countries is due to the realisation of the importance of economic inter-dependence for the promotion of the economic well-being of the peoples of these countries. This general awareness has found expression in the attempts by the United Nations and its various agencies, as well as by bodies outside the U. N. framework to encourage regional economic integration (1).

Since the early 1970s, and especially following the increase in oil prices, fluctuations in other commodity prices and the consequent financial and balance of payments problems, the need for collective self-reliance among the developing countries has received a new note of urgency. The multiple problems have all combined to wreak havoc on these countries and to jeopardise their prospects of attaining the goals and targets set forth in the International Development Strategy as well as in their own development plans. The action of the members of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) was viewed by the countries of the Third World as constituting some kind of watershed in North-South relations. The developing countries saw in this action, despite the consequences it had for many of them, a manifestation of the ideas of self-assertion and a departure from what appeared to them the futile exercises in persuasion, even supplication, in which they had hitherto been engaged. It was not surprising, then that the issues of structural change and collective self-reliance were the dominant themes of the resolution finally adopted by the Sixth Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

However, in spite of the Declaration and Programme of Action for the Establishment of a New International Economic Order and the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States adopted by the Sixth Special Session of the General Assembly, and even in spite of the optimism engendered by the co-operation between the developed and developing countries the Seventh Special Session of the General Assembly, very

* *Department of Political Science, University of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria on Sabbatical leave from University of Ghana, Legon.*

little progress has been achieved when it comes to concrete measures to reorganize international economic relations on bases which are both realistic, just and equitable. The confrontation between the developing countries and the developed countries which manifested itself at the Sixth Special Session, the failure of the developing countries to achieve most of the objectives that they sought for the purposes of restructuring the world economic order at the Fourth Session of UNCTAD at Nairobi in May 1976 (2), and the breakdown of the Paris North-South Dialogue in June 1977 – all suggest that the salvation of the developing countries lies in mapping out their own strategy to solve their own economic problems. They are to foster mutual cooperation so as to impart strength to their national endeavours to fortify their independence (3). For although each individual country might be weak, President Nyerere has said,

Together, or even in groups, we are much less weak. We have the capability to help each other in many ways, each gaining in the process. And as a combined group we can meet the wealthy nations on very different terms; for though they may not need any one of us for their own economic health, they cannot cut themselves off from all of us (4).

To the developing world, therefore, economic integration and cooperation has become imperative.

It is against this background that we attempt in this paper to analyse the case for economic integration in West Africa and the problems and issues that arise in connection with such a scheme. The paper is divided into five sections. After this introductory section, we consider in section II the theoretical bases for West African economic integration. Section III analyses the complexities and objective conditions in West Africa, and briefly summarises the current efforts at economic integration in the sub-region. In section IV, some of the most serious, and potentially most disruptive, problems which are likely to confront an economic integration scheme in the sub-region are highlighted, while section V, the concluding section, attempts to make some observations for consideration by policy-makers involved in the creation and operation of a viable West African economic integration scheme.

II – ON THEORETICAL BASES FOR WEST AFRICAN ECONOMIC INTEGRATION:

Although most cases of regional economic integration are among Third World countries, yet research in this field has been dominated by theory based on the European experience. The EEC has thus become, in the words of Joseph Frankel, «a living laboratory for the integration theory» (5). Not surprisingly, the literature on economic integration and development has pointed out that developing countries do not satisfy the criteria of neo-classical customs union theory and that they will not reap the traditional welfare gains from integration. Hence some economists, such as Jacob Viner and R. G. Lipsey, deny that integration schemes will

benefit developing countries (6). Their argument is based upon the concept of trade creation and trade diversion. Professor Viner defines trade creation as a shift in trade from a high cost to a low cost source of supply within the integration area, and trade diversion as a shift from a low cost source of supply outside the integration area to a high cost producer within it. In Viner's view, if there is more trade diversion than trade creation within a customs union, then the net effect on world welfare and the welfare of the members will be negative. Since trade diversion (at least in the short run) will obviously prevail over trade creation in Third World customs unions as the members shift from low cost producers in the developed world to high cost producers among their neighbours, Viner and Lipsey are opposed to the creation of customs unions among developing countries.

On a theoretical basis, therefore, there might appear to be little to justify economic integration in West Africa. It must be pointed out, however, that Viner's analysis is set within a static framework; it ignores dynamic factors. This approach relies heavily on neo-classical assumptions of full employment, perfect competition, constant returns to scale, perfect internal mobility of factors of production and equality of private and social costs. It also evaluates the desirability of a customs union from the viewpoint of global welfare considerations only. Although recent literature on customs unions does not ignore static gains, it is now concerned also with the dynamics of economic growth and emphasizes the positive effects of the creation of regional markets on the developmental pace of member countries. In other words, the dynamic effects refer to the various possible ways in which integration affects the rate of growth of GNP of participating countries. They include, for example, the economics of scale brought about by the enlargement of the size of the market for firms producing below optimum capacity prior to integration; or the effect on the value and location of investment (7).

Besides, while the initial effects of a customs union among developing countries may be «expensive» or negative, the long run consequences of public and private entrepreneurs' being able to produce and sell for a regional rather than a more limited national market may be positive in terms of economic efficiency and growth. From a dynamic perspective, economic integration widens the scope for and reduces the cost of import substitution (8). These considerations seem to be of over-riding importance in the decision to integrate the economies of the West African States. For, while there could not be sufficient justification on a «purely static analysis basis» for the creation of a West African customs union, the contrary is the case on dynamic grounds (9).

III — OBJECTIVE CONDITIONS IN THE WEST AFRICAN SUB-REGION:

The intricacy of the economic, political and social dimensions of the West African sub-region has been acknowledged and highlighted by previous writers on the subject. As one ECA study put it, «The West African sub-region is the most varied in Africa as to size of countries,

degree of economic development, language and economic internal and external links» (10). Nicolas Plessz, on the other hand, states that «West Africa occupies a very particular position in so far as integration is concerned» (11), while Adebayo Adedeji aptly adds that «a study of integration efforts in West Africa is inevitably a study of frustration» (12). For if Africa as a whole is badly fragmented, West Africa is much more so affected than elsewhere on the continent. The region has the largest number of mini-states – the smallest being the Gambia, with a population of less than 0.5 million and a land area of 11,291 sq.km. Similarly, if frontiers are artificial and arbitrary on the continent in general, they are absurd and capricious in West Africa. They run inwards from the coast, cutting across tribal, cultural and linguistic borders. To these must be added the great African political divides – French, Portuguese and English speaking regions, the franc, dollar and sterling areas and, until the Lome Convention of February 1975, EEC associates and non-associates. Besides, with the possible exception of Nigeria, which has a total land area of 923,768 sq.km. and an estimated population of 71 million, representing roughly 58 per cent of the sub-region's total population, none of the states in West Africa is a large enough economic unit capable of creating and sustaining an integrated modern economy with high levels of productivity (13).

Furthermore, if trade dependence is a characteristic feature of developing economies, such dependence is chronic in the West African countries. Exports and imports almost exclusively to and from outside the region account for as much as one-half of the gross domestic product in most cases. Added to this unenviable position is the fact that the majority of the West African countries depend on a single crop – such as cocoa (Ghana) and groundnuts (Senegal) – and some do not possess even this resource in significant quantities.

The countries are poor and the standard of living in the sub-region is one of the lowest in the world. The per capita income of the West African community in 1974 was about 270 US dollars compared to the World average of US dollars 1,422, the European average of US dollars 3313, the Latin American average of US dollars 953, the Asian average of US dollars 366 (14). The level of industrialization is generally very low although the levels vary from country to country. The countries of the sub-region thus possess all the characteristics of under-developed economies. Against this background, therefore, West Africa is perhaps the region of the world where economic integration or at least the avoidance of disintegration, is more imperative for economic development.

Nearly two decades of independence have brought into sharp focus the seriousness of these economic problems. While most West African leaders share an earnest desire to overcome these problems, there is often a tragic lack of resources to enable them to do so. Yet, internal economic weakness has meant continued reliance on external assistance, with some inevitable political repercussions at home. The principal task facing these countries, then, is to move away from the colonial pattern of economic activity, diversifying and modernizing their economic system, ensuring adequate investment in physical infrastructure while at the same time steering clear of capitulation to one or the other of the «isms».

Not surprisingly, since the early 1960s West African States have turned increasingly to co-operation with their neighbours, in the hope that this would enable them to overcome, at least partly, the problem posed by fragmentation and the difficulties created by export dependence. While cooperation both as an ideal and in practice has not been entirely new to West Africa (15), there has been since early 1972 a more systematic discussion of the scope of closer economic integration, its advantages and problems, and of the institutional structures which could support it on a constantly expanding basis.

The outcome of the years of gestation was the creation in Lagos, Nigeria, on May 28, 1975, of the all-embracing Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The ECOWAS treaty has been rightly described as one of «the most ambitious projects of its kind in the world» (16) and, in West Africa itself as «by far the most momentous and far-reaching economic treaty since its component parts won independence» (17). The treaty aims at promoting cooperation and development among member states in all fields of economic activity for the purpose of raising the standard of living of its people. The ultimate objective of its efforts is to achieve accelerated and sustained economic development of member states through the elimination of all types of obstacles to the free movement of goods, capital and persons (18). With an enlarged market and subsequent expansion in industrial production taking advantage of economies of scale, industrial growth and technological advancement in the sub-region will be enhanced with a view to benefitting more from technological progress which at present is not shared equitably by all members of the international community.

In view of the hopes, interests and aspirations which ECOWAS has generated throughout West Africa and, especially, of its uniqueness in that it embraces all the countries within the present boundaries of the sub-region, we intend to devote the rest of this paper to analysing some of the critical issues that may confront this infant organization. For in pursuing the ECOWAS objectives, there are constraints that are likely to limit the smooth and quick realization of the goal of desired economic union. Such constraints constitute the problems of the community. It should not be understood, however, that these problems are unique to ECOWAS; they are the type of problems and constraints which are likely to confront any other economic integration scheme of its kind in West Africa. Some comments on the various provisions of the ECOWAS treaty have already been made elsewhere (19), and therefore do not need repetition. What we do here is to highlight the most serious, and potentially most disruptive, problems and issues which do not appear to have received adequate attention from scholars in the field.

IV — PROBLEMS AND ISSUES:

Academic theorists of regional integration, especially of the neo-functional persuasion, initially ignored the external causes and effects and only belatedly have incorporated them within their analytical frameworks (20). It is now an established fact that regional change processes «are not autonomous or self-generated» (21), but responsive to a context of global

interdependence and interaction. For, as Philippe Schmitter has recently argued, «No matter what their original intentions, it should prove difficult to isolate regional deliberations from their context of global economic and political dependence» (22). Yet, one of the most salient consequences of integration among developing countries is a reduction of the degree of dependence on the rest of the world (23).

Given this background, it is easy to envisage the kind of problems likely to confront policy-makers and technocrats involved in the operation of ECOWAS. There is in the first place, the problem of the community initiating measures effective enough to combat attempts by extra-regional powers to take advantage of the newly created regional opportunities and thus derive more benefit from integration than would the intra-regional participants. Secondly, and closely related to this, is the problem of extricating the member states of ECOWAS from existing dependency relationships with the metropolitan powers and using national and regional institutions to bring about greater local control over resources. After all the term integration implies the replacement of the existing ties with the metropolitan centres by a new pattern of economic and political integration within the region.

As we have seen, the national economies of the West African countries are dependent in the sense that decisions taken by the metropolitan centres can affect not only the momentum, but the whole pattern of growth of the economy. The external dependence thus constitutes one of the main obstacles to the creation of a West African regional economy through *laissez-faire* approaches to integration and the operation of effective corrective measures. For it is unlikely that the metropolitan powers would easily allow their areas of influence and their sources of raw materials to slip from their hands. To continue to maintain the dependency relationships, these powers may apply several adaptive measures. For example, by aiding, advising, subsidizing, cajoling, or flattering regional and national actors in West Africa, they may seek to influence the course or collaborative effort and thereby protect their «essential» interests within the region. There is also the tendency that these metropolitan countries will unite and through such kinds of summit meetings, as for example, the recent conference of France and French-speaking African Heads of State held in May 1976 (24), or the biannual meetings of the Commonwealth Heads of State, may gradually undermine the spirit of ECOWAS and all that it stands for.

For an integration scheme in West Africa to enjoy a reasonable likelihood of achieving success it must include measures which aim to reduce dependence on metropolitan countries, and this should be a significant distinguishing characteristic of such a regional integration scheme as ECOWAS. The regional measures should seek to regulate foreign investment and transfer of technology, including the designation of certain sectors of the economy in which foreign participation will be limited or totally excluded. Without such a policy the degree of success of ECOWAS will be sharply limited (25).

Besides the potential threat to ECOWAS emanating from the metropolitan powers is the particular role of such non-governmental external actors as transnational corporations in the integrative process.

To be precise, the basis of operation of many of these actors are located in the metropolitan countries themselves. The actions of such external actors or, what Philippe Schmitter has termed, «external penetration» (26), can have a profound effect on the direction of an integrative undertaking (27). In both the Central American and the European Common Markets, for example, foreign investment has played a key role, even though in neither instance was that the original plan. Some of these actors, like the metropolitan countries, perceive their interests to be adversely affected by an integration process and they become involved in a negative way (28). On the other hand, a large and seemingly positive involvement of these actors can also produce a negative effect in cases in which this gives them a veto power on further integrative steps, as for example, U.S. attitudes towards the Central American industrial allocation scheme (29). Thus, whatever way one looks at it, ECOWAS will be confronted with the problem of how to control the role of these nongovernmental external actors, notably transnational corporations, in the economic activity of the sub-region. For these private external interests may seek to penetrate the new reward system from within in an attempt to get inside the boundaries of the emerging regional system. Therefore, one can expect that ECOWAS, in the absence of deliberate restrictive policies, will stimulate flows of foreign capital and technology (30).

Experience of other economic co-operative arrangements in developing countries has shown that the creation of a customs union has led in many cases to opportunities being created for transnational corporations in particular to exploit the enlarged market. A case in point is the most painful lesson learnt from the experience of the Central American Common Market and Latin American Free Trade Area. The main beneficiaries of regional measures initiated by these two regional groupings intended to promote Latin American enterprises were transnational corporations controlled from outside Latin America, who used free trade area and customs union alike as springboards for obtaining dominant positions outside (31).

The ECOWAS Protocol on the rules of origin anticipated the possibility of «external penetration», for it accepts that «the promotion of trade in goods originating in member states as well as the collective economic development of the community requires indigenous ownership and participation» (32). Conditions which goods must satisfy to qualify as «goods originating in the country» are also specified (33).

While these ensure a reasonable measure of participation of local factor endowments, it is clear that, critically examined, a lot of room is left for foreign participation and for the utilization of foreign resources and capital. It must be pointed out that «ownership and participation» do not necessarily ensure local control especially when it is seen that great reliance is to be placed on foreign technology and know-how. Although it is intended that this reliance on external forces should be minimized by pulling resources together, the tendency of the community technocrats to look outside for forces of development may tend to lead to greater dependence, making the possibility of achieving self-reliance even more difficult.

Unless the role which foreign partners are allowed to play in the Common Market is carefully circumscribed and progressively minimized they may become the dominant force within the community. If this

happens then we would have created the opportunity for undermining sustained economic cooperation in the West African sub-region (34).

Another issue of particular importance for a successful implementation of the ECOWAS scheme is the problem of harmonisation of industrial and commercial policies (35). This has stemmed probably from the same significance attached to industrialization as an engine of growth. The primary rationale of ECOWAS as an economic integration scheme is the promotion of industrial development that will transform the economies of the member states. The success of ECOWAS will therefore crucially depend on the development and improvement in links fostered by balanced industrial development in the sub-region. Harmonisation of industrial policies to achieve this end would seem to constitute the precise sore-spot in the implementation of the ECOWAS scheme.

For, in the first place, meaningful harmonisation is predicted on the sharing of a common ideology and consequently common socio-economic objectives. Can we really say that this pre-condition exists in the West African sub-region? If the answer is in the negative, do the conditions in the sub-region allow for a progressive development in this direction? It will indeed not be too much of an oversimplification to conclude, then, that development plans can hardly be harmonised without first reconciling the social, political and economic divergencies that account for disparate policies in the sub-region.

Secondly, apart from difficulties posed by divergent ideologies of socio-economic development, harmonisation that does not differentiate the various levels of development and particular needs of individual member countries is either not going to be accepted or even if accepted is not likely to endure the test of time (36). For the wide disparities among the ECOWAS countries in natural resources, population and the level of industrial and overall development have resulted in broad disparities in national priorities, policies and objectives. Reconciliation of these disparities for harmonisation purpose is unlikely to be an easy task.

Besides, major problems are likely to arise from the location of common projects. If ECOWAS projects are to be growth-promoting, they must be sited where conditions are most conducive to efficient production. While the location of such industries in the more favoured areas of the sub-region may accelerate overall growth of the community, it may depress the less developed areas further and widen economic imbalance. The provisions made for compensating member states which sustain economic losses because of the location of community projects are unlikely to make the less favoured areas altogether willing to make such sacrifices in the interest of overall growth of the community. On the other hand, if projects are concentrated in the less favoured areas, such as the landlocked sparsely populated desert countries, in order to promote balanced industrial development, overall growth of the community may be sacrificed (37).

This tendency is likely to provoke unhealthy rivalry among the ECOWAS member states instead of co-operation. The problem will be accentuated if the less developed areas have any reason to believe that industrial harmonisation would aggravate the problem of economic imbalance in the long run as the case has been in such integration schemes as

the East African Community (EAC), Latin American Free Trade Area (LAFTA) and the Central American Common Market (CACM), in spite of the fact that in all these schemes provisions were made for the less developed territories.

Although the ECOWAS treaty has also made provisions for the development of the less developed member states in the industrial field, these have not been as explicitly and attractively documented as, for example, in the case of the recently created Andean Common Market. The Andean sub-regional agreement accorded special treatment or concessions to the two less developed countries – Bolivia and Ecuador. The expectation was that special treatment would accelerate their economic growth, thus reducing the disparity between them and the other members and, in turn, making them more effective participants in the Andean Common Market. The four concessions stipulated in Article 78 – 81 were somewhat more extensive and explicit than those of LAFTA (38). It would appear that the less favoured areas in the West African sub-region may have to enjoy considerable preferential treatment in the short run if their loyal cooperation is to be guaranteed in the long run.

Added to all this are two other highly critical elements of any effective integrative schemes. These are first, the problem of equitable distribution of expected gains and losses from integration and, secondly, the problem posed by political factors. These are perhaps the most difficult and divisive issues which have been the root cause of all the major conflicts experienced by developing countries within integration systems. The two problems often exacerbate each other. Differences on these issues can prevent the provisions of ECOWAS from being implemented, or can weaken and destroy the scheme at a later date. As the two problems have already received adequate attention elsewhere (39), we intend here to highlight aspects of a few relevant details.

In all integration schemes, including even those among industrialized countries, the gains are not likely to be distributed evenly. Among developing countries disparities in the distribution of the gains from integration are likely to be greater, with some member countries being net losers. Because of the highly charged nature of economic questions and of strong nationalistic tendencies, each member country assesses regional integration in terms of the benefits which accrue it. And since the costs and benefits of regional economic integration are differently distributed among the member countries, policies which bring regional gains may be opposed by those countries which do not directly and immediately benefit. The main problem is that no effective formula has yet been devised for ensuring equitable distribution of benefits. Some benefit-sharing plans have been tried with a certain degree of success, but they related only to small specific aspects of co-operation. In such major aspects of economic development as industry and agriculture, difficulties still arise in regard to the establishment of a system of distribution of benefits.

This, then, poses a serious problem for ECOWAS, especially in the light of the West African peculiar situation. For the actual distribution of gains from economic integration depends upon national differences of size, reflecting dissimilar capacities to take advantage of specialization,

scale economies, factor input endowments, and market structures (40). Data show that these factors are not prevalent in West Africa and the extent to which they are, would result in their benefits being distributed unevenly throughout the region. Evidence of this latter point is that the free trade area proposed between Senegal and Gambia would offer Gambia «no obvious advantage and some evident immediate disadvantages in the form of higher administrative costs» (41). In 1968 Chad decided to withdraw from membership of the *Union douanière et économique de l'Afrique Centrale* (UDEAC) and to agree to close links with Zaire mainly because of the dissatisfaction over UDEAC's inability to work out a formula for measuring the costs and benefits at integration and «to agree upon an equitable distribution of industrial projects» (42). In addition, the recent collapse of the East African Community bears out this point (43).

This situation thus poses some crucial challenges to the member states of ECOWAS: How, for example, can they agree upon an acceptable distribution of the benefits from the community? How could this be implemented? How, also, can the obvious gaps be bridged between say, Benin, Upper Volta, Niger and Mali on the one hand, and Nigeria, Ivory Coast and Ghana on the other? Which countries would be required to give up what, when, and for what rewards? These are the most contentious and highly politically-laden issues which are likely to confront the Community, even though the protocol relating to the Fund for Co-operation, Compensation and Development contains elaborate provisions to meet eventualities (44).

The second issue, political factors, may pose no less a problem than the question of distribution of costs and benefits. For an economic integration to succeed, participating states must be politically willing to surrender some sovereignty in the overall community interest. Put in other way economic nationalism and policies of national self-sufficiency could thwart moves toward integration and cooperation. This may be an uphill task for ECOWAS, for the West African sub-region ranks high in political instability – caused in many cases by military takeovers –, ideological differences, problems arising from the charm of national sovereignty and frequently strained political relations. A case in point was the dramatic closure of the Togo–Benin border, even after the ratification of the ECOWAS treaty; while in recent years indigenisation policies have sometimes resulted in the expulsion of nationals of some member states from certain areas.

From the experience gained from past attempts at economic cooperation in West Africa, it is clear that the political problem is a factor to be given close attention at all times. For, as Felipe Herrera warned a few years ago:

We have a long way to travel and all the longer, the more we delay in recognising that economic integration cannot be attained exclusively through strictly economic measures, that economic integration is not in itself enough to assure the progress and welfare of nations, and that every development progress entails-

simultaneous struggle on the fronts of technology, law, education, institutions, and fundamentally, politics (45).

Thus, the successful implementation of the ECOWAS provisions will ultimately be a function of political decisions. Hence any attempt to isolate economic policy from the *related* processes of political decision-making and political exchange seems certain to be incomplete.

To this point in the analysis, a few of the most potentially disruptive problems likely to confront the newly created ECOWAS have been identified. Taken together, they raise serious questions about the viability of economic integration in West Africa. These problems are, however, not unsurmountable, given the necessary commitment and the readiness to take concerted action on all fronts. On the other hand, for an effective implementation of the ECOWAS scheme, a few other issues are worth considering. It is to these issues that we turn in the next section.

V — OBSERVATION AND CONCLUSION

One issue of particular importance is perhaps the problem relating to the community's attitude towards foreign capital, as unrestricted or unregulated foreign investment is likely to lead to complete loss of political control by the member states. No doubt sizeable injections of foreign capital, especially direct investment, which brings with it technology and management, will be needed to put the large unemployed labour and natural resources to work. At the moment the various countries of West Africa have wide differences in their policy towards foreign capital. These range from an open-door policy to one which looks upon foreign capital with suspicion. An integrated market is likely to be attractive to foreign capital and the opportunity should not be missed.

It will therefore be necessary to have a clearly defined long-term policy towards foreign capital. A regional investment policy, as John Sloan has recently confirmed, is «perhaps the most important positive integration agreement» (46). For, in the first place, such a policy is needed if maximum benefits are to be derived from «inter-industry specialization and from economies of scale, if duplication of efforts is to be avoided and if it is considered competition and private investment decisions are insufficient to provide these benefits». Secondly, a regional investment policy is at the same time needed to counteract the clustering effects of industrialization and can be used to reduce the need for financial compensation agreements by ensuring, a more equitable distribution of the employment and income generated by integration (47). Finally, policy harmonization in this policy area will also obviate competition among member countries whereby some countries offer to foreign investors excessively generous concessions which are hardly justifiable on purely economic grounds.

Closely related to this problem is the need to keep the transnational corporation at arm's length and to offer subregional entrepreneurs — whether private, state, or co-operative — an amount of protection against their overmighty transnational competitors that mere tariff

barriers have failed to give in the past. This can be done by adopting the principle of the «phase-out» by which all investments of extra subregional origin, whether present or future, are to be accommodated within what might fairly be described as «subregional company law», and barring foreign investment from certain areas of economic activity altogether. In addition, a decision can be taken to create procedures for the licence and selective transfer of technology from outside the sub-region. More significantly, a relatively attractive term for the formation of sub-regional multinational companies able to absorb safe amounts of extra-subregional capital and act as channel for the mobilization and diffusion of sub-regional savings could be framed.

To tackle these issues effectively, some regional planning will be required. Indeed much of the success of ECOWAS will also depend upon the ability of the member states to make some headway in the relatively uncharted terrain of regional planning (48). The use of resources on a subregional scale to effect a real «integration of production» in the whole of West Africa can be considered as one of the most important benefits to accrue to ECOWAS. It is in this area of activity that «positive» policies of integration can be implemented to go beyond the creation of conditions under which economic forces are free to operate. Unfortunately this new field of regional planning is burdened by a series of thorny issues on which ECOWAS will have to take some important decision. For example, should a regional planning be a single plan covering a number of countries? Or should each country devise its own plan, subject to overall co-ordination during preparation and implementation? In either case, where does final authority lie when scope extends beyond individual countries?

However these questions are decided, it is obvious that some regional planning is essential for the success of an economic integration in West Africa. Perhaps in its most effective form a West African sub-regional planning should not be limited to the co-ordination or harmonisation of national development plans, but rather should involve the adoption and implementation of development planning at the sub-regional level, combining resources across national boundaries to undertake development in the service of the sub-region. Such policies imply a great deal of state participation in controlling economic activity and a large measure of responsibility on the part of the ECOWAS institutions. They thus also require a high degree of political commitment to regional integration.

Briefly stated, a regional planning agency in West Africa, which has gained the confidence of national decision-makers through its technical competence, can perform invaluable developmental services even if it lacks – as it surely will for some time – supra national authority. Such an agency will be able to design blueprints whereby national developmental interests may be harmonized within the association with each country being offered a favourable balance of benefits over sacrifices. Above all, a regional agency in West Africa might also help members to foresee – and hopefully overcome – possible bottlenecks to accelerated regional trade and development in terms of transportation inadequacies, communication difficulties, lack of natural resources, and the scarcity of capital and trained personnel.

Finally, cooperation among West African countries and, indeed, among the developing countries of Africa «is not or rather should not be just the concern of government». It should be the concern of all the people who must put pressure on their governments «to keep moving in the right direction as well as doing all they can to bring about the realization of such cooperation» (49). Needless to add that cooperation goes far beyond treaty making, the negotiations of protocols and the establishment of institutions and machinery. To this end, internal specialized pressure groups with international outlook must emerge: businessmen, elites, parliamentary groups, religious groups, trade unions, chambers of commerce, journalists, who feel that the present national boundaries are too narrow and have served only to limit the horizon and scope of their varied activities. The solution of current economic problems should then be seen as consisting, partially, of widening of the market through economic integration.

It should be emphasized, in conclusion, that this paper is a preliminary inquiry into the prospects of economic integration in West Africa, focusing on the challenges the fledgling Economic Community of West African States is likely to face. While it is too early to assess the contribution of ECOWAS to integration in the sub-region, it is to be noted that it constitutes a serious attempt, for the first time in the sub-region, at economic cooperation and integration cutting across divisions of language, history, and existing affiliations and institutions. Despite the problems highlighted above, it is evident that ECOWAS has a much larger potential market and more widespread trading links than other groupings in Africa. It should always be emphasized, however, that economic integration is not a panacea for the problems of the West African countries; its success is crucially dependent on a number of factors such as domestic reforms and the political will to integrate. There is always a need, particularly in the special case of West Africa, for far-reaching political decisions that will endow the instruments of integration with the efficacy needed to withstand elements of possible stagnation in the near future. It is hoped that the strategy of the economic integration can ultimately help the West African countries overcome the obstacles to development by gradually increasing their inter-sub-regional trade, by gradually subjecting their industries to competition, by gradually creating a community spirit among the members and by gradually impressing upon them the need for national and regional planning.

FOOTNOTES

- (1) See for example, Proceedings of UNCTAD, Vol. 1: *Final Act and Report* (New York, 1964), p. 111; Report of the UNCTAD on Its Second Session, TD/L.37, Annex 1, (New Delhi, 1968), p. 65; United Nations: Resolution Adopted by the General Assembly on the Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, A/RES/3201 (S.V2), 9 May, 1974.
- (2) For an assessment of UNCTAD IV, see Samir Amin, «After Nairobi: An APPRAISAL of UNCTAD IV», *Africa Development* Vol. 1, No. 2, 1976, pp. 58 – 61; Gamani Corea, «UNCTAD and the New International Econo-

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RESUME

Dans cet article l'auteur fait une étude préliminaire des perspectives de l'intégration économique en Afrique de l'Ouest en insistant sur les obstacles que la jeune Communauté Economique des Etats de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (CEDEAO) aura à faire face. Il commence son étude en nous donnant un bref aperçu de l'instabilité économique mondiale des années 70 et de l'échec de toute une série d'efforts déployés dans le cadre du dialogue Nord-Sud qui avait pour but de jeter les bases d'un Nouvel Ordre Economique Mondial. Après une brève discussion des raisons théoriques pour une intégration économique de l'Afrique de l'Ouest et des caractéristiques généraux de la sous-région, l'article consacre une analyse détaillée

à quelques obstacles et contraintes majeurs que la CEDEAO est susceptible de rencontrer. Parmi les problèmes les plus sérieux susceptibles de provoquer un éclatement dans l'avenir, il faut d'abord mentionner l'intervention quasi-certaine de certaines Puissances extra-régionales comme les anciennes puissances coloniales ou les Entreprises Multinationales qui feront tout pour profiter de ces chances nouvellement créées en Afrique de l'Ouest et ainsi bénéficier de l'intégration plus que les agents de cet intégration eux-mêmes. Il faut donc que les pays membres de la CEDEAO non seulement tiennent ces Entreprises Multinationales à distance mais, plus important encore, il faut qu'ils essaient de se dégager des relations actuelles de dépendance vis-à-vis des anciennes puissances coloniales. Puis, l'article attire l'attention sur le problème de l'harmonisation des politiques industrielles et commerciales sanctionnée dans le chapitre V (articles 28 — 32) de la Convention de la CEDEAO pour ensuite discuter brièvement deux autres points extrêmement critiques qui ont généralement été à l'origine des conflits majeurs qu'ont connu les pays en voie de développement dans les systèmes d'intégration. Ces points sont d'abord le problème de la distribution équitable des bénéfices et pertes prévus dans l'intégration et ensuite celui posé par des facteurs politiques. Dans la dernière partie de l'article, l'auteur fait des suggestions aux politiciens et technocrates impliqués dans la création et la fonctionnement d'un plan viable d'intégration économique de l'Afrique de l'Ouest. Il souligne par exemple l'importance que les pays membres de la CEDEAO doivent accorder à la définition d'une approche commune pour l'utilisation du capital étranger puisque un investissement étranger illimité et non contrôlé mènera probablement à une absence totale de contrôle politique de la part des pays membres. Il souligne ainsi que la réussite de la CEDEAO dépend en grande partie de l'habileté des états membres à faire des progrès dans le terrain relativement inexploré de la planification régionale. L'utilisation de ressources à un niveau sous-régional pour effectuer une réelle intégration de la production dans toute l'Afrique de l'Ouest peut être considérée comme l'un des avantages les plus importants qui revient à la CEDEAO.

REVIEW

Ranjit SAU : *Unequal Exchange, Imperialism and Underdevelopment: An Essay on the Political Economy of Imperialism, (Oxford University Press, Calcutta, 1978)*

Reviewed by

Thandika MKANDAWIRE *

Ranjit Sau's «Essay» seeks to analyse how the exploitative relation between metropolitan and periphery economies has been maintained in the post-colonial or neo-colonial era. More specifically, how has the unequal exchange of the last 400 years been perpetrated in the neo-colonial era? Essentially then this is a study of not only the roots of imperialism at the center but also its manifestation in the periphery and the socio-economic forces maintaining the system.

As is essential to any theory of imperialism, Sau starts with a discussion of the nature of the crisis in the metropolitan economies since it is this crisis that not only generates the expansionist tendencies of capitalism at the center but conditions, in a very fundamental way, the modalities of the interactions between the center and the periphery. Sau chooses to start the discussion with a frontal attack on conventional theories of growth based on some notion of a «golden age steady-state» expansion path of capitalist accumulation. Along such a path several key economic magnitudes – rate of profits, and the growth rates of income capital and employment – are equal. There is no «realization» crisis, nor is capitalism encumbered by internal contradictions. Sau asserts that the concept of a «golden age steady-state» is intended to be an answer to Marx's theory of falling rates of profits. This may be true but it could be equally argued that the theory was advanced as a response to the demonstration by Harrod and Domar *within* the Keynesian paradigm that capitalist accumulation traversed a «knife-edge» from which any slight departure would generate a movement away from equilibrium. It could also be argued that the models positing «steady-state» capitalist accumulation are intended as *reductio ad absurdum* of notions of competitive capitalism for they establish how absurdly stringent are the conditions of capitalist stability. The point here is that Sau's reading of the ideology behind the elaborate mathematical equations may be too sweeping.

Sau is at his best when he discusses the relationship between the «golden age of steady-state» and the concept of exploitation. Under the «golden age» regime, profit (r) is equal to growth (g) or

$$g = r$$

What happens then when g is less than r ? In such a case although the workers are producing enough to sustain permanently a certain steady stream of per capita consumption, they are consuming less than that. Somebody else then must be depriving them of a part of the fruits of their labour. Somebody must be exploiting them. This definition of exploita-

* CODESRIA, Dakar, Senegal.

tion cuts both ways since should the growth rate *exceed* the profit rate, the workers in turn must be exploiting some other group in society. Only along the «golden age steady-state» path is there no exploitation since along such a path all profits are reinvested, or, which is the same thing, capitalists do not consume.

There are three things to note about this theoretical construct and Sau brings them all out clearly. In the first place, the definition of exploitation advanced here is fundamentally different from that of Marx and the claims (especially by Samuelson and Weizsäcker) that their theory is a *generalized* theory of exploitation is false. In Marx, the capitalists' appropriation of surplus labour and their control of its disposal (to consume or invest) constitute exploitation since they alienate the fruits of labour from the producers. In the second place, the age of no exploitation when g equals r is patently absurd and so devoid of social and historical content that it has been justifiably called «mythical» (Joan Robinson). In that state, capitalists somehow exist although they do not consume anything ! Finally, the competitive conditions that must be fulfilled in order to ensure steady-state accumulation are drawn out of a never-never land.

Sau abruptly abandons this line of attack on conventional theory and the reader is left with the feeling that Sau's exposé was probably much ado about nothing. His various demonstrations of the mythical nature of «steady-state» capitalist accumulation do not in themselves establish why imperialism should be the system's outlet. He immediately moves on to a brief elaboration of the Marxism theory of capitalist crisis around the well-known triad of constant capital, variable capital and surplus. According to this theory there are two fundamental types of crises. One is called the «falling tendency of the rate of profit» and the other the «realization crisis». Both of these crises impel capitalism towards expansionism either in search of raw materials to lower the value of constant and/or variable capital or in search of new markets to solve the problem of «realization» of surplus. Imperialism, together with technological change, concentration of capital and intensification of exploitation appear then as «the countervailing tendencies» within the system. The incorporation of the present-day underdeveloped countries is thus one of the manifestations of these «countervailing tendencies».

On a purely theoretical basis it has been argued, on the one hand, that such expansion of capitalism should lead to development in the periphery economies since capitalist expropriation of surplus, search for markets or acquisition of essential inputs all require expansion of such economies. On the other hand, it has been argued (e.g. by Gunder Frank) that imperialism can only *underdevelop* the periphery economies. Sau seems at times to lean heavily towards the latter despite his observation that :

«It is incorrect to say that in view of imperialism, industrialization is impossible in the Third World; or that its economy must stagnate or even regress. For it is to the interest of imperialism that an economic expansion of a particular nature occurs in the semi-colony, so as to absorb its discarded commodities including plant and equipment». (p. 44).

Next the author turns to the theory of «unequal exchange». He starts off with a critique of Emmanuel's theory. It will be recalled that Emmanuel distinguishes between a primary form of non-equivalence characterized by equal rates of exploitation but unequal composition of capital, and what he terms the pure form where the rates of exploitation are in themselves different. Emmanuel dismisses the first mentioned theory of non-equivalence as too broad since it holds not only in trade but also within the same country among different sectors. The case of «pure form» non-equivalence occurs whenever trade takes place at prices established through the equalization of profits between regions in which the rate of surplus value is «institutionally» different.

As many others have pointed out, in Emmanuel's theory there is no clear indication as to what mechanism leads to the equalization of profit rates. If it is the mobility of capital induced by the search for the highest return, then one ought to consider the dynamic impact of new investments in the areas enjoying high rates of surplus value. If, on the other hand, it is trade, then one must explain why the capitalists of the high profit region should enter trade when it leads to a fall in their rates of profit due to equalization on a world scale. Similar arguments can be applied against the Sraffian model of Oscar Braun in which there can be no rational ground for the bourgeoisie of the Third World to engage in trade.

Sau advances his own theory of unequal exchange. Take the following matrix equation :

$$p = bw[I - \{I - (1 + r) A\}]^{-1}$$

Where p is the price vector, b is the vector of labour inputs, I is the identity matrix, w and r are the wage and interest rate respectively, and A is $n \times n$ technology matrix. Imagine two countries engaged in trade. Both have the same profit rate but different wage rates. The goods produced in the different countries are exchanged between the two countries according to their price ratios. According to the equation above, the price is a multiple of the wage rate. When two goods are exchanged between two countries maintaining trade balance then their total prices must be equal. But they have different wages; so the respective multipliers must be different. The multiplier will be higher for the country with the lower wage rate. Now the multiplier is nothing but the sum of the direct and indirect labour contents (the «socially necessary labour») weighed with the profit rate according to their timing of occurrence in the production process. Sau concludes, «Hence the country with the lower wage rate gives out more labour than that what it gets back under balanced trade *even* with perfect competition in full force» (p. 58).

Now what are the policy implications of this presentation ? Should periphery countries simply raise their wages ? No, says Sau. The reason is that the phenomenon of unequal exchange is many centuries old and in modern times is affected «partly by the relative cheapness of labour in poor countries and partly by the outright monopoly power of rich countries». This is an interesting observation especially because it raises the question as to whether the system of prices shown above and the transformation of values into prices implicit in the equation is a «his-

torical process» so that nothing can be done to change the relationship by simply manipulating any of the variables or coefficients in the price equation. Furthermore, one wonders why, if monopoly is congenital to imperialism, bother with models whose assumptions (perfect competition, constant returns to scale etc.) are ahistorical. Indeed as it turns out the forms of non-equivalence Sau concentrates upon are ones resulting from the monopolistic pre-eminence of the advanced countries: technological dominance, transfer pricing, royalties, super profits etc.

In chapter 4, Sau discusses the nature of technological progress under monopoly capitalism. He advances two arguments which seem contradictory. In the first place we are told that in the regime of monopoly capitalism, technological progress «is designed in such a way that the existing plant and equipment are used to the maximum possible extent, and the least possible is expended on new capital goods or on labour» (p. 74). On the following page we are told that despite this usual hesitation of a monopolist to innovate, his penchant for quick and high profits leads to a rapid development of consumer products, and, in its train, to a fast turnover of producer goods: «Obsolescence creeps into the plant and equipment, and their economic life gets exhausted well before the expiry of the technical longevity».

In any case, obsolescence is given pre-eminence in the discussion. The obsolescent plant and equipment is sold or dumped upon the periphery economies (in used or new form). In fact, the existence of an overseas market for obsolescent plant and equipment gives «big impetus» to technological progress in the center. Sau takes the case of India as an example from which he concludes that «the middle layer of the bourgeoisie is an important channel for the penetration of foreign capital and technology in the Third World» (p. 93).

Chapter 5 deals with problems of transition in the Third World. Sau attacks various analyses of transition from the conservative «Chicago School» to the radical, Marxist-inspired one. The Chicago School posits a mode of production in which capitalism is dominant and exclusive and everybody behaves as the *homo economicus* of textbook fame. Such a view implies that feudalism, semi-feudalism and all such categories are totally beside the point when one considers the problem of development. Other variants of such orthodox theory are the dualistic theories of growth and Myrdal's *Asian Drama* which, each in its own way, suggest that economic expansion would be set in motion if only market forces could be let free.

As for the Marxist camp, Sau divides the school into three categories depending on what answer they provide to the question: What is the dominant mode of production in the Third World: (i) capitalist, (ii) colonial – post-colonial or, (iii) semi-feudal – semi-colonial? Sau, again on the basis of evidence from India, supports the third characterization of periphery economies as one true to the Third World. Evidence from Africa would suggest need for more cautious generalization from the Indian experience.

Finally the author discusses the international and national alliances that prop up the whole system of imperialism and unequal exchange. Once again Sau generalizes too hastily the Indian experience to other Third World regions.

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