

Whither Social Science Institutions in Africa: A Prognosis

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Introduction

The basic thrust of this paper is to analyze the historical evolutions of social science institutions during the last three decades, identify the main actors involved in this evolution and the major trends emerging towards the future. We conclude by attempting a prognosis of what is the most likely evolution during the next two decades and therefore what are the challenges and options open to a strategic institution such as CODESRIA. Briefly we will argue that:

1. Social science institutions and the production of social knowledge in Africa during the last 30 years have been shaped by the socio-economic and political contexts in which they were operating as well as by a number of critical actors, namely:
 - the national governments;
 - the students and professors;
 - the middle class as the most important sector of civil society;
 - the external donor community.
2. Social science institutions are of various types and should be differentiated by their formal and effective ownership as well as by the different roles they play in a country/sub-region or the continent; the two elements — ownership and function of institutions — are important factors in their specific evolution;
3. The externally imposed 'solutions' to the economic and political crises of African countries during the 80s, and the dramatic changes in the international environment in this half of the 90s, has led to:

- the intellectual domination of the African social science, by the neoclassic school of economics as represented by the Bretton Woods institutions — the World Bank (WB) and IMF.¹
 - such domination is reinforced by the creation of new parallel research and training centers focusing exclusively on policy analysis and economic management; some old universities are recuperated by donor support focusing on the same program at the expense of others.
4. While most of the traditional universities and the UN supported regional institutions are in the process of being restructured and perhaps of withering away, the new parallel institutions and some of the old universities with WB programmes are expected to dominate the social science scene in Africa for the rest of this decade and the next.
 5. While CODESRIA and other similar social science institutions have played an important role in the 70s and 80s as critiques of developmentalism and received conventional social science, they do now and will in the near future, face a more difficult and challenging situation. What should their long-term strategy be for facing the coming future?

In the first half of the paper I will focus on the most important social science institutions — those 'owned' by the national governments; namely universities and other higher level training and research institutions in the different fields of social science. The second half of the paper will deal with the other types of social science institutions — those regional institutions owned by the UN System, the coordinating African institutions (the NGOs)

1 The Bretton Woods institutions' 'school' of economic growth and development is part of the neoclassical movement which considers market prices as the key instrument for bringing about economic growth, and eventually general social development. The WB/IMF operationalise their 'development thinking' through the SAPs. The free market economics during the Thatcher/Reagan rule in the late 70s and the 80s dominated the 'development thinking' in the USA and the UK. This widely publicized school of economics had an important place in the conventional social science of Europe and North America during this period and consequently became influential, if not dominant in Africa in both the universities and governments, through the SAPs. More important, the donor community under the coordination of the WB, began to link (in their conditionalities SAPs and other form aid), the introduction of the liberal multi-party political systems in African countries. The argument behind this linkage (which is doubted by many scholars), is that economic growth in African countries, at this stage of their development, can only take place under a multi-party political system. Thus the WB/IMF 'school' of economic growth was not only linked to the technicalities of SAPs, but extended to the arena of the political system and 'governance' and to such other areas as poverty ('Poverty Alleviation'), to social problems ('Social Dimension of Adjustment' (SDA), to economic analysis and economic management ('Capacity Building') etc. In effect the WB/IMF 'thinking' extends — through the totality of their projects and programmes — to the entire traditional area of social science i.e. economy, society and politics.

at the sub-regional/regional level and owned by the social science community; and those new institutions and programmes owned and sponsored by the donor community (coordinated by the WB). The paper will end with a prognosis of the trends and the coming challenges about to face the researcher's institutions and the need for them to develop new strategies.

To make sense of the many different types of social science institutions, I will classify them into five broad categories — basically in terms of the 'ownership' of the institutions. These are:-

- (i) Government Led National Institutions
- (ii) UNECA/Inter-Governmental Led Institutions
- (iii) Social Science Community Led Institutions
- (iv) Donor Community Led Institutions

Let us quickly go over these different types of institutions and briefly look at their histories and the context of their operations before we discuss the emerging trends at the end of the paper.

Government Led National Institutions

The Raison d'Être of Universities and Research Institutes

These are mainly higher level training and research institutions created, financed and monitored by national governments. Most important of these institutions are the universities, research institutes such as those of African or Development Studies or Administration and Management training institutes and various types of teacher training colleges. In some countries there may be additional other institutions such as diplomacy training centers or foreign affairs think tank type of institution etc. There may also be other more specialized institutions in languages, history, literature etc. with focus on the local and the traditional. But on the whole the number and range of these institutions in medium and small countries is limited to 1 or 2 universities and 4 or 5 institutes. The few larger countries such as Nigeria, Egypt, South Africa, have from 5 to 20 universities and many smaller institutes.

In the majority of African countries (i.e. medium and small countries), the 'core' of the social science institutions are one university and two or three institutes, which were created around or just after independence, during the first half of the sixties. Others were added on as needed — mainly during the seventies.

The primary and formal functions of these institutions were and still are:-

- (a) to train high level human resources for governments and its parastatal institutions, as well as for the private sector;
- (b) to carry out research especially on the country's economy in order to help the governments in their efforts to 'develop' the countries;

(c) to carry out research on the histories and cultures of the different people of the respective countries in order to revive African culture per se and to develop 'national' culture as perceived by the governments.

Clearly these institutions were and still are critical to both governments and countries. As an 'industry', they produce:

- (i) the social knowledge of the countries — information, knowledge and ideologies required by and essential to the governments, the private sector, and the ruling groups;
- (ii) the immediate and next generations of leaders for the governments, the private sector and the countries;
- (iii) the skilled cadre needed to run the vast machinery of governments, parastatals, and the private sector.

In order to ensure that these institutions produced the 'right product', their control was thus essential for both the national governments and their supporters inside and outside the countries. If the 'products' of these institutions somehow had 'inappropriate' skills, knowledge and ideologies, they could hamper the running of the governmental system and could create opposition to the governments and division within the countries. These would be undesirable developments which neither the nationalist governments nor their supporters wanted. Hence African governments viewed these institutions as being critical to their own security and survival and put in place elaborate mechanism for their effective control and monitoring.

If these institutions were and still are politically important to the governments, they were also of great social and intellectual significance to the society as a whole. A differentiation took place amongst the institutions of most countries, with the early 'core' institutions amongst them acquiring social prestige and over time became dominated by the higher echelon of the elite groups. They thus became the producers of the elite of the countries and the children of the elite.

Just before and immediately after independence, these 'core' institutions were built by the governments with some support from the ex-colonial powers. As government created institutions, and as the most prestigious institutions in the country, the government invested heavily in them— both financially and politically. During this early stage of institutional development, the ex-colonial powers provided important financial and personal support as well as the backup technical support in the diploma/examination system, libraries, text books etc., as well as administrative support. Thus during the early phase of independence, the governments and the ex-colonial powers were the basic 'owners' of these semi-autonomous institutions, which in form and content were modelled on their metropolitan counterparts,

but with stricter control and monitoring mechanism by the national government. However by the mid-sixties the Americans were well on the way to establishing themselves in certain 'key' (for the Americans) countries, providing all kinds of support — 'institutions-building', scholarships, personnel, and undertaking extensive research in the fields of political science, sociology/anthropology and economics. The strong resource and organizational base of the Americans progressively began to make the American 'presence' more visible in particular countries.

The Canadians and 'non-colonial' European powers (the Scandinavians, but including Holland and West Germany!) began to enter the field of providing support to social science institutions during the early 70s. Their entry effectively widened the sources of funding for individual researchers and institutions in certain countries.²

These national institutions started largely as important investments by the African governments who financed a substantial part of the early stage of their development and maintenance. Progressively however, the contribution of external donors became more important, particularly during the late 70s and the 80s when countries were undergoing the SAP regime and therefore had to drastically reduce their contribution to these institutions. Clearly these national social science institutions are the most important within each country and continentally. To understand their evolution and eventually identify the major trends within these institution, we need to look at the impact on them of the internal evolution of the countries themselves as well as the changing external environment. These national institutions passed through three broad phases which I will now discuss.

The Evolutions of the Institutions: The Socio-Economic and Political Contexts

The Decade of the 1960s: The Phase of Consensus

The institutions during this phase had the following general characteristics:-

- (a) emphases on training;
- (b) smaller student's body;
- (c) high social status;

2 For further discussion on the role of external finance in social science in Africa, see Bujra's 'Foreign Financing of Research and the Development of African Social Science', paper presented at the CODESRIA symposium on Academic Freedom, Kampala, 26-29 november, 1990.

- (d) strong multiple ties with ex-colonial institutions, the latter moulding the early development of the former. Later in the sixties the Americans also played a similar important role in some countries;
- (e) complete acceptance of conventional metropolitan social science and its ideological underpinning;
- (f) relative academic and administrative autonomy;
- (g) local academics were not in command of the intellectual leadership of the institutions, although they were generally nationalist and pro-government;
- (h) the institutions had no financial problems;
- (i) there was general consensus on the role of the institutions and the directions of government led development in the country. There were of course debates and disagreements etc. but mainly on technical issues rather than on fundamentals. There was general political and ideological consensus. The very few local and foreign academics who had profound disagreement with the status quo, were effectively marginalized.

The Consensus Amongst the Main Actors

The 60s have been described as the 'euphoric decade' during which general consensus prevailed not only at the institutions of higher learning, but also in society at large. This, in our view, was largely because of a conjoint of common interests of all the main actors involved with the social science institutions. Consider the main interest of the major actors at the time:-

The Governments: from their point of view, the institutions were producing trained, generally uncritical cadre without any problems. The institutions were supporting and sustaining the 'official' ideology of the government. Furthermore, they were providing the underpinning of the nationalist view and pride of African culture and history. The institutions were thus fulfilling their functions correctly, as far as the governments were concerned. To continue maintaining and developing the institutions in the same course was thus the strategy of the governments.

The Academics: the academics who joined these institutions in the 60s, were generally trained abroad (metropolitan countries and the US), were starting a distinguished, secure, well paid and high status professional career, and looked forward to upward mobility within the institutions/profession and possibly the government; they were generally nationalist and supported the governments, and as Mamdani put it, they thought that 'the state ...is the custodian of the development process and the university an institution that must train human resources for development. It then seemed natural to us that the state play a key role in managing the university' (Mamdani 1993:12). Their interests and those of the governments were thus essentially

the same. The academic's strategy was thus to support the government and not 'rock the boat'.

The Students: as the top most group of the educational pyramid, they entered these institutions with the assurance of a good and free training, secure high status career at the end of it, upward social mobility and an expected life-long economic security for self and the extended family. If there were any dissatisfaction amongst students during this period, it was mainly on the ground that the food was not up to their high standards of expectations. These institutions thus catered for the interest of the student's body and the latter's strategy was generally to be good students and graduate from the various institutions with a reasonable degree/diploma.

The External Donors: the institutions were strategic in producing the trained cadres to maintain the wheels of the governments and private sector. The government's development orientation was based on free market with a strong dose of welfare, and a political system which attempted to maintain consensus within a nationalist ideology. More importantly, these governments largely pursued a pro-Western foreign policy. This was an ideal situation for the external donors given the cold war context at the time. And the social science institutions during this early phase of the 60s played a crucial role in underpinning such a situation. Hence the donor's strategy was to give strong support of various types to these institutions.

These interests of the main actors with a stake in the social science institutions, were finely balanced, and as described here, there was a communality of interest to maintain the institutions as they were and to develop them accordingly. However this complex interactions between actors and institutions contained internal dynamics which were the seeds of potential disruption in the near futures, of this communality and political and ideological consensus. There were thus conflicting forces within the societies which expressed themselves in internal differences within the government and the institutions but which, though contained during this period, were to appear later — breaking the consensus etc . We will discuss some of these issues later as we proceed with the evolution of these institutions. Here however it is sufficient to emphasize that the early phase of the development of social science institutions in Africa was a remarkable period of general unity and agreement about both goals and means. Unfortunately however it is not clear whether the knowledge produced by these institutions at the time had any direct or indirect contribution to the modest economic growth of most African countries during the 60s. Furthermore and with hindsight, barring the few brilliant exceptions of scholars such as Samir Amin and Ali Mazrui, there were no sparks nor any form of development in the social sciences in African countries during this period. These institutions were largely transmitters of metropolitan social science in their respective countries.

The Expanding Phase of the 1970s: The Phase of Competing Ideologies

The Changing Internal Context: The Emergence of Conflicts

Most African countries entered the 70s with their economies continuing their modest growth of the 60s. The government itself was expanding considerably, particularly the parastatal sector. And so was the private sector. During the second half of the seventies however, most countries began to experience economic decline — some to almost zero growth. Economic crises became prevalent and the WB/IMF began to come up with the SAPs as a solution to the growing economic difficulties of African countries. Some 10 countries had accepted SAP by the end of the 1970s.

By the mid seventies the African middle-class had become sizeable and was in fact growing fast.

One of the major consequences of the growth of the middle class, was the pressure this class exerted on governments to expand social science institutions. It was during this period that new Universities were opened and various types of training and research centers were created. The student body expanded dramatically causing considerable problems over infra-structure and services at these institutions. At the same time the national academic staff increased steeply. The new and young academics brought with them the disciplinary divisions and battles acquired from the countries of training. More importantly they brought with them the ideological commitments acquired in Europe and North America as well as the socialist countries. Thus the students/professors 'group' became an important actor during this period, in contrast to the earlier decade of the 1960s. More significantly however, by the late seventies, the fast growing middle-class had become economically more differentiated and a significant part of it marginalized from political power — often on ethnic basis. As part of this process the military began to assert itself as a major political force through a series of coups d'état. Eventually the military were forced to share power with various factions of the civilian elite by forming political alliances with them.

Meanwhile the African economies were being increasingly integrated into the world economy with stronger and more diversified linkages between the countries and the international system, particularly through the financial market. By the late seventies, external debt was emerging as a major factor in the economic crises and the country's external links.

At the international level, both the information revolution which facilitated access to information, data and knowledge, the rapid globalization of the new information technologies, had considerable impact on the availability of publications in African countries which hitherto had been inaccessible or unavailable.

It is within this internal and external context that we now briefly characterize the second phase in the evolution of the social science institutions during the 1970s. The basic characteristics of these institutions during this phase, were:-

- (i) Expansions of institutional capacities (sometime doubling the number of institutions) in response to demands from expansion of government, the parastatal and the private sector;
- (ii) Over production of cadre from the institutions to the expanding middle class, some of whom could not be absorbed, by the state or the private sector;
- (iii) Increase in foreign financial and personnel support to the institutions;
- (iv) Easy access to and availability of knowledge in books and journals on major trends of ideas and schools of thoughts circulating internationally, such as:-
 - Assertion of Third Worldism — e.g. NIEO and various trends of ideas emanating from the UN specialized agencies such as UNCTAD, UNESCO, ILO etc.,
 - The Latin American Dependencia school, Unequal Exchange debate and the literature on Asian Marxism — particularly Maoism,
 - European and American neo-Marxism as well as official Marxisms,
 - UN Developmentalism;
- (v) Deterioration of the economic situation in many countries, during the second half of the 1970s;
- (vi) A combination of financial crises and the SAPs, leading to the reduction of funds to social science institutions towards the end of 1970s.

Contending Ideologies and the Radicalization of the Universities

A combination of forces arising from internal developments within the countries and changes in the international environment, led to a breakdown of the consensus phase of the 1960s. As a result several significant developments took place within the institutions themselves during the decade of the 1970s.

Firstly there was the radicalization of a substantial part of both the academics and the students. The students resorted to strike actions mainly against mismanagement and lack of democracy within the institutions. These actions led to a series of closures of universities and other major institutes thus precipitating crisis situations within the elite/middle-class section of the society. The 'radical' academics (normally a minority but more active because generally more politically committed), launched major debates on the

policies of governments and accused them of failing the people. The radical academic's attacks on the government were broadly based on the following arguments:-

- (a) government policies have led to the exploitation of the country by foreign investors (supported by a small section of local investors) and the consequent deterioration of the economic conditions of most workers and peasants;
- (b) governments have sold the country's major natural resources cheaply to foreigners thus making the country poorer;
- (c) governments have, through illegal use of state power and institutions, enriched a small section of the elite in and outside the governments;
- (d) governments have deepened economic differentiation within the countries;
- (e) the ruling groups have unleashed corruption and wastage in government and ethnic hostilities within the country;
- (f) governments have become dictatorial by using all types of forceful methods to suppress all forms of critique, opposition and democratic practices accepted in the 1960s — especially against academics, students and journalists etc.

These arguments of the radical academics, dominated the debates in social science institutions leading to a serious split within the academic communities — between those for the status quo and those proposing change.

Secondly, African countries went through considerable political instabilities, especially through military coups d'état, but also through secessionist movements, peasant rebellions, large scale withdrawals by peasants from commercial production, frequent industrial strikes etc. The deep economic divisions which had been created and the dormant ethnic hostilities, both emerged into the national scene as major problems. The critique emanating from the social science institutions began to be perceived by various forces and groups outside the institutions as being correct and justified. They were thus soon taken up and reproduced by the different dissatisfied groups and classes, in civil society.

Thus by the end of the 70s, the social science institutions had come under intense pressure from both students' struggle, and academics' activism. The governments reaction to the struggles of the students and academics was to use crude oppressive methods in an attempt at suppressing the campus struggles. Furthermore, through cuts in external funds and deep cuts of government finance, the institutions began to literally crumble. There began to appear what was aptly called 'the book famine' and other similar syndromes in most social science institutions. Most of the academics became

demoralized by government suppression and by the economic crises — high inflation forcing them to ‘moonlight’ into other economic activities; consultancies being only one of them.

It is under these difficult circumstances that the demoralized academics found it necessary to support and rally around old and new NGOs ‘owned’ by the academic community at the sub-regional and continental levels. These institutions, as will be discussed later, supported, buttressed and sometimes rekindled the debates at the national level, and through various activities, kept the demoralized academics, morally and intellectually afloat — on a survival diet of books, journals and conferences.

Finally, the debate within the national social science institutions became a debate about social science itself — between received conventional social science which supported the capitalist system and the ideology which goes with it, and critical social science which broadly follows the framework of Marxist methodology. Everything discussed in the class room was subjected to questioning and classification in relation to the two types of social sciences. There were no neutral or grey areas with regards to journals, books, lectures, ideas and their proponents, and of course events taking place within the countries. Critical social science provided the framework from which came the prevalent critique of government. And those who supported critical social science were generally those activist academics who opposed the governments, some of whom moved into the arena of praxis and politics. Conventional social science on the other hand was the bedrock and foundation of government policies and the status quo.³ And conventional social scientists were generally advocates and defenders of government policies, providing ‘scientific’ basis to such policies in the form of technical advice to government and through publications. This debate thus raged through the major institutions in almost every country, splitting the academic community into the two opposing camps. There were of course important differences and tendencies within each camp. The left of center camp (critical social science) in particular was often virulent in its internal debates. But on the whole the broad division was between the two camps, and government’s reactions against academics (sometime violent) did not take into considerations the fine nuances and differences amongst their critics.

3 There were exceptions. These were countries which proclaimed to have socialist governments and which followed socialist policies, particularly Marxism. Officially these countries were against Capitalism and liberal political ideology. At the same time they were hostile and intolerant of academics who were proponents of critical social science and who dared critique government’s ‘socialist’ policies. Example of such countries in the 1970s were Guinea Conakry, Benin, Algeria, Congo, Mozambique etc.

The social science institutions in most countries thus became effectively battle grounds between government supporters and radical academics and students. As the government's control mechanism became more and more violent many academics left for 'greener pastures', generally abroad, while the rich elite groups began sending their students to Europe and North America. It was during this period that the governments began to literally 'starve' the institutions of funds, as part of SAPs requirements.

The confrontation at the 'campus' between the government on one hand and the students and academics on the other, was basically a forerunner of the deeper divisions and potential conflicts within society at large. If the previous peasants rebellions and worker's strikes of the 1960s and early 1970s had been 'quietly' controlled, the 'campus' conflict of the late 70s had transformed into a new phenomenon representing the dissatisfaction of a substantial section of the expanded elite groups and the middle class as a whole. The dissatisfied part of the middle class is based largely in the capital, and though marginalized from political power, nevertheless has strong links within the government system. It is very articulate and often has its own 'media'. More significantly, it has sympathetic support from influential external groups — such as human rights groups, some donors, and sometimes even governments — groups which could publicize their case internationally. Once the focus of opposition moved from the 'campus' to the dissatisfied part of the middle class in the wider society (a basic objective of the academics), then the rules of conflict and confrontation changed. The middle class was a much more serious opposition to the government than the academics alone, and potentially it could form an alternative government. This dissatisfied part of the middle class became the bases for the so called 'democratization' movements of the 80s.

Conflicting Interests of the Main Actors

Let us briefly look at the changing perception of the major actors and their interest in the social science institutions during this phase.

The government: The government's role swung like a pendulum, from expanding the institutions in the early 70s to starving them financially and questioning their usefulness. This is because of the internal development within the countries which have resulted in considerable opposition to governments policies as discussed above. The social science institutions were producing more cadres than either the governments or the economies could absorb and more importantly they had become a forum for not only debating issues, but for articulating the case of the opposition groups and exposing the deep divisions and contradictions within the country. For most governments these institutions had become rather dangerous, and were easily persuaded by the new thinking of the WB/IMF that the institutions had 'out-lived their usefulness' and needed immediate restructuring, if not complete

dismantling. This idea became the seed for the future strategies of governments towards social science institutions, as we shall see later.

For both the students and the academics, these institutions were no longer a stepping stone for a bright future career and economic security (or even for an ongoing career, in the case of the academics). They thus became a base for extra curricular activities — both economic and political. As long as the institutions provided a base (however difficult that base may be), and so long as there was no alternative base for a large body of the academics and students, their strategy was to try and ensure the continuity of these institutions.

For society at large, these institutions were still important and prestigious, even if their images have been tarnished by constant crises and government propaganda about their uselessness. Thus given the importance of education in African societies, and higher education in particular, for the majority of the people in the countries (and particularly the middle class); these institutions were still very important to them as national assets. Hence it was politically very difficult for the government to carry out any major restructuring of these institutions.

The external donors on the other hand had become alarmed at these developments and particularly at the new 'political' or 'confrontational' role the institutions were playing. A fundamental idea contained in SAP is that higher education should be opened to the free market and the existing institutions should be pruned to a small core of highly specialized centers which would directly support government policies and the economic management of the country. This idea was proposed as part of the SAP package, but was opposed by governments on the ground that such a policy was politically difficult to implement. In the late 70s most other donors began to experience internal economic difficulties and so began to cut down on any increases in their aid packages. The coordination of donor aid around World Bank policies, had not begun but already discussions were taking place on this.

By the early 1980s, most national social science institutions had begun to be physically dilapidated, performing their minimal functions with great difficulties because of reduced government and foreign finance. At the same time there was considerable pressure from an expanding student population to enter these institutions despite their deterioration and the steady migration of academics mainly to non-African countries or Bantustan South Africa. Thus the situations of these institutions was almost exactly the opposite of what it was like in the 1960s. And this brings us to the next phase of the evolutions of these government led national social science institutions.

The Phase from 1980: Africa as the Donor's Dominion

Deepening Socio-Political Divisions

The 1980s have been described as the 'lost decade' — a general phrase which does not tell us what was lost and to whom! The economic crises which was experienced by most countries in the late 70s, became deeper and widespread covering almost all African countries. The African economies with their serious structural distortions and weakness were propelled into their deepest crises by the triple shocks — the second oil shock, the recession in the developed economies and the external debt. The result was a deep and almost catastrophic socioeconomic crisis. Under these circumstances African countries began, *en masse*, to accept WB/IMF stabilization and structural adjustment programmes (SAPs). From 1981 to 1989 a total of 36 sub-Saharan countries had accepted SAPs, most of them going through a succession of programmes. 'On average, each of the 36 countries undertook seven adjustment programmes in the 1980s. Eleven countries initiated 10 or more programmes' (Jespersen 1992:13). Only 6% of sub-Saharan countries had not initiated any adjustment programme by 1989. 'In addition several countries (eg. Burkina Faso) introduced some kind of 'home-grown' programme. Thus adjustment became the main focus of economic policy-making during the 1980s'.⁴

During the 1980s and up to the present, there have been important efforts (by forces within and outside the region) to bring about democratization in individual countries. This process which is still going on has not been easy or smooth. Almost all the countries which have introduced 'multi-party' political system, have experienced serious internal conflicts between political parties, which in most cases have tended to be vehicles of ethnic groups. Thus ethnic rivalries and hostilities have come out into the open in these countries, with opposition to the government tending to be an alliance of convenience of ethnic groups who perceive themselves to have been excluded from political power. And these ethnic alliances are generally led by the urban based middle class groups opposing governments. In addition to the 'controlled conflicts' emerging out of what Museveni (current President of Uganda) calls 'competitive politics', there have been other movements — secessionist, religious and other social movements of various types, some reviving from the past while others were new — which have added to the seriousness of political instabilities in most countries (including those two

4 Jespersen, 1992, 13 The success or failure of these policies in individual countries or in the region as a whole, is a subject of considerable controversy, although most Africans perceive the programmes as having failed to (a) diminish if not remove the economic crises, and (b) remove any of the structural distortions and weakness in African economies. This point will be taken up later.

beacons and success stories of market economies during the 1970s: Kenya and Ivory Coast).

The Final Collapse of the Institutions

While the governments were very busy implementing the various stabilization and adjustment programmes and at the same time coping with political instability, the national social science institutions were ignored and their funding allocations annually reduced.⁵ External funding to the institutions remained stagnant or was also progressively reduced. The institutions thus deteriorated rapidly, the infra-structure collapsing, the best and not so best academics leaving for better 'pastures', the children of the top economic elite groups going abroad while at the same time a larger number of students were being admitted into the existing institutions. The quality of training went down markedly, and normal research became nonexistent, except for consultancy research for external agencies. Finally the institutions became physically depleted and hardly functioning. Makerere University College is given by a World Bank document as an example (a Box example), titled 'Decline in Capacity at Makerere'.

Throughout the 1960s, Makerere University College in Kampala, Uganda was one of Africa's premier universities.... Makerere was also a de facto regional center of academic excellence...

'Unfortunately, this golden age of Makerere was cut short during the 1970s and 1980s. Those years of economic hardship and the ravages of war saw the institution shrivel to a mere skeleton of its former self. Inadequate staff salaries, a decrepit library, neglect of campus public utilities (telephone, water, electricity, sewers) — all these factors led to widespread faculty flight and a staggering decline in the quality of the educational experience at the university. Lecturers there were being paid the equivalent of less than US\$25 per month in the summer of 1989. Only one phone was working for the whole of the university. Computer and modern technological facilities (for example the fax machine) were virtually nonexistent. 'Makerere is a graphic example of the decline that has occurred in numerous higher educational institutions throughout Sub-Saharan Africa' (World Bank 1991:11).

The World Bank has characterized the present situation of social science institutions as follows: 'At present higher education in Africa is confronted by an inappropriate mix of outputs, overproduction of poor-quality graduates, and high cost' (World Bank 1989:81). To elaborate:

5 Between 1980 and 1985, sub-Saharan African spending on education, as a proportion to GNP, actually decreased from 4.5% to 3.5%. For many African countries, this spending was still hovering around 3.5% in 1990 — far short of the figure of 5% of GNP deemed necessary for a sustainable education system, *Donors to African Education*, Newsletter Vol.5, No.2, 1993, p.1.

- (i) 'The growth in numbers of university graduate since independence has been extraordinary, from 1,200 in 1960 to over 70,000 in 1983. However, partly as a consequence of this growth, there is now a crises of quality in African universities. Too many poorly trained graduates are entering the labour market each year, many of them in already oversupplied sectors' (World Bank 1991:11).
- (ii) 'One explanation of the shortages in high-level skills is the brain drain. The United States alone had more than 34,000 African students in 1985, many of whom are unlikely to return to Africa; there are reported to be more than 70,000 trained Africans who have opted to remain in Europe' (World Bank 1989:81). 'Over 10,000 Nigerians are reportedly now working in the United Sates' World Bank 1989).

An important factor which directly affected the institutions during this period was the intensification of student's and academic's activism, which was more and more related to the democratizations process in many countries. In response to this the governments often took harsh measures of closing universities, sending students to the villages for long periods, imprisoning and sacking academic staff etc. The institutions became essentially unmanageable and yet for political reasons, the government could not prune and restructure them. They became an encumbrance, an albatross to the governments.

The Changing Parameters: The Demise of the LPA and the Triumph of the 'Berg Report'

The great debates of the 1970s between the left and the right on alternative development paths and the central question of equity in development — debates which polarized the academic community into opposing camps continually confronting each other and throwing intellectual sparks all over the place, slowly and progressively became muted in the 1980s. The parameters of discussion on development for this decade were set out by the Monrovia Symposium report of 1979 followed by the Lagos Plan of Action of 1980 on the one hand, and by the World Bank's 'Berg Report' of 1981 on the other. While the former presented the African states' point of view which argued for a more autonomous form of a 'mixed-economy' type of development for African countries within an inter-dependent world economy and some form of regional economic integration, the latter advocated a return to an undiluted free market based economic growth with African countries focusing even more on expanding their traditional export of the primary goods sector. While the government's point of view on development was being 'presented to the public', many governments were at the same time signing agreements with the WB/IMF for stabilization and adjustment programmes. By the mid 1980s, the governments were mainly arguing about the technicalities of the SAPs, their implementations and their social effects. The Lagos Plan of Ac-

tion (LPA) was at the same time slowly being forgotten. On the other hand the Berg Report's basic arguments, despite serious critique by both African governments and academics,⁶ was being progressively reinforced. By 1989, 36 countries had gone through various stabilization and adjustment programmes (see above), and the publication of the WB's *From Crises to Sustainable Growth: A Long-Term perspective Study* crowned the intellectual dominance of the WB parameters and development framework on all discussions of African development. The study became the bible for all researchers carrying out consultancy research — which by this time was the main form of research taking place in many social science institutions.

By the early 1990s, and after wide and intensive implementation of SAPs in most African countries, there was extensive discussion on the performance of SAPs. The most positive and optimistic view was that, at best, SAP had 'mixed performance' (Smith 1991:31). However most African intellectuals considered that the basic structural problems of African economies, especially the distorted linkages with the external environment, have not changed and indeed have not been addressed by SAPs. At the same time SAPs have evolved into a medium to longer-term process rather than a short-term one. Some see this process going into the 21st century Taylor 1991:19). Thus the development process which in the 1960s and 1970s was basically in the hands of the African governments, today this is no longer the case. Indeed it is becoming clear that even the long-term development process is now in the hands of the donor community, coordinated by the WB/IMF. This raises the important question as to whether the social science community should continue to address their critique to African governments or should shift and address them to the donor community.

By the end of the 1970s, the national social science institutions had become physically delapidated and overcrowded with students. They were trying to maintain their high quality training, even when the academics were doing very little research, and when most had gone through a political 'cleansing' process. Nevertheless the institutions were still operating at the minimal level. Supporters of critical social science — the left in general — were generally demoralized. It was however, during this period that the forum for analyzing and debating issues relating to the development process, from the perspective of critical social science, began to shift from the national institutions to NGO institutions at the regional and sub-regional levels. These latter institutions are 'owned' by the academics themselves — eg. CODESRIA, AAPS, OSSREA etc. As will be seen later, critical social scientists tended to dominate these institutions, and the debate between the

6 CODESRIA, Colloquium on the World Bank Report: *Accelerated Development in sub-Saharan Africa: An Agenda for Action*, Dakar, Senegal, 26-27 April, 1982.

conventional and critical social scientists which used to take place at the national institutions during the 1970s, shifted to these institutions in the 1980s. This shift is important because it did symbolize both the important role these NGOs had assumed since the 1970s, as well as the effectiveness of state suppressions of critical social science at the national level. This also explains the dominance of conventional social science at the national level in the 1980s.

Main Actors and their Broad Strategies

Let us now briefly focus our analysis on the role and strategies of the major actors involved in the development of the social science institutions in Africa during the 1980s. Starting with students, there are three important issues which need to be briefly mentioned here. Firstly it is a major goal of all students to get an entry into and qualify from social science institutions — whatever the outside world may think about the quality of their training. Graduating from these institutions of higher learning is a generalized and deeply held social value. Hence the great demand for entry into these institutions. Secondly once the students are in these institutions they are often divided between a small minority who become politically conscious, radical and active, and the majority who simply want to get their diploma and most likely a job to start a career. Thirdly the students as a group have no power to influence the future development of the institutions, although the activist wing of the students have some power of often forcing the closure (briefly) of the institutions. The general strategy — if they have a common strategy — of the majority of students is to ensure the continuity of the institutions rather than their permanent closure or reduction in their numbers. This goal is a reflection of the general aspiration of the parents and society as a whole.

The academics as professionals had invested heavily in order to become professional academics and therefore their vested interest is the continuity of the institutions which provide their livelihood and the basis of their career — despite the physical functional deterioration of the institutions. This is partly because the academics effectively do not have alternative skills to fall back to and cannot easily change career. Furthermore, both the political activist and those who are involved in supplemental economic activities, prefer the continuity of the institutions which they use as a primary base — for their salaries, as contact and communication points etc. Their present and future strategies are thus to ensure the continuity of the institutions — preferably with improvement in facilities and income, but otherwise in their present state. They are thus generally opposed to pruning or restructuring these institutions as is advocated by the donors. On this they generally have the support of the student body and society at large.

But the governments as the major actor vis-a-vis these institutions, face a serious dilemma. On the one hand society at large, the students and the academics would like these institutions to be improved and their capacities

expanded through further investment of public funds and donor support. On the other hand the governments have no funds for the institutions and donor support is predicated on reforming the entire higher education by reducing the number of the institutions, and reorienting their training and research programme towards economic management and technology. To carry out such restructuring reforms would mean going against the strong wishes of society at large, and would be against the interest of both the students and academics — a powerful group. Such reforms would thus be politically risky. Hence the general paralysis of governments on this issue. However very soon the governments will be forced to take action with regards to higher education as a whole and so will introduce the reforms required by the donors. Government's strategy for the future development of the social science institutions would thus be to introduce a reform package approved by the donor community.

Donor policies on aid to African countries is now largely coordinated by the Global Coalition for Africa under the close guidance of the WB/IMF. The reform of higher education — particularly social science institutions — have been outlined in various WB reports and documents whose recommendations, the governments are being urged to follow. 'To meet the crises in university education, radical measures are needed to improve quality, reduce cost for each student and graduate, constrain output in fields that do not support economic development, and relieve the burden on public sources of financing by increasing the participation of beneficiaries and their families' (World Bank 1989:82). However, whatever savings which may be made through reforming of higher education and through implementing other adjustment measures, may not be enough to create a higher education which is relevant and productive for the fully adjusted and restructured market economies of African countries in the near future. 'Regrettably, all such savings from adjustment measures will not be sufficient, in most countries, to cover the substantial resources needed to revitalize and build African education to the extent essential for future development. International aid will remain a critical determinant of the pace of progress of education in the region' (World Bank 1988:6).

'This support should be offered in the context of a compact' between the Africans and the donor community. A framework for mobilizing resources for economic development exists provided by UNPAAERD. 'To take this initiative a step further, a new global coalition is proposed for the 1990s.' 'The proposed global coalition for Africa would be a forum in which African leaders could meet with their key partners to agree on general strategies that would then provide broad guidance for the design of individual country programmes' on such issues as environmental protection, capacity building, population policy, food security, regional integration etc (World Bank 1989:194).

To sum up then, African national social science institutions throughout the 1980s to the present, have been seriously affected by the economic and political crises which almost all African countries have experienced. This in turn has led to the dominance of conventional social science in the entire development process. The dramatic restructuring of African economies, their deeper integration into the world economy, and the concomitant need for a new form of 'economic and development management' of the restructured economies, have made the existing social science institutions unsuitable, according to the donor community. Serious restructuring of these institutions has thus become necessary in order to meet the new demands of 'economic management'. Since the economies themselves are being restructured by a series of programme packages from the WB/IMF, the social science institutions will also need similar customized programme designed and financed by the WB and the donor community. Thus the future of African social science institutions at the national level is no longer in the hands of the governments. Rather the future of these institutions has been mapped out to compliment the emerging restructured market economies of African countries. The reform and restructuring will be carried out by the African governments with expertise from the donors and financed by the donors. The most important and critical part of the reform programme which directly relates to social science institutions, is The African Capacity Building Initiative. The impact of the ACBI's programme on social science institutions will be discussed later in a separate section.

The Institutions of the UN Researchers and the Donors

The UNECA Sponsored Institutions

During the last 35 years, the UNECA (hereafter ECA) and the African governments have sponsored and created 37 institutions, consisting of banks, clearing houses, associations, consultancy/advisory centers, and training and research institutions. The institutions cover major aspects of development including socioeconomic development, planning and management. They operate at the regional level and their function is to provide services to the member states of the ECA. These institutions are financed by the UN System, African States and other donors but are owned by the ECA and the African governments.

The 37 institutions were created primarily to fill perceived development gaps in Africa. 'ECA-sponsored institutions make important contribution to the development of their member States especially through their capacity-building training programmes, research and consultancy services' (ECA 1993:3). Of the 37 institutions, 9 are in the broad field of Socioeconomic Development. These training and research institutions cover the fields of Social Development (ACARTSOD), Economic planning (IDEP), Management and Administration (ESAMI, AAPAM), Population (RIPS, IFORD),

Monetary Studies (CAEM), Crime Prevention (UNAFRI) and Women Studies (ATRCW).

The first UN social science institution to be set up was the Institute for Development and Economic Planning (IDEP) in 1962. This obviously reflected the concerns of the African governments and the international community (at the time highly influenced by the ex-colonial powers on African matters). It was felt that African governments needed to know more about economic planning of ex-colonial economies which were being adapted to nationalist goals but within the framework of market economics. It is important to note that, apart from the ADB (African Development Bank), no other social science institution was set up during the 1960s. Of the 8 other social science institutions, 7 were set in the 1970s (between 1971 and 1980). The last institute to be set up — on Crime Prevention — was in 1989. Again this last institute, like the first one, may have reflected the concerns of the governments over the rise of crimes in African countries in the 1980.

The majority of the ECA-sponsored institutes were set up in the 1970s as part of the grand UN entree into Africa with its ideology of 'Developmentalism' within the framework of the UN Development Decade. As pointed out earlier, the decade of the 70s saw a major opening up of Africa to the international community and the UN presence in Africa was one such important force. However, UN developmentalism, stripped of its jargon, represented no more than orthodox free market economic growth with affirmative actions here and there. And the affirmative actions programmes (women, the handicapped groups, the rural poor etc.) were mainly advocated and initiated by NGOs. Thus the UN training and research institutions set up during the 1970s were basically concerned with propagating orthodox ideas of economic growth — through traditional sectorial planning techniques, monetary policies, population policies, improved administration and management practices, and social welfare policies as advocated by African governments. These institutions operated mainly as training institutions of middle range government officials. Even within the orthodox framework, they produced no important intellectual output through research and publications. Their contribution to the big social science debates and discussion on development, was essentially zero (with the exception of IDEP, which I will discuss below). However the ECA's perception of the contribution of these institutions is very different. It believes that these institutions have so far done very well. 'Over the years, impressive achievements have been made by these institutions...' One achievement has been the 'provision of specialized training to African government officials in the field of socioeconomic analysis and planning, and in the area of management development' (ECA 1993:2). The ECA's criteria of success are that these institutions have trained a large number of officials (whatever the con-

tent of that training) and have therefore built up capacity in African governments to carry out development programmes.

Both the World Bank and a large section of the African social science community, have different views on the achievements of these institutions. Throughout the 1980s, the World Bank attributed part of the African crises to 'mismanagement' and argued that management capacity in governments was very low if it existed at all. By the end of the 1980s, the donor community under the coordination of the World Bank, came up with its own programme, — the African Capacity Building Initiative (ACBI) — an initiative with the objective of setting up programmes and institutes for training and research in policy analysis and economic management. Obviously the WB and the donor community had rather negative views of the achievements of the ECA sponsored institutions — especially in their claim to have built up African capacity for development. Similarly the African social science community do not think highly of these institutions or their achievements. From the mid-seventies onwards when the economic crises began to be serious in some countries and the governments began to tighten their control of the universities in order to silence their critics, these ECA institutions did not provide an alternative forum for such critique of governments development policies and received social science. And African researchers having no faith in these institutions began to create their own institutions, where they could be free to debate and discuss theories and practices of development. The ECA institutions were and continue to be mediocre training institutions of middle level government officials. Hardly any research, not even mediocre, came out of these institutions. The exception of course being IDEP.

IDEP — The Exception

IDEP is a unique and excellent example of what these ECA institutions could have achieved but did not. Between 1962 and 1970, African countries were trying to transform the inherited colonial economies in order to achieve their vision of development. They thus embarked on major 'development programmes' — expanding their export oriented agriculture (the traditional crops), and embarking on import substitutions industrial policies — thus intensifying the integration of the ex-colonial economies into the world market on the basis of their so called 'comparative advantage'. During the period 1962-1970 there was no word from IDEP on these major developments in economic policies implemented by African governments. Similarly, from 1980 to 1990, when the entire African experience of socioeconomic development was being reduced to meaningless cliches by WB 'analysts', IDEP was not only quiet but it was as if it did not exist. The silence of IDEP during this period was very loud and incomprehensible, given the fact that in the 1970s IDEP became well known for its distinctive and controversial views of government policies and development prescriptions of the Bretton

Woods Institutions. Furthermore, CODESRIA which is in the same city of Dakar where IDEP is located was constantly producing critical analysis and commentaries of both government and WB policies during the 1980s while IDEP remained silent.

In 1970 Samir Amin became the Director of IDEP. During the ten years he led the institute, IDEP acquired African and international fame as well as notoriety. Its Political Economy Approach of focusing on the role of classes and the state in analyzing the development problems of African countries, and drawing attention to the 'periphery/center' unequal relationship as a major cause of African under development, attracted African and Third World scholars to IDEP. IDEP organized major conferences and seminars throughout Africa advocating its radical perspective of Africa's development problems. Through these public exposures and publications, IDEP became a major center of debates and a source of radical ideas on Africa and the Third World. More importantly IDEP attracted many African scholars as teachers, researchers and participants in its conferences, thus becoming a parking place for projects which could not be carried out at the national level. Thus the rebirth of CODESRIA in 1973 with IDEP as the host institute and Samir Amin as its first Executive Secretary was a major effort and achievement by Samir Amin to accommodate African researchers who were attracted to Pan-Africanism and the radical approach of Amin.

All this did not go down well with the ECA, the UN in New York or the WB and other donors. From the mid-seventies pressure began to build up for Amin's removal on the never stated ground that he was a Marxist. Amin thus had to fight, what he called, a continuous 'guerilla war' against the UN officials while continuing with his prolific activities of publications, teaching and actively participating in the 'Third Worldist' movement of the time (eg. the creation of the Third World Forum, the linking of CODESRIA and its Latin American counterpart, CLACSO, and the strong involvement in the NIEO debate etc.). In 1980, Amin resigned from IDEP. Since then IDEP has become a forgotten and quiet institution.

This brief history of IDEP is given here to indicate that these ECA-sponsored institutions had the potential of becoming more than simple 'technical' training centers for low level officials. As regional institutions they should have risen above the petty technicalities of training for development (which in any case was being done at the national level, and perhaps better). They were supposed to have a continental perspective of Africa's development problems and prospects and to contextualise the continent within the world system. This is exactly what Samir Amin did in IDEP. Unfortunately however Samir Amin and IDEP could not be reproduced in the other institutes because of the uniqueness of the man. But one did not need a Samir Amin to make these institutions rise above their mediocrity. In the end, the job of critical examination of government

policies, of sifting through the strong input of received knowledge and ideas in African social science institutions, and of trying to develop an African perspective and paradigms to Africa's development experience, was left to the African social science community itself through its own institutions which it created such as CODESRIA, AAPS etc.

Prospects of the UNECA Institutions

Finally, what is happening to these ECA-sponsored institutions? Like the national institutions, they have also been affected by the crises of the 1980s. 'One major attribute of these institutions is that their operational existence depends largely on the assessed contribution of their member States, supplemented by other donors, in particular for technical assistance projects'. 'However, a number of them face serious financial constraints due to lack of financial support from their member States in terms of non-payment of their assessed contributions, diminishing donor assistance and limited or no self-financing capacity'. Member States of the ECA have set up several Ad-hoc Committees to deal with this situation. It was found that 'there were unnecessary duplication and overlapping of activities among the existing institutions'. Hence 'rationalization measures are necessary to produce a few but coherent set of regional and sub-regional centers that are efficient, self-supporting and supportable by member States' (ECA 1993:3). In the case of social science institutions, the rationalization measure recommended, is to merge the three main institutions — IDEP, ACARTSOD and ACMS (economic planning, social development and monetary studies). Despite the critique of the WB and the donors, or the critique of the African social science community, the merger is a purely bureaucratic solution meant to save money! The fact that the officials produced by these institutions over the years, have made no impact on the development of their respective countries, nor have they contributed to averting the crises that befell their countries, should have warned the Ad-hoc committee that perhaps there is something deeply wrong with these institutions! Could it be that the contents of the training and research of these institutions has so far been inappropriate, irrelevant and of little use to the member States? This issue does not seem to have crossed the minds of the members of the Ad-hoc committees. And if it did, they must have found it necessary not to mention it!

The Social Science Community Led Institutions

Establishing the Researcher's Institutions: The Context

In 1973 two important social science Pan-African organizations were established — CODESRIA in Dakar and AAPS in Dar-es-Salaam. These two organizations were set up as NGOs by African researchers themselves in order to serve their professional and scientific interests. CODESRIA was hosted by IDEP while AAPS by the University of Dar-es-Salaam. The two hosting institutions were at the time major social science centers dominated

by the Political Economy approach or what came to be known as 'critical social science'. At the time the material and working conditions of most universities were probably at their best, and the free circulation of ideas, freedom of expression and publication had not yet come under any serious assault by the African states. Self censorship by academics was not a characteristic of the scholars at the time. So why were these institutions established at the time?

The reasons for creating AAPS in 1973 are more or less the same as those behind the establishment of CODESRIA.⁷ For CODESRIA there were several reasons for its establishment at the time. The immediate reason was the setting up of CERDAS by UNESCO, in 1972. When in 1972, the Center for Research and Documentation for Africa South of the Sahara (CERDAS) was set up upon UNESCO initiative in Kinshasa, there was reaction within the CODESRIA circles. The main concern was that if the UNESCO initiative remained unchallenged, then there was great danger that establishment, i.e. governments, would in effect gain control over social science in Africa. The major worry was over academic freedom and the prospect of a legitimizing rather than influencing role of social scientists'.⁸ The second reason was to counter the strong influence of former colonial powers in universities and research institutes. And the third reason was the strong belief of African scholars at the time that (a) the governments had rightly assumed the responsibility for developing their countries, and (b) that the scholars had the responsibility of informing and influencing the governments to carry out relevant and appropriate development policies. The scholars at the time sincerely believed that the governments would listen to them or that they would be able to influence critical personalities and forces in government — especially if the scholar's voice came from a Pan-African body of African scholars. The disappointment which followed later turned

7 The man who was behind the creation of AAPS was the late Professor Anthony Rweyemamu, at the time Head of Political Science Department of the University of Dar-es-Salaam. I was at the time Head of Sociology Department of the same University. He was a good colleague and a friend and I knew the background to Professor Rweyemamu's initiative to create AAPS.

8 *Social Science in Africa: The role of CODESRIA in Pan-African Cooperation Evaluation Report to SAREC*, by Stefan de Vylder and Anders Hjrt a Ormas. In 1972 CODESRIA was the Council of Directors of Economic and Social Research Institutes in Africa (CODESRIA). At the time discussions were going on in IDEP between Professor Onitiri (who was in charge of the pre-1973 Council), and Samir Amin. Samir Amin wanted to establish a new and different type. The interpretation given above by Vylder and Ormas is correct. Both Professor Onitiri and myself participated in the UNESCO organized preparatory meetings for establishing CERDAS in Lome (1971). We were both aware and concerned at the potentially negative impact CERDAS could have on the social science researchers in Africa.

into combativeness which was later to be reflected in CODESRIA's mode of operation.

If AAPS and CODESRIA had been set up during the period of universities' expansion, of relative freedom and good working conditions for researchers, of optimism and high economic growth in most African countries, the other 15 social science organizations and associations set up by African researchers, were definitely established when the crises had already started in the late 1970s. Indeed the majority of these institutions were set up in the decade of the 80s. There is thus a definite link between the creation of these institutions by the social science community, and the difficulties the community faced in the universities and research institutes. Indeed it is our argument that as the economic crises deepened and authoritarianism took roots, these led to extreme deterioration of the infrastructure and material conditions at the universities (as exemplified by Makerere University described earlier) and to political repression of academics, official and self-censorship, and attacks on the dignity and well being of researchers. It was because of these conditions that social scientists began to commit themselves to the then existing organizations — CODESRIA and AAPS — and at the same time to set up their own institutions mainly at the sub-regional levels. Clearly the research community felt that only through their own organizations, operating above the national level, could they effectively fight for their survival, publicize their critique of government policies, continue their efforts of 'domesticating' or indigenizing social science, defend academic freedom as well as fight against political oppression. Despite the flight of many scholars from their countries, the majority of scholars stayed behind. For those who stayed behind, and especially for the younger generation who were joining the academic ranks, the intolerable economic and political conditions had the effect of strengthening their resolve to take their own organizations seriously and to operate at the sub-regional and regional level in order to acquire the Pan-African perspective which most of them lacked but found exciting. Furthermore these new linkages, in addition to widening their intellectual horizon, they also strengthened political ties amongst the researchers.

The setting up of these social science community led institutions was of course not easy, given their 'radical' objectives and the demands on them by the African social science community. In the first place the African social science 'community' was more of an ideal than a reality, given the recentness of higher education, the size of the continent and its heterogeneity. The researchers did not know each other, they had different traditions of higher education, and of course the language barrier. To overcome this latter problem, most of the organizations set up by the researchers were generally sub-regional — the most successful being those

operating within the same linguistic region (English or French). Of the 17 organizations, only five are continent-wide organizations (CODESRIA, AAPS, AAWORD, AAS and the Third World Forum). Of these five only three are operating effectively across the continent. The remaining 12 are basically sub-regional organizations, 4 operating in Francophone countries and 8 in the Anglophone sub-regions. The second problems facing these organizations is the ideological division amongst the research community — broadly between left and right — each faction wanting to dominate the output of these institutions. The third and very important problems is that of funding. These organizations are almost entirely dependent on external funding.

The problems connected with this dependence are well-known; insecurity and lack of continuity, a tendency to favour 'project-funding' at the expense of core support to institution-building, danger of directing research towards easily fundable projects which the donor happen to favour at the moment, a neglect of basic research, priority to 'mainstream' themes and methodologies at the expense of innovative or critical research, etc. As in all aid, conditionality is always present — after all, funding agencies are accountable to their own countries — although it may be subtler in research cooperation than in ordinary development project (Vylder and Ornas 1990:3). Different organizations found their own ways of handling this problem, the most successful ones being CODESRIA and the Third World Forum (Bujra 1990).

Another very important problem facing these institutions is the question of finding committed, efficient and honest management. Many African organizations have foundered as a result of this problem. A final problem facing these organizations once set up, is whether they are able to provide the 'services' demanded and needed by their constituency — the researchers.

The performance of most of these organizations has varied widely from surviving as an inactive organizations to those which are successful and well established, such as CODESRIA or OSSREA. The achievements of these institutions should be measured in terms of several important criteria relating to their basic objectives, such as — mobilizing researchers, providing service to researchers, defending researcher's basic academic freedom, indigenization of social science, and providing a forum for debating critical development and political issues. These are tough criteria and some are not easily measurable. Nevertheless applying these criteria even liberally, most of the 17 institutions set up by the research community would fail the test. A few however have done very well. Since the social science scene is changing very fast in response to the changing political and economic environment in African countries, these successful institutions will soon face a new situation. The question is therefore whether these presently successful few

institutions will be able to adapt themselves to the new emerging forces which are likely to have significant impact on the future African social science scene.

CODESRIA: A Case Study

CODESRIA is the most successful of these researches institutions. It may therefore be useful to measure its success by applying specific evaluative criteria such as service to research, mobilize researcher, policy oriented research, 'indigenization' of social science and defending academic freedom. In this way we may be able to highlight critical issues and problems is faced by all similar institutions. But CODESRIA's objectives:-

CODESRIA's main objective is to activate concerned African social scientists to undertake fundamental as well as problem-oriented research in the field of development from a perspective which is more relevant to the needs of the African people and thus challenging the existing orthodox development theories which have often led many African countries to stagnation and underdevelopment. It is hoped that research coordinated by or associated with CODESRIA will lead to producing new ideas, and alternative strategies to the development problems of Africa.

Apart from this broad objective of mobilizing researchers and 'indigenizing' social science, CODESRIA had other and more practical objectives, principally:

- to strengthen collaboration between African social scientists;
- to facilitate the exchange and dissemination of information and research results;
- to promote interaction and flow of ideas across linguistic and geographical barriers;
- to defend academic freedom.

Using the criteria mentioned above, we now turn to look at what CODESRIA has achieved or failed to achieve during the last 20 years of its existence, keeping in mind its objectives and the conditions under which it has operated during this period.

Services to Researchers

CODESRIA has provided a forum for public debates through its publications, such as *Africa Development* (first published in 1976) and the *CODESRIA Bulletin*, the latter having achieved extensive publicity (almost 2000 subscribers). Additionally it publishes working and occasional papers and more importantly a book and monograph series. Originally these were publication outlets for researchers directly involved in CODESRIA networks, but have over the years, become important outlets for African

researchers in general especially since the mid-eighties when publication services (for social science) at the national level collapsed.

It set up the CODESRIA Documentation and Information Center (CODICE) in 1983, through which it provided bibliographic support to researchers and research institutes in many countries. CODICE played an active role during the 'book hunger' of the 1980s, in responding to researcher's requests for documents, especially for journal articles, and documents/reports published by international and inter-governmental organizations, which were inaccessible to African researchers and their institutes.

Defence of Academic Freedom

Over many years CODESRIA encountered many serious limitations of academic freedom in many countries, making research on many important problems almost impossible. Research and publication on some of the 'sensitive' issues was dangerous. And it is the governments which defined what is and what is not 'sensitive' — the definition being arbitrary and very wide. For many years, CODESRIA could do very little about this kind of breach of academic freedom. However when researchers lost their jobs or were imprisoned because of their publications, CODESRIA's reaction was often to organize a letter of appeal or protest to the authorities on behalf of the researchers. In 1990 CODESRIA organized a major conference on academic freedom in Kampala. The conference produced the widely publicized Kampala Declaration which is apparently used by various organizations. It has also set up a small fund to support some researchers, national conferences on academic freedom, publicize cases of violation, and make representation on behalf of individual scholars. It is now in the process of setting up a small unit which will carry out these activities on a full time basis. This serious activism for academic freedom and in support of oppressed scholars is an important contribution by CODESRIA to the wider human rights movement now sweeping the continent.

Mobilizing Researchers

How far has CODESRIA succeeded in mobilizing researchers throughout the continent? CODESRIA carries out various types of activities involving researchers from all over the continent. The statistics from CODESRIA is impressive. Here are some of the figures:

- 60 Conferences carried out during the last 20 years. This excludes the workshops carried out by national working groups in individual countries;
- 2000 social scientists have participated in CODESRIA conferences;
- 1987 papers have been presented at these conferences;
- 170 researchers have participated in MWG from 39 countries;

- 27 National Working Groups have been set up between 1985-1990 i.e. NWG in 27 countries, each group involving an average of 10 researchers;
- 600 grants have been awarded to young researchers since 1987. Researchers cover different disciplines and from all over the continent;
- 422 articles have been published by *Africa Development* since 1976. The bilingual journal has a distribution of 700 per issue in Africa;
- 2000 copies of each issue of the *CODESRIA Bulletin* is distributed to subscribers;
- 42 books and monographs have been published between 1973-93;
- 42 Working and Occasional Papers have been published.

The distribution of CODESRIA's publications is still not what it should be. More importantly the quality of the publication is still uneven and the spread of the contribution is also uneven, with the Anglophone dominating and with Nigeria making the largest contribution amongst the Anglophones. How far has all this output impacted on, for example, government policies, or the development of social science itself. We will discuss these issues below.

In addition to the above activities, CODESRIA has carried out a major programme of creating and supporting sub-regional organizations and professional association. Between 1975 and 1990, it has in fact been directly involved in the setting up of 8 sub-regional organizations and association out of a total of 16 (excluding itself). This has been an important programme in which these institutions have made great efforts to mobilize researchers within their sub-region or profession.

CODESRIA and Policy Research

In general the relationship between CODESRIA as an institution and the African governments has always been delicate and ambivalent. When it was founded CODESRIA had thought of itself as the Pan-African 'think tank' on development issues, with an obligation to help African governments with advise based on its research expertise and collective wisdom. At the same time, CODESRIA has always been a consistent critique of government development policies, and many of the participating researchers in CODESRIA's activities are often well-known critiques of their governments. Thus despite CODESRIA's self assigned role as a 'think tank', most African

9 The institutions are:- AAWORD, SAUSSC, OSSREA, SADRA, CIEREA, AECA, CASA, and PAA.

government have kept a polite distance from CODESRIA, while a few have expressed open hostility. Indeed the optimistic assumption of the founders that CODESRIA could influence government policy, was at best unrealistic and at worst an illusion. It was soon abandoned.

Apart from government's suspicions of CODESRIA's ideas, there were important structural reasons for its lack of influence of government policies. Government's development policies, particularly on the economy, were based on and guided by the following parameters:

- the structure of the inherited economies of the African countries;
- the nationalist government ideologies (and later the narrow interest of ruling factions — military, civilian or an alliance — that economic development can only take place within a market economy (with some state intervention in support) and through foreign investment;
- the direct input of advisors provided by the donor community — by the former colonial powers during the 60s, by a mixed bag of advisors during the 70s, and directly by the WB/IMF from the late 1970s onwards. In the 1980s there were 100,000 technical assistant experts in sub-Saharan Africa.

CODESRIA's literature was dominated by an advocacy for equity in the distribution of national resources, participation of the poorer classes in decision making and at various levels of economic management, and full democratization of the political process. It also carried out consistent attacks on corruption, bad governance and state oppression. Given the advocacy of these ideas by CODESRIA, and the environment of government policy and decision making, it is not surprising that CODESRIA has made little impact on policies made by the states.

Clearly this question is complicated and cannot be addressed fully here. As CODESRIA began to realize its impotence to directly influence policies of the African governments, it entered into a period of serious soul searching on this question. The shredding of the interface between research and policy making and the apparent impotence of the social scientists in face of serious political, social, and economic crises were a source of considerable soul searching among the social science community. In the end CODESRIA decided that the 'consumers' of policy-oriented research were not only states or donors, but society at large and that what the states view as 'policy-oriented' was only that which they could digest. It was important that research results be accessible to a larger community and that influencing the thinking and perception of the main social actors, including those outside the state was an important contribution to the process of policy making in

Africa'.¹⁰ Thus on the basis of experience, CODESRIA felt it stood a better chance of influencing civil society with its ideas on development policies, than the states themselves. CODESRIA therefore shifted its target to civil society. It is thus important to note that today CODESRIA no longer claims that its research output is aimed at influencing government policies, as it did in its first brochure quoted above, but rather that its target is to influence the wider society (civil society), through the social science community; and in an ideal democratic society, civil society would in turn affect the policies of the government. This position is supported by an experienced social scientist who for many years has been involved in both policy making and trying to influence government policies. He argues that:

African social scientists need to exploit more effectively the opportunities brought about by the pressure to democratize and open up African societies for a greater degree of participation, transparency and accountability in order to make more meaningful contribution to policy making. Important to stress here is that policy-oriented research is not only meaningful for and should not be directed only to governments. Parliamentarians, people's organizations (Trade Unions, Women, Youth and grassroots organizations etc.) and NGOs have a great need for policy research not only to help them shape their own policies and decisions, but also to assist them in influencing the process of national policy making. They are part of civil society and of the forces of social and economic change (Rasheed 1993:29).

How then would we be able to identify the impact of CODESRIA on civil society? Perhaps the first step is to find out what has been its impact on the research community and on social science itself.

CODESRIA's Impact on Social Science

The Indigenization Question

This is one of the most complicated and controversial issue when discussing CODESRIA's achievements or failures. And those who pronounce on this issue are generally passionate and partisan on the question. In any case the criteria for an indigenized social science are not clear and there is very little agreement as to how to measure the 'domestication' or 'indigenization' of social science in Africa. Has CODESRIA indigenized social science in Africa? Has CODESRIA developed its own paradigm? Has it developed a clear and recognizable CODESRIA perspective on development issues and on world issues? What is often referred to as 'critical social science', is it the CODESRIA perspective? And what is the difference between 'critical

10 Report of the Executive Secretary to the 20th Anniversary of CODESRIA, p.7, 1993.

social science' and the Political Economy Approach? Is the latter a uniquely CODESRIA approach, or is it a terminology appropriated by Marxists, neo-Marxists, or just the broad spectrum of various 'leftists tendencies'? Clearly this is a complex issue. And there are strong feelings about it (by both proponents and opponents of CODESRIA), precisely because it is both a methodological and an ideological issue. Divisions therefore do exist amongst African scholars. Hence an appreciation or evaluation of CODESRIA's impact on social science, is very difficult to do objectively. But we can try, very briefly, to give some views which exist on this issue.

As a starting point it may be useful to differentiate between two of the most dominant broad 'schools' of social science in Africa. Firstly there is the orthodox social science school evolved on three axis — classical market economics, modernization sociology/political science, and classical history. Recently the most dominant representation of this school in Africa has been the two Bretton Woods Institutions — the WB and IMF (and also the entire baggage of UN Agencies' 'Developmentalism'). It is important to point out that there are many African researchers who subscribe to this school.

Secondly there is the broad 'leftist's school', whose axis are classical Marxism, neo-Marxism and other various 'Marxists' tendencies, and the 'dependencia school'. Sometimes this second school is referred to as the Political Economy Approach. The strongest advocate of this second school have generally been the many Africanists foreign scholars. Needless to say there are also many African scholars who subscribe to the various tendencies of this school — some of whom are associated with CODESRIA.

An objective look at CODESRIA would clearly indicate that since its inception, CODESRIA has consistently opposed the first school, with very serious arguments. On the other hand, CODESRIA has often been confused with the second school partly because some of its most important supporters were and still are adherents of this school. Over the years however, CODESRIA has claimed that it has been developing a uniquely relevant and African perspective to Africa's development problems, a perspective which is different from and has gone beyond that of the perspectives of the second school. And it is this claim which constitutes, CODESRIA's definition of indigenization of social science i.e. it has developed a perspective which is different from both the first and the second schools of social science in Africa. Needless to say this claim is contested by the followers of the two main schools, both Africans and foreigners.

CODESRIA's case is well articulated by its present Executive Secretary.

There were many facets to the process of indigenization. The simplest one simply involved indigenization of personnel involved in research. The second followed from the old-age injunction 'know thyself' and gave primacy to knowledge of Africa. The third involved the problem of reconciling the 'universal' with the specificity of the African experience.

In the process, African social science had to overcome many problems. One of these was the burden of received knowledge. Most of the social scientists have been trained abroad and had learnt to see Africa through certain intellectual prisms of vantage points. And even those who had not studied abroad were victims of the same problem that often resulted in mimetism in scholarship, a situation decried at many conferences (CODESRIA 1993:12).

The differences between African and foreign scholars over the interpretation of the African experience, has, in the final analysis tended to define CODESRIA's perspective and therefore what constitutes indigenization of social science. Briefly these differences are over a number of critical issues, such as:

- Foreign scholar's excessive focus of their analysis on the African state. African states are pictured either as having done nothing wrong, or that everything they did was bad. Most African scholars associated with CODESRIA, would disagree with this over emphasis on the state and with the black or white picture of those states. Indeed many African scholars have recently been refocussing their research on civil society and its internal dynamics, as well as its external links. This refocussing may thus be an important breakthrough from both the first two schools. And CODESRIA would argue that this is part of the process of 'indigenizing' social science in Africa.
- During the last decade, most foreign scholars who adhere to the first school, accepted the view 'that both the diagnosis and the prescription of the international financial institutions were essentially correct'. 'There was however widespread consensus in African intellectual circles that both the diagnosis and the prescriptions of these institutions were wrong and therefore could not be a point of departure of the analyses of African politics' (CODESRIA 1993:13). Again here African scholars would argue that their analysis of the African crises during the eighties, was richer and reflected the reality more than the analysis of the Bretton Wood's Institutions.
- A third area of difference was the practice of many foreign Africanist to use African examples as a 'case study' to fit their theoretical construct. African societies were therefore assumed to behave according to certain models — supposedly universal models — thus denying any independence, uniqueness or specificity to African societies. African scholars were generally not amused by this treatment of Africa by foreign Africanist. More importantly, this approach reflected the shallowness and poverty of the methodology used by the Africanist.

To sum up this question I cannot do better than to let Archie Mafeje (1992) describe the essential elements of indigenization of social science from his latest and best study of the Interlacustrine Kingdoms of East Africa. Mafeje's aim in this study is to reconceptualise, from the existing ethnography, the concept of African social formation.

First and foremost is the idea that each region has its own 'historical specificity' or 'experience' without refusing to be 'analytically universal'. Deciphering regional/local experiences ('vernacular', social structures, histories etc.) can only be done through authentic local interlocutors. Hence the call for the indigenization of social science and the 'rejection of homogenization of all social experience under the pretext of 'universalism' (p.7).

Secondly African social phenomena and social relations have been approached and analyzed in a particular way by non-Africans and thereby creating serious misconception. This is attributed to an:

inarticulation between universal language, as is employed in the social sciences and derived from European historical experience, and vernacular, as is experienced and understood by the Africans themselves. As we see it, what is at issue is the authenticity of social science texts (p.9).

Thirdly the African experience needs to be 'decoded' and interpreted through an:

appreciation of what is involved contextually' i.e. understanding the context of the social phenomenon and social relations. Nothing is self evident. Hence the demand that the analysis be informed by local expertise in order for it to be 'endowed with greater validity and objectivity. From the point of view of social theory, this involves a process of sifting, discarding and recasting (p.9).

Fourthly, deep local expertise and knowledge of the vernacular often lead to different interpretation of social relations and phenomenon, since the same social categories such as 'class' 'need not behave the same way everywhere in the world'. For example:

- African entrepreneur might forgo opportunities to maximize value in favor of kinship considerations or leisure;
- in Buganda landlords-chiefs found greater value in political followers than in servile labour;
- the interlacustrine kingdoms exhibited the same mode of production but were at different stages of centralization of political power. Thus 'the relationship between modes of political organization and modes of economic production is not absolute but relative;

- and 'the absence of property and labour-relations in what is presumably class societies' (of the Kingdoms), raises the question as to what is meant by 'class' in different contexts.

These examples indicate the difficulties of using social science 'universalistic' categories, and at the same time show the importance of local expertise in interpreting the specificities of the African social systems.

Finally Mafeje's approach of the ethnography was to learn from it rather than to impose preconceived theories and categories.

I deliberately avoided all this. Using discursive method, I allowed myself to be guided by the African ethnographies themselves. In trying to decode them, all pre-existing concepts became suspect and were subject to review. In the process a number of epistemological assumptions, including Marxist ones, ceased to be self-evident and became objects for intellectual labour'. 'Having deciphered the chosen African ethnographies, I felt that I was in a position to evaluate them from inside outwards, i.e. towards the wider social environment, for example, colonial capitalism and struggles against imperialist domination (Preface).

This approach of re-examining one's concepts and assumptions and making an interpretation from the ethnography itself and its context, is, in our view, critical for a deeper understanding of the African social experience.

We have used Mafeje at length here because he is one of the few African scholars who has come to grips with the notion of indigenization of social science, as a methodological problematic — both at the conceptual and classificatory levels. His seminal book is the best example of an explicit effort at reconceptualising an important social science concept, 'social formation', within the African context, using a clearly identifiable 'indigenous' approach. Mafeje's study has pushed the indigenization process far ahead.

CODESRIA has clearly gone beyond mere claims, and seem to be definitive with a clear conception of what its perspective is and what constitutes indigenization. This confidence is reflected in the very euphoric view of CODESRIA's President in his opening address to the 20th Anniversary of CODESRIA. He states:

Very briefly we can say that the result [of CODESRIA's 20 years of work] constitute an emerging pan-African paradigm of social sciences with increasingly definite political values, ideological values, philosophical values and creatively drawing on the previously produced scientific forces. It took a multidimensional battle, in a very difficult and hostile environment, against received knowledge and values and power relations sustaining it. The number of the social scientists involved in

this movement has increased considerably. It is one requirement to make the CODESRIA paradigm a normal one for social science in Africa. It is a healthy sign of this paradigm that it allows intense theoretical and methodological debates on the kinds of entities (ontology) being in the explanation of social formations; on ways of knowing Africa and the logical structures of produced theories. Quite a number of researchers (Africans and non-Africans) have been forced to wake up from their paradigmatic slumber.

The above statement is very certain and congratulatory about the achievement of CODESRIA in terms of indigenizing social science. Coming as it does from the President of CODESRIA at a 20th Anniversary celebration, the confidence is to be expected and perhaps rightly so. Outside CODESRIA's 'community' as it were, there are doubts about its achievement precisely on this issue. And the most negative view of this comes from two Swedes, who say that 'the early attempts, of which CODESRIA was an important part, to create an indigenous alternative to the prevailing 'mainstream' paradigms (read — first school) in social sciences are largely reckoned to have failed, as witnessed by the rise and subsequent decline of various 'dependency' and neo-Marxian currents' (Vylder and Ornas 1990). In my view the Swedes are confused over this issue. As already seen from Mafeje's description earlier, the indigenization approach is independent of the other schools, or their rise and decline. Clearly the debate over this issue will continue, and that as CODESRIA has argued, a part of the process of indigenization, is that African scholars now have more confidence in their views about the African experience, and will not be easily dissuaded from them by outsiders as was the case in the past.

CODESRIA is celebrating its 20th Anniversary (1973-1993) and in such situations, people tend to look at the more positive aspects of their past. In the case of CODESRIA this self-congratulation is well deserved. Well placed objective observers have given similar accolade to the organization. Despite important weaknesses which are recognized by CODESRIA itself, the main question facing it now is whether it will recognize the changing conditions of the African social science scene and work out strategies for the future, or whether it will remain cacooned in its past success and look at the future with rose tinted glasses.

To sum up then, we have used CODESRIA as a 'case-study' in order to bring out the problems which these institutions led by the social science community have had to face, and the high expectations the researchers had of them. If CODESRIA has survived the rough and tumble of Africa and the world during the last 20 years, then this could be considered an important achievement by itself. But as we have tried to show above, it has done more than survive. It also made remarkable progress, as the brief evaluation we

have made above indicates. The same cannot however be said of all the other sister institutions.

The growth of these research community-led institutes has been one of the most positive developments in social science in Africa. National universities and research institutes were given very functional roles — training, and research acceptable and digestible by governments. Furthermore influenced by foreigners, and later by researchers satisfied with the status quo and received social science, these institutions were constrained from developing into serious national centers of dialogue, critique, and innovators of ideas, policies and strategies. Hence there was an objective need for the existence of these scholar's driven institutions (as NGOs) not only to further the interest of researchers, but also to develop social science itself, through innovative research (basic and empirical) and to provide forums for dialogue and critique of received ideas. As someone has pointed out, referring to the most successful one of these institutions, 'If CODESRIA did not exist, it would have had to be invented'.

Indeed the furtherance of researcher's interest, especially the defence of their academic freedom, is a necessary pre-condition for the development of social science itself. These institutions have thus played this dual role.

The Donor Community Led Institutions and Programmes

Without any explicit statement made by the donor community, one can clearly see a framework emerging within which the various elements of donor driven reforms of African countries (not just economics) fall. Clearly there are three donor prescribed pillars of reforms:

- reform of the economy to bring about economic growth;
- reform of the political system to bring about better-governance and political stability as an essential environment to economic growth;
- reform of the economic management and policy formulation system as an essential instrument to economic growth.

These three pillars are inter-connected and essentially constitute the 'grand design' of the donor community to reform Africa out of its present crises and to carry it to the end of the century.

Economic reforms emanating from several generations of SAPs are being carried out by the African governments but with the supervision and evaluation of the WB/IMF. For our purpose, it is important to note two emerging points with regards to economic reforms and SAPs. Firstly that SAPs 'have virtually replaced economic planning in African countries'. Secondly, 'The persistence of the malaise suggests that the macroeconomic problems of the 1980s now have a long-term presence which may carry over well into the new century' (Taylor 1991:19). Hence it is necessary that the coming new generation of SAPs should be carefully examined 'now that structural ad-

justment is a medium/long-term process rather than a short-term one' (Smith 1991:21). Clearly therefore African long-term economic development rather than short term reforms, is now literally dominated by the Bretton Woods Institution's thinking and programmes.

The second pillar, that of political reform, is the democratization process introduced through the multi-party system.

Although there are important internal forces in African countries which are pushing for democratic reforms, the introduction and implementation of multi-party system in most African countries is generally part of the WB/IMF conditionalities. Such political reforms and national elections in particular, are being monitored and supervised through myriad official organizations and NGOs. Whether this process will eventually bring about a 'liberal democracy' with 'transparency and good governance' in the Western sense, is a subject of heated debate in Africa. For our purpose however, we do think that a political space is emerging which may allow the national social science institutions to become once again centers of active dialogue and debate. This is assuming that the universities and research institutes will not have been reformed — reduced in numbers, restructured, their programmes refocussed and their personnel and management, streamlined, changed and reorganized.

The third pillar of reform is on economic management and policy analysis. This is the subject of the ACBI and is being carried out through the ACBF. This third pillar is crucial to the future of all African social science institutions and indeed to the process of indigenizing social science itself. What then is the programme of the ACBF and how will it affect African social science institutions?

The WB's arguments for major changes in African higher education were presented in its 1988 study on Education in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Higher education's contribution to development in Africa is being threatened, however, by four interrelated weaknesses. First higher education is now producing relatively too many graduates of programmes of dubious quality and relevance and generating too little new knowledge and direct development support. Second, the quality of these output show unmistakable signs in many countries of having deteriorated so much that the fundamental effectiveness of the institutions is also in doubt. Third, the cost of higher education are needlessly high. Fourth, the pattern of financing higher education is socially inequitable and economically inefficient (World Bank 1988:5). This argument was repeated in the Bank's LTPS, 1989 with both these studies calling for action (World Bank 1989:81-2). The ACBI was thus born, in 1991, as a response to this challenge.

The ultimate objective of the ACBI is clear: 10,15, or 20 years from now, Sub-Saharan Africa will have its own professional policy analysts and managers and its own institutions for training and advice in policy analysis and development management. There will be much less dependence on external technical assistance. Africa will be more in control of its economic destiny (Jaycox 1991).

Although the WB is the 'lead' institution of the ACBI, the Initiative is in fact 'owned' by the international donor community. 'The African Development Bank, the United National Development Programme, and the World Bank are the lead co-sponsors of the ACBI. The Initiative represents a broad partnership between Sub-Saharan African countries and the international donor community' (Jaycox 1991:1).

The scope of the ACBI is focused on 'policy analysis and development management — because these skills are crucial and affect all other development issues'. Despite this focused scope, the impact of the Initiative 'should be deep and widespread' (Jaycox 1991:1). And the action program of the ACBI will focus on six principal components. These are:

- the rehabilitation and improvement of selected national institutions — already existing departments of economics or public administration in universities or colleges, or research and management institutions;
- the building or strengthening of a small number of regional institutions for policy analysis and development management; these regional centers would be principally training institutions in policy analysis and development management skills, and sources of policy analysis and advice;
- the strengthening or creation of government policy units in the Offices of the Presidents, Ministries of Finance, Planning and Central Banks;
- the provision of fellowships to support selected African individuals in their research and training needs;
- the expansion of in-service training and work experiences for African professionals;
- the strengthening of local consulting firms, professional associations, and other non official organizations.

The ACBI action programme is extensive. Policy analysis and economic management training and research will be carried out within the framework of neoclassic economics and the modernization school of sociology and political science. Clearly it is not possible to analyze government policies relating to economic, social and political development of a country without using methodologies, concepts and theories developed by Western orthodox

social science. Thus the ACBI programme will affect and indeed likely to dominate, all aspects of social science in Africa,

The ACBI programme will set up new institutions as well as revive old universities which used to be 'first-class' institutions in the 1960s. Makerere University, the University of Ghana at Legon, and the University of Ibadan in Nigeria, have been mentioned as universities which are in a severe states of despair and therefore need to be rehabilitated through the ACBI programme. Indeed by the end of 1993 (i.e. within three years of the ACBF being established), it had committed some 25 to 30 million US dollars to new institutes and old Universities in 11 countries.¹¹ At this rate higher education in sub-Saharan Africa will soon be dominated by institutions and programmes financed by ACBF and under the guidance, if not supervision of the ACBF. Since governments will continue to reduce their financial support to institutions of higher education, ACBF support will create a two tier system amongst social science institutions in Africa — those with access to ACBF finances and those with very limited and diminishing resources from their governments.

The difference in access to resources between foreign-supported research centers and projects on the one hand and national academic institutions on the other has increased during the past decade. If present tendencies continue, there is a danger that the research community will be divided between a small group of scholars in well-funded 'islands', supported by foreign agencies and with modern computers and easy access to the global network of knowledge, and a large group of badly paid and equipped academics muddling through at national universities (Vylder and Ornas 1990:3). If this situation comes about, which is the most likely result of a vigorous implementation of the ACBI Programme, then there is no doubt that the social science scene in Africa — especially sub-Saharan Africa — will be dominated by the institutions and programmes supported by the ACBF. Given this likely scenario, the inevitable question which one must ask is, what will happen to the whole process of indigenizing social science which institutions like CODESRIA have been trying to bring about?. Indeed what will happen to the institutions led by the social science community all of which are entirely dependent on funding from the donor community? Will the donor community continue to support ACBF institutions and programme and at the same time support researchers led institutions which oppose the orthodox social science of the ACBF?

11 Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea Bissau, Rwanda, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Kenya, Botswana and South Africa. Also financing is provided to AERC and CIEREA (Francophone Faculties and Institutes).

The Future Prospects: Whither Social Science in Africa?

Discussion of the future prospects (of social science) may either lead to what has been termed 'afro-pessimism' — a state of mind that simply project past trends into the future and sees nothing but bleakness for Africa — or become an excuse in voluntarism and wishful thinking about a bright future for Africa unencumbered by the dreadful experiences of the recent past (Mkandawire 1993:129). To avoid both pessimism and wishful optimism, it is necessary to have a deep grasp of the past and the present. In this paper I have tried to carry out a serious analyses of social science institutions in order to have a deep understanding of their evolution during the last 30 years, and the socioeconomic and political contexts which affected that evolution. The result of this analysis indicates that there are clear and unmistakable trends which are emerging and which are most likely to continue for the rest of this decade and possibly into the first decade of the 21st century:

We have argued so far that African social science institutions are directly affected by the socioeconomic and political contexts of African countries and the continent as a whole. The future of social science institution, like their present and their past, depends very much on the future socioeconomic and political contexts in which they will operate. What then is the most likely socioeconomic and political context to prevail in African countries during the next 15 years?

Although this is not the place for developing a future scenario of Africa or of specific African countries, nevertheless we need to do a little 'probing of the future' to anticipate the most likely outline of the socioeconomic and political contexts within which social science institutions will operate. The primary base of this 'probe' are the interrelated forces or trends which have emerged out of the deep analysis of the past and the present of the social science institutions and the environment within which they have functioned. Briefly the main trends which we have identified, are:

1. the sustainability or continuity of the democratization process the consequences of which will bring about more autonomy and academic freedom to the social science institutions;
2. the present situation of most economies and the SAPs are both processes which have taken a medium to long-term character and therefore likely to continue for the next two decades;
3. the continuing decline of the role of government in social science institutions, a trend which is likely to lead to a decrease in both government financial contribution and political control of the institutions;
4. the implementation of the ACBI Programme and the coordination of donor policies and financial backing behind the Programme;

5. the continued expansion of demand for social science training and research by the expanding middle class and society at large;
6. the reform and restructuring of higher education will be vigorously implemented as part of the coming new generations of SAPs;
7. most of the researcher's institutions are in the process of withering away either because they have been unable to cope with the normal requirements of institutional developments or because of the changing internal and external conditions. However a few such institutions will survive.

Are these major trends likely to continue for the next two decades? It is our view that these trends will continue, if we make the following assumptions:-

Firstly that the democratization process will continue. It is likely to bring a degree of functional 'political stability' and a 'democratic space', which will enable the economy (and social science institutions) to function and possibly even grow. The 'political stability' likely to emerge will encompass various degrees of tensions and 'controlled' conflicts — such as revolts of unemployed urban youths, low level ethnic, religious and secessionist conflicts, mostly in isolated areas etc. An important feature of these tensions and conflicts is that they would not adversely affect the functioning of the middle class, the main productive economic areas and enterprises, the basic infrastructure, and major institutions. This situation actually prevails now in Uganda, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Senegal, Zambia, Zimbabwe to mention but few of the more important countries. We are assuming that most countries will have this kind of 'stability', while some countries are more likely to degenerate into chaos or 'manageable anarchy'.

Secondly, we assume that most African governments will continue to implement new generations of SAPs which may bring about a perceptible economic growth of between 2% to 3% annually to some few countries with strong economies. Most countries with weak economies and weak management capacities, are likely to continue with negative growth and thus protract the present level of social and economic crises.

The BWI will continually work out new generations of SAPs, possibly introducing low level 'social net' schemes into their programmes whose implementation they will continue to supervise. ODA is not likely to increase from the present level. More importantly, very little FDI money is likely to come to Africa. Hence the necessary capital to propel the few promising economies into a fast growth track — a la South East Asia — will not be available. Nor will there be significant internal reforms of the South East Asia type (eg. Korea) in any countries with promising economies, since they are being forced to implement BWI's reforms (the SAPs) which do not touch the deep structural distortions of their economies. Hence, as far as

African economies are concerned, we assume the continuation of the present situation rather than a major breakthrough into a fast track path of economic growth.

Thirdly, we assume that the donors will push through their ACBI programme so that in 15 to 20 years from now, Africa 'will have its own professional policy analysts and managers and its own institutions for training and advice in policy analysis and development management' (ACBI). This is the objective of the ACBI and we assume that the donors will implement and sustain this programme.

These assumptions, in my view, are reasonable and realistic given the analysis we have made and the data available. They are not based on the 'afro-pessimism' state of mind nor on a flight of imagination of optimistic fantasy. One would have liked to be reasonably more optimistic with regards to the economic outlook. But I could not find encouraging trends or data to enable me to make assumptions of a bright economic outlook. Of course there are always what are known as 'critical uncertainties', the possibility that some unforeseen or neglected trends may lead to a new and positive development which will compound all the assumptions we have made here. This possibility always exists, and in our case, if it were to come about, it might take place in such countries as Nigeria, Egypt, South Africa, Kenya or Zimbabwe. On this possibility, one is at the level of hope rather than analysis. And to go back to analysis let me look briefly at each of these assumptions.

The first assumption — that of continuing democratization process and its likely consequences — is based on my reading, research and observation of the post-independence political systems of African countries. This is not the place to argue the case for this assumption. Of course there are other interpretations particularly on: (a) whether the 'democratization' process will continue or not and for how long, and (b) on the likely outcome — whether it will be a Western type liberal democracy, back to dictatorship, or simply various degrees of 'chaos'. However, I stand by the scenario I have assumed despite these other interpretations.

The second assumption — on the possible economic outlook — is also, in my view, realistic and reasonable. On this question most analysts tend to go to the extremes of 'afro-pessimism', a view which I do not subscribe to. On the other hand the outlook is not very bright, and indeed is rather gloomy, given the available information. Here are two views from different sources, one on the general economic outlook, and the other specifically on the question of external resources coming to Africa.

On the General Economic Outlook

According to the World Bank, 'The outlook for sub-Saharan Africa is especially fragile, with the biggest risks being a continuation of the deterioration in the terms of trade and continuation of political unrest'. The

baseline projection for the above outlook assumed 'no major adverse conditions with respect to the weather and internal conflicts' even though Africa is 'more susceptible to droughts than any other continent'. Furthermore there is risk of a lower availability (of ODA), which could result in severe reductions in investments and consumptions'. Thus poverty is expected to increase by 50% between now and the year 2000. And if one assumes a 'low-case scenario' for the international environment, this 'carries very gloomy implications for this region'. Since Africa is particularly dependent on primary commodities, the prospect would be one of negative growth per capita GDP and ensuing political tension. The number of poor could easily double under this scenario (World Bank 1993:65-6). The prospects for African countries are therefore rather gloomy.

On External Resources for African Development

In a Survey of Third-World Finance, the *Economist* (September 25 — October 1st 1993) consistently paints a gloomy picture on this issue:

But the poorest economies, especially in Africa, are still confined in the debtor's prison of the 1980s.... Much if not all of any additional external resources, in the form of aid or loans, must be devoted to that purpose (paying their debts); little remains to pay for productive investment. For these countries the 1980s were not merely, as the cliché has it, a 'lost decade', but a time when they became substantially poorer. In the 1990s at least some of them will fall even farther behind (p.7). Against this background (of debt), the chances (of African countries) of attracting much new private capital are negligible (p.14). Perhaps for years, Africa's poor reputation amongst investors will continue to taint its individual economies, reformers and non-reformers alike. Until that changes, it will be difficult for the region's more promising economies to attract the private capital they may, in due course, be able to use profitably. Difficult but not impossible (p.15).

The WB and the *Economist* may, in general, think alike, and also may draw on the same sources for data. Nevertheless we have to take their views and analyses on some of these issues seriously. Without accepting and agreeing with everything from the WB and the *Economist*, I have used their views on the economic outlook because I broadly agree with them. And in the absence of any serious alternative views, about the future economic outlook of Africa, my assumption on the economic outlook will thus stand as stated.

The third assumption is straight forward. The ACBI Programme is a long-term one. The structure, the mechanism, the funds and the political will are all in place. The latter (political will) may wane or become stronger during the next two decades, but I don't think it will seriously affect the implementation of the Programme. Unless of course the Programme is canceled for reasons which we cannot at the moment foresee. But this is one of

the uncertainties of any attempt at probing the future. My views are the Programme will continue for the next one if not the two decades.

Given the main trends identified and given the assumptions made above, what then are the most likely consequences or outcome on the social science institutions? Indeed on social science itself? Briefly, here are some of the most likely possibilities:

1. Given the progressive decrease of UN and government funds, and the shift of donor funds (mainly if not exclusively) to the ACBI programme, the UNECA led institutions are likely to continue to have financial problems. The three remaining institutions will either be discontinued for lack of funds or may be taken over by the ACBF.
2. Some training and research institutions and universities are likely to be discontinued or 'whither away' as part of the reform and restructuring process which will most likely be required by SAPs.
3. Universities and institutions which survive the restructuring process are likely to focus their training and research to science and technology as would be demanded by SAP. Social Science is most likely to occupy a smaller part in these restructured institutions. More importantly the social science programme will be largely focused on policy analysis and economic management as defined by the ACBF. These social science programmes will be heavily if not entirely funded by the ACBF. Those universities and institutions which do not have ACBF Programme or finance, are expected to become second class institutions with a poor material base and research environment. These latter institutions will be in the majority but with less status and prestige.
4. More new institutions are likely to be set up by the ACBF. These institutions and the ACBF funded social science programmes in universities and management institutes will most likely dominate the social science scene in African higher education.
5. Consultancy research is most like to increase dramatically since strengthening local consulting firms is a part of the ACBI programme. Researchers in consultancy firms, the ACBF institutes and the Universities will most likely interact intensively. Thus the consultancy mode of research is likely to be the most dominant type of research in these institutions.
6. The demand for University education will continue to rise especially by the middle class. Given the reduction in the number of places at universities, the high cost of studying at African Universities (even with cost sharing), many African students are likely to go to West Asia for university education if the cost there continues to be cheaper than in

Africa. Private universities are also likely to increase in number so as to cater for the children of the elite who could not afford to send their children to Europe or North America.

7. As the presence of the 'democratization process' continues to be felt and academic freedom returns to the campus, the critique over government policies and the debates over the relevancy and type of social science at the universities are also most likely to resume. This development is likely to be disapproved and even resented by both governments and the donor community. More importantly however, it is likely to lead to better academic research (in contrast to consultancy research) and a more robust social science at the universities.
8. The researcher's led institutions almost all of which depend on donor funding are likely to go through a difficult time. Donor funds are likely to be scarce and very tied. Donor conditionalities of good management, efficiency and productivity are likely to discontinue most of these institutions.
9. The few researcher's led institutions which are likely to survive such as CODESRIA, will face a new situation whose basic features will most likely be:
 - (i) National level institutions will be divided into two 'classes' or tiers by ACBF — the rich and the poor.
 - (ii) A divided academic community between those who are linked to the ACBI Programmes and supporters of the status quo and those who are not linked to the ACBI Programmes, mostly in the poorer institutions, radicalized and supporters of critical and indigenized social science. The latter category of researchers are most likely to be also political activist.
 - (iii) 'African governments have virtually abdicated their responsibility for and have also lost control over the process of development' (Rasheed 1993:27). Policy making on economic growth and development is now essentially in the hands of the Bretton Woods Institutions.
 - (iv) A critical uncertainty of the future will be the behaviour of CODESRIA's donors. Will they continue to accept CODESRIA's independence, as in the past, even if CODESRIA becomes a major critique of their ACBI Programmes?

On the positive side however:

- (v) African Scholars have become and will continue to be more confident of themselves and their work is likely to have greater impact both in Africa and internationally. The 'community' will be larger and

substantial, composed mainly of younger researchers more steeped in the post-independence experience.

(vi) The process of indigenization of social science is well advanced. Given the continuing paradigmatic confusion of the foreign Africanist and of the left in general, the indigenization process is likely to gain momentum and therefore constitute a major challenge to the conventional social science.

CODESRIA is the most important and successful Pan-African institutions owned by the research community. There are major changes of long-term consequences taking place within African countries and globally. Clearly CODESRIA is aware of these changes (Mkandawire 1993). However will CODESRIA take the next step and 'plan for the future' by formulating strategies based on a serious analyses of the emerging trends and their likely development during the next 10 to 20 years? This is CODESRIA's challenge.

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