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Philosophie et développement de l'Afrique

Romuald Évariste Bambara*

Nous sommes des idéalistes : nous voulons le meilleur, même si ce meilleur n'est pas forcément réalisable. Mais, en même temps, nous sommes des réalistes et des pragmatiques. Nous avons conscience de nos limites tout en ne nous accordant aucune limite. Nous savons ce que nous pouvons et ne pouvons pas faire, tout en recherchant l'impossible. Je suis ainsi, les Rwandais sont ainsi.

Interview du chef de l'État rwandais Paul Kagame, in *Jeune Afrique*, n° 2940, du 14 au 20 mai 2017, p. 29.

Résumé

La philosophie en particulier et tout ce qui se rapporte à la littérature en général sont fréquemment soumis à la critique désobligeante et récurrente de ne pas prendre part au développement du continent africain. La philosophie répond que son rôle est de susciter un rêve, une utopie, condition sine qua non de toute construction de soi et de tout idéal à se fixer. La philosophie en Afrique, réflexion abstraite ou théorique, doit, en partant de sa situation réelle, c'est-à-dire des conditions intellectuelles, spirituelles, matérielles, sociales, créer des concepts aptes à prendre en compte les aspirations et les rêves des Africains. Le présent article incite donc l'Afrique à générer ses propres concepts, qui seront le reflet de sa condition d'existence et de son imaginaire. Une telle démarche peut éviter au continent africain un usage sans précaution épistémologique des concepts exprimant l'hégémonie de la civilisation européenne.

Mots-clés : Afrique, développement, émergence, philosophie, progrès, utopie

Abstract

Philosophy in particular and all that relates to literature in general are frequently the subject to derogatory and recurrent critique of not participating in the development of the African continent. By way of response to such criticism, Philosophy argues that its role is to create dreams and utopia, a prerequisite

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for all constructions of the self and any ideal to be set. Philosophy in Africa – whether abstract or theoretical reflection – should, based on its actual realities, i.e., its intellectual, spiritual, material, social conditions, formulate concepts capable of accounting for the aspirations and dreams of Africans. This article therefore urges Africa to generate its own concepts, that reflect and are grounded in its imagination and life condition. Such an approach can prevent the African continent from using concepts that emphasise the hegemony of European civilisation, without any epistemological precaution.

Keywords: Africa, Development, Emergence, Philosophy, Progress, Utopia

Introduction

Dans certains continents, l'habitude d'être imprégné ou de se confronter à la pensée philosophique participe de l'absence d'une interrogation sur son utilité. En revanche, dans d'autres comme l'Afrique, il en va autrement. Sur ce continent, l'opinion s'interroge régulièrement sur l'utilité de la philosophie en insistant sur les besoins pressants ou les préoccupations actuelles de l'Afrique. Cependant, l'intérêt de ces interrogations est souvent mal perçu. Pour l'opinion, la philosophie est un verbiage stérile. Cette perception des choses est aussi malheureusement partagée par certains acteurs politiques. De ce fait, il n'est pas rare d'entendre des décideurs conforter l'opinion de l'inutilité de la philosophie. Et, à partir de ce constat, de dénoncer l'investissement à perte dans la formation des étudiants en philosophie et le traitement salarial des enseignants de philosophie sur le continent.

Au Burkina Faso, les discours des deux premiers responsables politiques sont illustratifs à cet égard. Le premier est celui du président du Faso[1] ; au cours d'une émission sur la télévision nationale du Burkina, celui-ci déclare : « Nous ne devons plus continuer à former des philosophes et des juristes… par milliers alors qu'ils n'auront pas de boulot. » Le second, celui du président de l'Assemblée nationale (2016:8), s'inscrit dans la même logique : « On ne peut pas continuer à former des littéraires, des philosophes et des poètes pour encadrer nos vies, mais il nous faut plutôt des médecins, des techniciens et autres, capables de répondre aux besoins[2] ». Dans ces deux déclarations, la remise en cause de l'enseignement des disciplines littéraires en général est assumée, mais particulièrement celle de l'enseignement de la philosophie. Pourquoi la philosophie est-elle en particulier pointée du doigt ? Que lui reproche-t-on ? L'intérêt pour nous dans cet écrit est de partir des critiques formulées à l'encontre de la philosophie et de chercher à analyser le lien susceptible d'être établi entre celle-ci et le développement de l'Afrique.

Qu'est-ce que la philosophie peut apporter à l'Afrique ? Dans un continent qui se trouve confronté à la nécessité de la vie et où tout est prioritaire, la philosophie est régulièrement sommée de dire ce qu'elle peut faire pour le continent. D'autres types de savoirs et de pratiques comme la science, les techniques et la technologie sont, pour le continent africain, d'une nécessité vitale et urgente que ne saurait recéler le besoin d'une réflexion philosophique désintéressée ou d'une méditation métaphysique par essence abstraite.

Le continent africain se trouve confronté à des problèmes sociaux, économiques, techniques et technologiques qui nécessitent des réponses urgentes. Comment l'activité philosophique peut-elle aider à la résolution de ces problèmes ? La philosophie se laisse-t-elle penser en termes d'utilité, de rendement ? La philosophie n'est-elle pas essentiellement théorique ? Comment peut-elle prendre part au développement du continent africain ? Du reste, qu'entend-on par développement ? Est-ce un concept univoque ? De nos jours, le discours politique en Afrique ne parle-t-il pas aussi de façon systématique de progrès, d'émergence ? Que signifient ces concepts et quels sont leurs liens avec la notion de développement ?

L'enjeu pour nous à travers cette réflexion est de tenter d'élucider ce qu'est la philosophie et d'examiner aussi le lien qui existe entre la philosophie et des concepts comme le développement, le progrès, l'émergence dans le contexte spécifique de l'Afrique. Une telle spécification peut éviter de lui faire des procès en sorcellerie sur des préoccupations qui ne sont pas nécessairement les siennes. Pour ce faire, l'analyse, qui se veut historique et critique, cherche d'abord à élucider ce qu'est la notion de philosophie de façon générale et, de façon spécifique, la philosophie en Afrique. Il s'agit par ailleurs de démontrer ce que la philosophie vise. Ensuite, l'analyse s'attache à comprendre ce qu'est le développement à travers des notions connexes comme le progrès, l'émergence, et à voir si les normes d'appréciation de ces différents concepts ne sont pas partie intégrante d'une éthique de la vie. Enfin, il s'agit de préciser le rôle que peut jouer la philosophie pour le développement de l'Afrique.

De la nature réelle de la philosophie et de la spécificité de la philosophie africaine

De l'Antiquité jusqu'à nos jours, le point transversal de la philosophie demeure ce fait majeur : la quête de la sagesse, du bonheur. Ce trait est caractéristique de toute l'histoire de la philosophie. La philosophie se veut une réflexion théorique, cohérente, systématique et critique des savoirs, des pratiques, du réel dans toute sa diversité. Essentiellement abstraite, elle se

distingue de l'opinion (*doxa* en grec), du discours courant, par sa radicalité, par sa quête de l'universalité et par sa posture critique. La critique peut être considérée comme l'essence même du discours philosophique. Sans être le tout de la philosophie, elle est prise pour un moment nécessaire de l'activité philosophique. La philosophie vise à interroger la réalité des choses, le langage par le langage. En effet, les idées ne prennent forme que par le langage. Dans ce sens, toute critique se veut une critique du langage. Le terme critique vient du grec *krinein,* qui signifie « juger une affaire », au sens juridique du terme. Et cette critique porte non seulement sur la raison, la faculté qui permet de critiquer, de s'interroger ou de construire les savoirs, mais aussi sur toutes les thématiques telles que la politique, le social, l'esthétique, la foi, la raison, etc. Plusieurs philosophes comme Descartes, Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche… en font une étape importante de leurs réflexions philosophiques. La philosophie analyse tout et estime être en droit d'examiner sans limites tout, c'est-à-dire les discours, les propos, les convictions, les comportements, les dogmes, les principes, etc. La critique est donc résolument une vocation de l'activité philosophique.

La philosophie, à certaines périodes, s'est voulu une quête de la totalité de l'univers existant. Des systèmes comme l'hégélianisme, le marxisme, l'existentialisme, le heideggerianisme, etc. se sont efforcés de construire une certaine intelligibilité de cet univers dans sa totalité. Que faut-il entendre par système ? Le système recouvre plusieurs significations. Il peut renvoyer à l'idée de totalité, d'encyclopédie ou de savoir complet. Tout comme le système peut désigner une philosophie caractérisée par un principe de cohérence ou une organisation linéaire de la cohérence. Enrevanche, à d'autres moments, la philosophie a reconnu son impuissance à embrasser une telle totalité. La période contemporaine s'illustre par sa volonté d'échapper au système, de rejeter le savoir absolu hérité de la philosophie moderne. Aussi se définit-elle par son refus de vénérer une pensée quelconque. Et ce rejet du système se fait au nom des objets de connaissances échappant au savoir absolu comme l'individu, la vie, l'histoire, l'inconscient, la liberté, le langage, l'angoisse, la vie, les sciences, etc.

Gilles Deleuze et Félix Guattari (2005) conçoivent la philosophie comme une activité créatrice de concepts, un art de créer ou d'inventer des concepts. Son objet réside dans cette capacité à forger toujours des concepts nouveaux en tenant compte des particularités du moment, des concepts qui saisissent le sens des événements qui se succèdent afin de construire une certaine rationalité ou intelligibilité des faits. Les concepts philosophiques traduisent les essences des événements, des réalités. L'homme veut comprendre son monde, avoir une lecture des événements sociaux, politiques, économiques

qui surviennent dans et hors de son environnement de vie. La philosophie répond à une telle exigence par la création de concepts, de nouveaux concepts. Et chaque concept porte la signature de son concepteur. La grandeur de toute philosophie va s'évaluer en fonction des concepts créés et qui permettent de clarifier le sens des événements qui surviennent. Deleuze et Guattari, tout en insistant sur cette particularité foncière de l'activité philosophique, rappellent paradoxalement la méfiance nietzschéenne vis-à-vis des concepts en usage dans l'univers de la pensée philosophique :

> Nietzsche a déterminé la tâche de la philosophie quand il écrivit : « Les philosophes ne doivent plus se contenter d'accepter les concepts qu'on leur donne, pour seulement les nettoyer et les faire reluire, mais il faut qu'ils commencent par les fabriquer, les créer, les poser et persuader les hommes d'y recourir. Jusqu'à présent, somme toute, chacun faisait confiance à ses concepts, comme à une dot miraculeuse venue de quelque monde également miraculeux », mais il faut remplacer la confiance par la méfiance, et c'est des concepts que le philosophe doit se méfier le plus, tant qu'il ne les a pas lui-même créés. (2005:11)

De l'avis des deux philosophes contemporains, l'art de créer des concepts propres à l'activité philosophique démontre l'utilité de celle-ci et remet en cause la suspicion sur son caractère nocif au point que l'argument souvent véhiculé que « la grandeur de la philosophie serait justement de ne servir à rien est une coquetterie qui n'amuse même plus les jeunes gens » (2005:14) n'est plus recevable.

Slavoj Žižek (2016) insiste sur l'absence de repères pour nous orienter dans le monde. Un monde soumis à un changement vertigineux. Dès lors, il exhorte le philosophe à ne pas céder à la tentation d'agir ; telle est la première chose à faire. La précipitation est fortement déconseillée. Žižek (2016:67) reprend à son compte cette formule d'Adorno : « À la question : « Que devons-nous faire ? », je répondrais en toute honnêteté : « Je n'en sais rien ». » Et dans une démarche empreinte de prudence, il préconise simplement ceci :

> Je peux simplement m'efforcer d'analyser les choses telles qu'elles sont. On m'objectera que toute formulation de critique impose aussi une suggestion d'amélioration. Je considère que c'est là un préjugé bourgeois. Très souvent, au cours de l'Histoire, les œuvres qui se sont donné des objectifs purement théoriques sont justement celles qui ont transformé la conscience et, partant, la réalité sociale.

Le pouvoir du philosophe réside dans la réflexion. Une réflexion manifeste dans les trois techniques souvent déployées que sont la conceptualisation, l'argumentation et la construction. À ceux qui sont tentés d'agir, de passer à

l'acte, le philosophe slovène fait observer que cette action s'inscrira dans une idéologie hégémonique. Pour ce faire, il conseille au philosophe qui veut agir de s'engager dans des organismes non gouvernementaux comme Médecins sans frontières, Greenpeace, etc. Ou plutôt de participer à des campagnes féministes et antiracistes. Telles sont les possibilités suggérées à ceux qui veulent agir. C'est pourquoi il réfute la onzième des *Thèses sur Feuerbach* de Karl Marx. Cette thèse, rappelons-le, disait que « Les philosophes n'ont fait qu'interpréter le monde de différentes manières, ce qui importe c'est de le transformer. » Une critique sans doute inspirée par Hegel, que Žižek perçoit comme le philosophe purement contemplatif, dont paradoxalement la pensée a inspiré plusieurs essais radicaux de transformation du monde. Ainsi, à propos de cette affirmation de Marx, il soutient : « Je serai tenté donc de renverser la thèse de Marx : tout au long du XXe siècle, nous nous sommes empressés de transformer le monde ; prenons désormais le temps de l'interpréter » (2016:67). Une manière de ramener la philosophie à son essence, à ce qui la constitue véritablement, c'est-à-dire son interrogation critique, son étonnement devant la réalité ou face à l'humain. De ce fait, on peut affirmer de façon générale que le questionnement est au centre de l'activité philosophique. Ce questionnement est radical et incite à la recherche de l'essence des choses. Par ce jeu de questionnement, la philosophie manifeste sa force comme un éveil de conscience, un accroissement de la prise de conscience sur les réalités du vécu humain.

Comment se présente et se déroule l'activité philosophique en Afrique ? Au-delà des aspects généraux de la philosophie, qu'est-ce qui fait la singularité de la philosophie en Afrique ? On peut distinguer deux formes principales d'expression de la philosophie en Afrique : la forme diffuse, perceptible dans nos contes, nos légendes, nos proverbes, nos maximes…, et la forme académique présente dans les productions des universitaires, des lettrés. Cette deuxième forme est perceptible à travers des figures de proue comme Paulin Hountondji, Alexis Kagamé, Marcien Towa, Ebénézer Njoh-Mouelle, Elungu, Fabien Eboussi-Boulaga, Jean-Godefroy Bidima, Issiaka-Prosper Latoundji Lalèyê, Mamoussé Diagne, Souleymane Bachir Diagne, Kwasi Wiredu, etc. Des philosophes qui font des efforts de réflexion pour mettre en évidence ce qu'il y a de rationnel dans les réalités singulières abordées. À la différence de la philosophie occidentale, ils appréhendent des objets ou des problèmes particuliers et proposent éventuellement des solutions spécifiques.

La philosophie en Afrique va se définir comme la production d'un ensemble de textes et de pratiques qualifiés ou reconnus comme philosophiques par les Africains. Ces textes s'articulent autour de l'épineuse

question anthropologique, c'est-à-dire du devenir de l'homme, afin de retrouver le sens de celui-ci. Mais pour répondre à une telle préoccupation, la philosophie en Afrique doit s'organiser à plusieurs niveaux ou répondre à plusieurs exigences.

Une des exigences les plus connues et qui est à même de contribuer à la compréhension de l'activité primordiale de la philosophie en Afrique de ces jours est celle de la décolonisation conceptuelle ou en anglais « conceptual decolonization » du philosophe ghanéen Kwasi Wiredu (2000:53).

K. Wiredu vise à travers son projet de décolonisation conceptuelle à contextualiser les notions philosophiques qui semblent universelles et régulièrement utilisées par les philosophes africains comme la réalité, l'existence, l'objet, la substance, la qualité, la punition… Cette contextualisation peut contribuer à décoloniser mentalement les Africains qui reproduisent ces concepts sans en tirer des conséquences historiques. Il ne s'agit guère de rejeter toute forme occidentale du savoir, mais plutôt d'inciter chaque philosophe africain à être conscient de l'origine de certaines notions philosophiques afin d'en faire le meilleur usage qui soit.

La décolonisation conceptuelle passe par la réhabilitation des langues africaines. Les philosophes africains utilisent les langues européennes pour véhiculer leurs pensées. Certaines notions sont même considérées comme allant de soi, alors qu'en les traduisant dans nos langues ou en les reformulant, elles peuvent ne pas avoir de sens. Aussi la décolonisation conceptuelle veut-elle déconstruire ce faux universalisme en pratique dans le philosopher des Africains. K. Wiredu lançait cet appel à la fin d'une communication présentée à Nairobi en 1980 : *« Philosophes africains, apprenons à penser dans nos langues ! »* Cet appel participe de l'établissement d'une vérité, à savoir que la philosophie n'est pas occidentale ou ne caractérise pas en propre l'Occident. Elle appartient à tous et chaque culture peut se l'approprier. Pour lui, les philosophes africains sont formés dans les langues européennes. Par conséquent, il faut veiller à récuser cette « désafricanisation mentale ».

Issiaka-Proper L. Lalèyê insiste pour dire que le philosophe africain contemporain, même l'ethnophilosophe, est un philosophe de formation européenne. En outre, ce philosophe utilise des langues qui sont les signes d'extériorité les plus immédiatement visibles :

> Nous ne saurions contester que l'activité philosophique de l'Afrique actuelle trouve son origine dans les conséquences multiformes du contact colonial. Les langues utilisées dans cette activité en sont le signe d'extériorité le plus immédiatement visible. Il faut cependant se garder d'en faire l'élément le plus déterminant et le plus significatif. (2010:144)

Il conçoit la philosophie comme un élan, plutôt que comme une retombée. Djibril Samb, dans sa préface à l'ouvrage de Lalèyê (2010), remarque que celui-ci distingue trois traits cumulatifs qui permettent de caractériser et de décrire la philosophie africaine :

> Une activité individuelle libre et consciente de caractère discursif et non seulement conceptuel, une activité réflexive fondée sur la raison qui se donne pour objet la totalité de l'expérience humaine ; enfin, une activité qui se fixe pour cause finale la réalisation des vertus cardinales comme le vrai, le juste et le bien. (2010:9)

Jean-Godefroy Bidima, dans *La philosophie négro-africaine* (1995), affirme que l'expression *philosophie négro-africaine* ne tombe pas dans une volonté unificatrice. En effet, « on ne peut parler que des philosophies négro-africaines. La pluralité est liée à l'histoire africaine qui n'a ni unité de lieu (elle s'est déroulée en Afrique, mais aussi en Europe et aux Amériques) ni unité de temps ». Une telle philosophie négro-africaine aurait-elle « un statut propre qui la distinguerait dans sa tresse, son style, sa translation et son économie des autres philosophies, ou simplement, n'est-elle qu'une succursale des diverses philosophies occidentales et ses philosophes d'honnêtes et imprévisibles délégués provinciaux » ? (1995:4)

Partant d'un tel constat, le philosophe camerounais J.-G. Bidima remarque que la pratique philosophique africaine apparaît comme celle de la « traversée ». En forgeant le concept de la *traversée*, il contourne le piège de la question de l'universalité ou de la particularité de la philosophie africaine. La singularité de la philosophie africaine réside dans la valorisation non pas du donné, mais du mouvement. En d'autres termes, ce n'est pas l'héritage, c'est-à-dire ce qui est transmis, qui constitue l'essentiel, mais la transmission elle-même : « L'essentiel n'est plus ici de dire ce que l'Afrique a été (d'où on vient), mais ce *qu'elle devient (ce par quoi elle passe)* », confirme Jean Godefroy Bidima (2002:7).

La philosophie africaine écrite des quarante dernières années porte, selon J.-G. Bidima, les marques de deux fardeaux. Le premier fardeau, c'est celui de « l'homme blanc ». C'est au nom de cet « homme blanc » que les Africains ont été évangélisés, christianisés, à qui on enseigna l'histoire d'une Raison née en Grèce. Le deuxième fardeau est celui du « colonisé ». Celui-ci se manifeste dans le fait qu'un Africain « ne pouvait philosopher sans rappeler *l'aventure coloniale, l'esclavage et les traditions.* Colonialisme, esclavage et traditions devenaient des *cadres a priori* de toute diction philosophique africaine. Entre-temps, on a ajouté deux éléments à ce cadre : l'idée du *développement* et celle de *réappropriation des savoirs traditionnels* » (2002:11).

J.-G. Bidima (2011), dans son article intitulé « Philosophies, démocraties et pratiques : à la recherche d'un « universel latéral » », publié dans la revue *Critique,* relève neuf thèmes propres à la philosophie africaine : la colonisation, l'identité, l'État-nation, la diaspora, écriture/oralité, la vie, les relations individu/communauté, la race et la religion. Mais après la chute du mur de Berlin, les préoccupations des philosophes africains se sont déplacées vers les problèmes liés au cosmopolitisme, aux migrations transnationales, au genre, à la démocratisation, à la justice, à la mémoire et à l'environnement. L'intérêt pour les questions économiques reste très faible. Il manque une critique de l'économie politique.

L'Afrique doit s'engager dans une approche où « la philosophie est assumée par des hommes historiquement situés au sein des institutions, elles-mêmes encadrées par des textes » (2002:14). En d'autres termes, il faut cesser de *« promouvoir* l'ayant été, il s'agit maintenant de privilégier *le non encore (nondum),* comme le dit Ernst Bloch » (2002:8).

De nos jours, l'effort de penser à partir de nos réalités africaines, perceptible selon J.-G. Bidima, est devenu une constante chez bien des philosophes africains. Il cite (2011:677), par exemple, les philosophes sud-africains qui ont repris les éléments de la tradition africaine pour en extraire la notion d'*Ubuntu* afin de mettre en évidence une éthique de l'expérience. Dismas A. Masolo reprend la notion de *Juok* qui signifie l'éthique de la rectitude chez les Luo du Kenya. Souleymane Bachir Diagne oriente ses recherches sur les philosophies musulmanes, etc. À ces expériences, nous pouvons ajouter l'entreprise actuelle de construction, par Mahamadé Savadogo, des concepts philosophiques dans une langue du Burkina Faso comme le mooré de la province du Yatenga, afin de rendre la philosophie populaire sans porter atteinte à son essence. Des entreprises de réappropriation d'une pensée qui doit être aux prises avec les réalités du milieu local sans s'enfermer dans la particularité et tout en visant l'universalité. Cela permet aussi d'éviter de confiner la philosophie dans les murs des universités et de sortir de la déformation professionnelle de ses adeptes. Jean-François Petit espère que les philosophes africains ne vont pas « succomber aux ors des palais et autres académies » (2011:54).

Être aux prises avec les réalités du milieu local revient à s'intéresser à ce qui préoccupe les Africains en ce XXIe siècle : sortir du sous-développement, se développer. La notion de développement est dans tous les discours en Afrique. Chaque pays africain aspire à se développer. Mais qu'est-ce que le développement ? Et que signifient les concepts connexes comme le progrès, l'émergence ?

De l'approche de la notion de développement, du progrès et d'émergence

L'activité philosophique est considérée dans certains discours politiques comme inutile ou superflue, voire « une gageure pour une majorité d'Africains », selon le mot de J.-F. Petit (2011:45). Ces discours insistent sur ce qui constitue des urgences pour eux comme les soins et l'équipement en termes d'infrastructure, les routes, le transport des biens produits… En d'autres termes, l'urgence est dans la formation des médecins et des ingénieurs. Donc, l'intérêt est plutôt de chercher à résoudre les problèmes concrets, matériels du pays. Des notions comme celles du développement, du progrès, de l'émergence sont donc les constantes des discours politiques en Afrique. Des discours empreints d'économisme, accordant le primat à la quantité, la technique, la technologie, les finances… sur la qualité, la culture, l'être, etc. À tel point que l'impression qui se dégage est que les notions de développement, de progrès et d'émergence ne comportent pas de dimension philosophique. Justement, le rôle du philosophe africain est de montrer la vacuité de la notion de développement et des notions connexes comme celle du progrès, de l'émergence économique, de la croissance, la lutte contre la pauvreté... car elles sont le propre d'une production culturelle. Le rôle du philosophe africain est de ramer à contre-courant de ce consensus qui semble être universel dans les définitions des notions de développement, de progrès et d'émergence.

Ces notions sont propres au rêve de l'Occident, à sa vision du progrès humain, et celui-ci a réussi à les investir dans les imaginaires collectifs des peuples africains ou plutôt à les mondialiser. Des notions produites, mûries, enrichies avec des critères ou des normes partant du monde occidental. L'Occident se perçoit comme le centre producteur de sens, de mythes et exporte ses productions dans les autres continents. Ainsi, la notion de « pays sous-développé » (*underdeveloped*), dans l'esprit du président américain Harry Truman, qui fut l'un des premiers à en faire la promotion le 20 janvier 1949, lors de son discours sur l'état de l'Union devant le Congrès américain, visait à proposer une aide à des pays ou à des régions considérés comme économiquement arriérés, en retard sur les États-Unis. Cette aide aux pays dits « pauvres » visait à empêcher la montée du communisme. Aussi toute société qui ne présenterait pas les mêmes conditions économiques, financières, matérielles que les sociétés américaine et européenne était-elle considérée comme sous-développée. Ici, le soupçon de vouloir imposer aux autres le modèle économique de production capitaliste et libérale a été vite perçu.

Autre exemple, la notion du progrès infini dans ses dimensions morales, sociales, gnoséologiques, etc. est le fruit de la philosophie du XVIIe siècle. Des philosophes de la modernité, tels que Descartes, Leibniz, Pascal…

ont développé cette notion qui sera reprise et accentuée au XVIIIe siècle, dit siècle des Lumières. Le progrès désigne les constantes améliorations de la connaissance et de la maîtrise de la nature, des mœurs, de la politique, des arts, etc. Il ne comporte pas seulement des aspects quantitatifs et n'est pas nécessairement linéaire. Une approche partagée jusqu'au XIXe siècle par des auteurs comme Hegel et Auguste Comte qui insisteront sur l'idée que le progrès est une sorte de loi inscrite dans l'ordre de la nature et de la vie. Les notions de développement, de progrès, de croissance, d'émergence… partent toujours d'un existant, d'une réalité, d'une donnée en vue d'atteindre un autre stade propre à cet existant, à cette réalité, à cette donnée. Tous ces concepts se comprennent dans une logique, au sein d'un processus qui est interne, permettant de passer de la *potentia* à l'*actus*. C'est pourquoi, les normes occidentales, revêtues d'une pseudo-universalité, cachant mal leur entreprise d'extension ou d'expansion dans le monde, doivent être tenues pour ce qu'elles sont et rien d'autre, c'est-à-dire de simples pratiques ou logiques culturelles comportant certains paramètres susceptibles d'être partagés, et d'autres non.

Trois approches actuelles du développement peuvent de nos jours orienter la réflexion philosophique en Afrique. Il s'agit de celles de Joseph Ki-Zerbo, de Joseph Stiglitz et d'Amartya Sen.

Joseph Ki-Zerbo, historien et philosophe africain, est connu depuis les années soixante-dix comme un penseur qui a longuement théorisé sur le développement de son continent. Mais de quel développement parle-t-il ? Quels sont les mots ou quelles sont les notions dans nos langues africaines qui désignent le développement ? À son sens, le mot sera difficile à trouver, en revanche l'idée de développement existe dans nos cultures. Ki-Zerbo (2013) évoque la notion du développement endogène ou le principe selon lequel « on ne développe pas, on se développe ». En d'autres termes, on n'apporte pas le développement « clés en main » à un pays ou à un continent. À travers le concept du développement endogène, propre au monde, il récuse le critère de l'accumulation, de la croissance économique optimale propre à l'Occident. S'inspirant de ses travaux d'historien, Ki-Zerbo constate que tout peuple s'est développé en tirant de sa culture ou de soi-même les éléments de son propre développement. Le peuple ne se développe pas uniquement à partir d'éléments culturels exogènes. Toutes les civilisations se sont développées de façon endogène, c'est-à-dire en conformité avec leurs réalités ou leurs valeurs morales, psychologiques, religieuses, etc. C'est pourquoi il donne plusieurs définitions du développement. Il peut être perçu comme « le passage de soi à soi-même à un niveau supérieur » ou encore « la multiplication des choix quantitatifs et qualitatifs » (2013:198). Cette approche n'exclut pas nécessairement le paradigme du développement

comme accumulation de biens, de richesse ou de service, ou comme la croissance en termes d'indicateurs économiques. Mais l'accumulation doit aussi concerner les valeurs sociales. Il refuse simplement de réduire le développement à « l'évangile du néolibéralisme » (2013:206). Il n'y a pas d'itinéraire unique pour tous les pays qui veulent se développer : « Je considère que le progrès, ce qu'on appelle le développement, c'est « faire le plein » de sa capacité en tant qu'être humain pour être un émetteur et un récepteur de valeurs. » (2013:210).

Joseph Stiglitz[3] propose un nouveau modèle de développement qui intègre les spécificités locales et refuse d'appliquer les mêmes mesures ou normes à tous les pays. C'est pourquoi il ambitionne d'élargir la conception de la notion de développement. Une telle exigence prend en compte la notion de développement telle que théorisée par les institutions internationales en vue de l'élargir à des dimensions non économiques, telles que l'accès à la culture, la démocratie, l'éducation, la santé, la réduction des inégalités, etc. La révision de l'approche actuelle de la notion de développement, c'est-à-dire la définition des différentes stratégies de développement, doit être participative. Stiglitz consacre ses travaux en économie à la réduction de la pauvreté et de l'inégalité, répondant ainsi, selon lui, à l'appel de Martin Luther King du 28 août 1963, date de la Marche sur Washington pour le travail et la liberté. C'est à cette occasion que le mémorable discours « Je fais un rêve » a été prononcé. Dans un article co-écrit avec Michael Doyle qui figure dans l'ouvrage de J. Stiglitz (2015), « La grande fracture : les sociétés inégalitaires et ce que nous pouvons faire pour les changer », les deux auteurs énoncent cette certitude : « Une chose est certaine : le développement durable n'est pas réalisable si on ignore les disparités extrêmes. Il est impératif qu'un des objectifs de l'agenda post-OMD[4] se concentre sur l'inégalité. »

A. Sen[5] (1999) s'inscrit dans la logique d'élargissement des stratégies de développement. Sans rejeter les normes des civilisations occidentales consistant dans la production des revenus et des ressources pour caractériser le développement, en somme des normes quantitatives, il invoque également la notion de *capabilités* (de l'anglais *capabilities*). Cette *capabilité* désigne tout simplement le pouvoir dont dispose tout homme pour agir, c'est-à-dire sa capacité à se prendre en charge en fonction de ses besoins ou de ses désirs. La notion de capabilité n'est rien d'autre que l'exercice de la liberté perceptible dans les possibilités d'usage dont dispose un agent afin de jouir des ressources disponibles. L'exercice de cette capabilité dépend tout à la fois des caractéristiques personnelles de la personne et de l'organisation sociale. La responsabilité de la société consiste à accroître les *capabilités* des individus afin de leur permettre de disposer des biens primaires nécessaires

(soin, nourriture, logement…) essentiels à leur plein épanouissement. Ainsi, il faut œuvrer à rendre effectives les libertés individuelles. Et seul le système démocratique est la forme du pouvoir qui, permettant l'expression des différentes libertés politiques, comme celle de tenir des élections régulières, la liberté de parole, la liberté de critiquer, de publier, etc., favorise la réalisation des *capabilités*. Car le développement, dans son approche philosophique, se perçoit comme cette capacité réelle des individus à jouir des libertés. En d'autres termes, la disponibilité des ressources n'est plus un critère suffisant, la responsabilité sociale doit se manifester en assurant à chaque citoyen la capacité de jouir de ces ressources et de vivre la vie qui a de la valeur à ses yeux. Les résultats d'une telle réflexion vont conduire à la création et à la prise en compte dans la notion de développement de l'indicateur de développement humain (IDH).

En partant de ces critères ou de ces exigences qui ouvrent la notion de développement, c'est-à-dire ne l'enferment plus dans la vision occidentale, on peut admettre que se développer en Afrique, c'est parvenir à l'autosuffisance alimentaire, couvrir les besoins de santé des populations, créer des emplois, construire des infrastructures sociales et économiques, etc. À notre sens, il faut revenir sur les stratégies alternatives qui ont vu le jour dans la décennie 1970. Ces stratégies comportent des propositions comme les stratégies des besoins essentiels et celles du développement endogène. Qu'il s'agisse du concept de développement, de progrès ou d'émergence, nous devrons considérer que l'essentiel pour notre continent ou pour chaque pays africain pris isolément est de satisfaire les besoins considérés comme nécessaires, c'est-à-dire l'alimentation, l'éducation et la santé. On peut ajouter à cela la qualité de la vie telle que conçue par ses membres et le niveau de vie de ceux-ci. Ce qui revient à reconnaître aux citoyens la faculté de percevoir que leur bien-être s'améliore et que de nouvelles opportunités d'éducation, de santé, d'emploi, de loisirs s'offrent à eux. Ce critère[6] permet de ne pas confondre croissance économique et émergence ou développement. Le principe ou le bon sens qui affirme l'existence de plusieurs rationalités ou qui admet la multiplicité des dynamiques sociétales doit être toujours rappelé. Les possibles existent dans chaque société. Aucune n'est condamnée à reproduire inéluctablement les possibles des autres.

Prenons cet autre concept à la mode dans les discours des hommes politiques africains. Chaque homme politique proclame son ambition de faire de son pays un pays « émergent ». L'émergence étant perçue comme une des étapes (une autre étape souvent citée par les économistes est celle de la convergence) qui précède le développement économique, plus précisément le développement intégral. L'ex-président du Faso, Blaise

Compaoré, dès 2011, s'était doté d'un slogan « Burkina 2025 » avec pour objectif en 2025 de « Bâtir, ensemble, un Burkina émergent ». Alassane Dramane Ouattara espère réaliser une Côte d'Ivoire émergente à l'horizon 2020. On peut citer également l'Égypte, le Maroc, la Tunisie, le Gabon, le Nigeria, le Ghana, etc., dans cette longue liste de pays africains clamant haut et fort leur volonté d'être émergents. L'émergence dans les discours des hommes politiques africains est un concept strictement économique. La question cruciale qui se pose aujourd'hui est celle de savoir si un pays africain peut être émergent avec une monnaie sous tutelle comme c'est le cas de la Communauté française de l'Afrique (CFA). Le BRICS (Brésil, Russie, Inde, Chine, Afrique du Sud) est constitué de pays émergents disposant chacun de sa propre monnaie. Le Japon, la Malaisie et Taïwan ont réussi à relever le défi de l'émergence à partir de leur propre monnaie. Les années à venir doivent donc être des années de combat pour refuser cette mise sous tutelle par la France de certains États africains, une France qui n'est pas nécessairement plus « riche[7] » que certains d'entre eux : ce combat est plus celui de la société civile que des partis politiques. Mais au juste, quelle est l'origine du concept d'émergence ?

Antoine van Agtmael a utilisé ce concept dans une optique opérationnelle, c'est-à-dire dans le sens de faire la distinction dans les pays en développement (PED) entre les pays à haut risque pour les investissements internationaux et ceux qui sont susceptibles d'accueillir les capitaux étrangers et de les faire fructifier. Bien après cette première approche économique du concept d'émergence, d'autres approches font leur apparition. Dès lors, la problématique liée au concept d'émergence se décline ainsi qu'il suit : ce concept ne comporte-t-il pas une dimension sociale ? Quels sont les critères susceptibles de distinguer un pays « émergent » d'un autre qui ne l'est pas ? Les critères liés à la forte croissance, aux faibles endettements, à la « facilité des affaires » proposés par la Banque mondiale (*Doing Business*), ainsi que le critère lié au développement des exportations sont-ils suffisants pour qualifier un pays d'émergent ? Les critères de classification d'un pays dans la catégorie des pays émergents varient en fonction des institutions internationales (Banque mondiale, Fonds monétaire international…), des organismes financiers (Golden et Sachs) ou des groupes d'experts (Boston Consulting Group, Standards and Poor's).

De l'analyse de ce que sont le développement, le progrès, l'émergence, autant de catégories conceptuelles par lesquelles l'Occident impose son hégémonie au reste du monde sous l'appellation de mondialisation, ressort qu'il y a urgence pour nous de fonder une utopie. Et selon les propos de F. Sarr (2016:27-28),

> Dans un contexte global de panne de projet de civilisation, l'Utopie africaine consiste à frayer d'autres chemins du vivre ensemble, à réarticuler les relations entre les différents ordres : le culturel, le social, l'économique, le politique, en créant un nouvel espace de significations et en ordonnant une nouvelle échelle des valeurs, cette fois fondée sur ses cultures et ses fécondes onto-mythologies. Construire des sociétés qui font sens pour ceux qui les habitent. Contre la marée, prendre le large.

Quel peut être le rôle de la philosophie dans la genèse d'une telle utopie ? Comment peut-elle œuvrer à la constitution de ce sens propre à nos sociétés ?

Du rôle possible de la philosophie dans les cités de l'Afrique

Le principe est connu, chaque civilisation invente le savoir dont elle a besoin pour assurer sa survie et son épanouissement. Ce savoir va permettre de répondre à ses questions existentielles et d'orienter le sens de sa vie. Un savoir qui doit partir de la vie du peuple africain, de son environnement historique, géographique, sociologique, psychologique et moral. Un savoir généré, exprimant les plaintes, les complaintes, les douleurs et les joies, les plaisirs, les aspirations de l'Afrique. Quel est le rêve du continent africain ? Que veut-il mettre dans son imaginaire ? Quel sens veut-il donner à son existence ? La production d'un savoir portant la spécificité du continent reste le préalable à tout projet de société en Afrique : se penser, faire son rêve, se projeter. Une telle exigence souhaitée, proclamée de longue date peine malheureusement à se concrétiser. Rappelons-nous les propos d'Alioune Diop, lors du colloque de Yaoundé, tenu du 16 au 20 avril 1973 sur « Le critique africain et son peuple comme producteur de civilisation » :

> Une culture est authentique dans le cadre et à la lumière des options de la civilisation qui l'a produite. Notre drame à nous est que l'expérience culturelle de l'élite est dissociée de celle du peuple. La première est formée de l'extérieur à partir d'instruments culturels empruntés. Ses œuvres sont généralement conçues pour le public européen ou européanisé. La seconde au contraire est pratiquement sans lien avec l'opinion publique internationale. Elle ne se connaît pas elle-même dans toutes ses dimensions. Elle paraît sans emprise, sans responsabilité sur les grands problèmes modernes de l'humanité. (1977:529)

Des concepts comme le développement, le progrès, l'émergence, etc., cités par les hommes politiques africains sans aucune précaution épistémologique, portent des sens, des connotations propres à la culture occidentale. Des concepts issus d'une réflexion sur soi et des propres réalités occidentales, c'est-à-dire pensés par eux pour eux-mêmes. Et comme nous l'avons vu avec certains économistes, qui préconisent d'autres approches des concepts ci-dessus cités, parce que les réalités (matérielle, sociale, politique, économique, spirituelle,

etc.) et les aspirations des peuples ne sont pas les mêmes, chaque culture a l'obligation de produire son imaginaire, son capital intellectuel et symbolique afin d'exister et de les léguer aux générations futures. Comment élaborer les fondements sur lesquels les sociétés africaines peuvent s'instituer, s'organiser ? Comment construire les projets de société qui permettent d'édifier une vision de l'homme africain et de définir les finalités de la vie sociale en Afrique ?

L'erreur de certains hommes politiques et de certains scientistes qui critiquent la philosophie, la sociologie, le droit, l'anthropologie, la littérature…, bref, tout ce qui relève des lettres, des sciences humaines et juridiques, c'est de ne pas accorder du crédit à ce travail de création de concepts mettant en évidence les essences des réalités africaines, de construction d'un imaginaire, d'une fiction ou d'une utopie préalable à toute société qui aspire à se réaliser. En quoi consiste cette utopie ? Ce terme dérive du grec *u-topos* signifiant le lieu de nulle part, le non-lieu. J.-G. Bidima (1995:105), s'inspirant de la thèse de Ernst Bloch, perçoit cette utopie comme étant essentiellement une insatisfaction et une faim. Cette faim vise un mieux-être en permettant l'auto-projection de soi dans le futur et se fonde sur les déterminations historiques du vécu des Africains. Des déterminations qui ne sont pas figées, rigides, ou, pour employer une expression paradoxale, des déterminations indéterminées. Pour être explicite

> Cette utopie ne dessine pas la destination qui introduirait un destin arrêtant le mouvement, mais montre que l'Afrique ne se résout pas dans l'immédiat, qu'il y a des possibilités et une espérance en gestation. Cette utopie n'est pas fuite dans un passé doré ni dans un futur illusoire, elle n'est ni le chemin ni la destination mais perpétuel cheminement. (1995:106)

Une utopie concrète conforme ou s'identifiant à la notion de *traversée* propre au lexique de J.-G. Bidima. La notion de traversée s'oppose au repli sur soi, récuse l'ipséité :

> En clair, dans la traversée, l'Afrique doit inaugurer culturellement une logique de l'accumulation (pas au sens capitaliste !) des expériences d'autres histoires qui viendront à leur manière féconder la sienne. Certaines catégories doivent donc retenir l'attention : *l'exode* (dénucléation de soi, mise à distance), *l'audace* (d'en finir avec une petite existence dont les lignes sont tracées d'avance), *le passage* (franchir la porte hors du ghetto culturel et politique qui se blottit au creux du passé dans une mémoire figée par l'échec), *l'espérance* (qui n'est ni idéalisation nostalgique, ni fuite en avant), et « *la surveillance intellectuelle de soi* » (qui fait de l'utopie le lieu permanent du renvoi au non-lieu de l'Être, de la communauté et du Sujet) (1995:107).

Dans leurs critiques du système éducatif de leurs pays, un système hérité de la colonisation, les hommes politiques refusent de comprendre que le colon a institué une école utile à ses intérêts, propre à la vision de la mission qu'il s'était assignée dans les colonies. Plus de 50 ans après les indépendances des États africains, l'organisation de leur système éducatif perpétue les mêmes tares : l'inertie du système éducatif, des orientations qui ne tiennent guère compte des choix des élèves et des étudiants, des filières limitées, le cloisonnement des élèves et des étudiants dans des séries, des formations non adaptées aux besoins du pays, etc. Les chômeurs du Burkina Faso en particulier et de l'Afrique en général ne sont pas tous des philosophes, des hommes de lettres ou des juristes ou des sociologues. Des ingénieurs hydrogéologues, en génie civil chôment dans les pays africains. Combien d'ingénieurs hydrogéologues ou de génie civil ont été formés à l'étranger par certains États africains qui, de retour au pays, se sont vus opposer un refus d'emploi dans l'administration publique et surtout dans le privé ? Combien de sociétés qui exploitent les mines d'or, de diamant ou toute autre richesse naturelle embauchent les ingénieurs locaux formés dans les mêmes écoles que leurs collègues expatriés employés par ces mêmes sociétés ? Que fait par exemple l'État burkinabé pour mettre fin à cette pratique discriminante sur son sol ? Des faits qui incitent à penser à cet humour dérangeant de J.-G. Bidima (1995:103) sur la propriété des sols en Afrique : « Le sol ? Les multinationales étrangères savent à qui il appartient. » Les sociétés extractives ne recrutent que la main-d'œuvre locale non qualifiée. Et que deviennent les ingénieurs formés à coups de millions avec l'argent du contribuable africain ? Ils sont plongeurs, vigiles, caissiers, dans les centres commerciaux en Europe. Ce fait, les responsables politiques le connaissent. Eux qui devraient être les forces aptes à conduire au changement n'ont donc ni la vision ni l'ambition. Ils sont des hommes politiques et non des hommes d'État.

Quelle peut être alors la contribution du philosophe en Afrique ? Prenons comme exemple l'approche de Issiaka-Prosper L. Lalèyê (2010: 69). Il invite à accepter le principe suivant :

> [Dans] la plupart des problèmes concrets que les Africains cherchent à résoudre pour eux-mêmes, pour leurs sociétés et même pour leur continent, l'utilité d'une pensée de type philosophique ne peut être qu'indirecte. Les autres formes de connaissance sont mieux outillées que la philosophie pour examiner et résoudre les problèmes relatifs aux besoins matériels de l'existence humaine.

Cette approche fait écho à celle de Heidegger (1988:48-49) dans le journal *Der Spiegel* qui s'exprimait en ces termes : « La philosophie ne pourra pas produire d'effet immédiat qui change l'état présent du monde. Cela ne vaut pas seulement pour la philosophie, mais pour tout ce qui n'est que préoccupations et aspirations du côté de l'homme. »

Quant aux autres besoins, par exemple les besoins intellectuels (le spirituel, le moral et le politique), d'autres types de savoirs ou de sciences les prennent en compte ou y répondent favorablement.

Issiaka-Prosper L. Lalèyê (2010:72-75) distingue trois tâches à assigner à la philosophie africaine. La première tâche est celle d'une « lecture compréhensive, interprétative et critique des réalités négro-africaines d'hier et d'aujourd'hui ». Lire les réalités négro-africaines revient à les reconnaître dans leur existence autonome afin de mettre au point les moyens nécessaires pour les reconnaître. Et le mot « réalités africaines » est à prendre dans son sens large, c'est-à-dire incluant les réalités sensibles, les croyances, les conduites et les comportements, etc. Dans le cadre de la présente analyse, nous étendons la notion de « réalités négro-africaines » à celle de « réalité africaine », c'est-à-dire un champ vaste et diversifié concernant toute l'Afrique. Le philosophe africain constatera alors que son regard n'est ni le premier ni le seul. Son rôle à lui est de mettre en évidence les significations philosophiques de ces réalités. Des réalités qui ne possèdent pas des significations uniques ou univoques. Le philosophe africain, à l'analyse des significations multiples de la réalité africaine, s'efforcera de retenir ce qui, dans ces différentes approches, est compatible avec la raison.

La seconde tâche consiste pour le philosophe africain à s'ouvrir aux autres Africains qui ne sont pas philosophes, à dialoguer avec ses concitoyens. Il doit éviter cette erreur de s'enfermer dans l'univers des philosophes ou simplement dans leur tour d'ivoire. Pour cela, l'urgence est de s'ouvrir aux autres Africains qui ne sont pas philosophes. Cette ouverture consiste à se faire comprendre des autres Africains qui ne sont pas philosophes, à être accessible à des non philosophes africains ou à être simplement ouvert à son environnement socioculturel. Elle consiste aussi à chercher à comprendre les idées, les pensées, les réflexions des autres Africains qui ne sont pas philosophes, des spécialistes d'autres secteurs de la réalité africaine. Produire des idées ou mettre en évidence des significations philosophiques des réalités africaines accessibles à tous, échanger avec ceux qui ne sont pas philosophes, permet de co-agir. Il y a une obligation de s'ouvrir aux autres spécialistes qui se penchent sur les réalités africaines et d'entretenir un dialogue avec eux. Cette synergie d'action peut permettre une réappropriation des réalités africaines par les Africains d'aujourd'hui.

La troisième tâche consiste, en partant de cette compréhension de ces réalités négro-africaines, à dire que le philosophe africain doit s'évertuer à les ouvrir aux autres hommes. Il ne faut pas s'isoler dans son africanité (par exemple dans sa négritude). Précisons que ces réalités négro-africaines sont fondamentalement humaines. Ainsi, les autres hommes peuvent les

connaître, les comprendre et éventuellement les adopter pour s'en servir. Aussi le philosophe africain tout pétri des réalités propres de son milieu peut-il s'ouvrir aux autres réalités humaines afin de les connaître, de les examiner et peut-être aussi, de les adopter. En d'autres termes, le philosophe africain doit enraciner ses réflexions dans la raison. Et cet enracinement dans la raison est le seul fondement de l'universalité proclamée de la philosophie.

Le rôle du philosophe africain dans ce contexte de mondialisation de la culture occidentale est d'abord de faire prendre conscience à l'opinion et aux leaders ou élites des pays africains de cette volonté hégémonique occidentale, constatable dans ce vocable de mondialisation. Ensuite, inviter à la déconstruction systématique de tout ce qui se présente comme valeurs culturelles, sociales, économiques, politiques universelles. Enfin, procéder, en ce qui concerne spécifiquement le philosophe, à un travail de construction d'une u-topie pour le futur des Africains, comme l'avaient déjà suggéré F. Sarr et J.-G. Bidima. Une u-topie partant des spécificités intrinsèques à la tradition, à la culture, à la vision du monde des Africains et voulant prendre part à la noble aventure de la construction d'une société ouverte. Le philosophe africain d'aujourd'hui est contraint à ce travail de déconstruction, c'est-à-dire de destruction et de construction, au sens derridien du terme.

Cette déconstruction dans le sens de la destruction, sans gêne, doit porter sur toutes ces notions ou vocables propres à l'épistémè ou aux mythes de l'Occident, véhiculés sous couvert des savoirs dits universels. C'est ce que le philosophe africain Valentin Yves Mudimbé désigne sous l'expression de *bibliothèque coloniale*. Une telle destruction vise à libérer le discours africain, à faire de celui-ci un récit autonome, s'élaborant à partir de ses propres préoccupations ou enjeux. L'œuvre de construction commence ainsi. Une construction qui, de l'avis de certains philosophes africains comme Kwasi Wiredu, Valentin Yves Mudimbé, doit porter sur leur destin, leur futur en s'instituant en discours scientifique issu du contexte africain. Les langues africaines constituent le véhicule indispensable de cette construction.

À notre sens, cette plongée dans la réalité africaine peut passer par la constitution d'équipes pluridisciplinaires sous la direction des philosophes pour aller régulièrement échanger avec les populations dans leurs langues. Ces échanges peuvent permettre de découvrir leurs valeurs et de leur faire comprendre les exigences de nos sociétés ouvertes sur d'autres valeurs. Des échanges impliquant tous les lettrés ou non, les élèves et étudiants, les enseignants du primaire, du secondaire et tous les fonctionnaires en général. Des échanges inclusifs dans la langue de la localité afin d'impliquer le maximum de personnes pour permettre le débat contradictoire : on apprendra forcément les uns des autres. Ainsi, les philosophes et toute

l'équipe pluridisciplinaire peuvent appréhender toute l'ampleur des dimensions culturelles à inclure dans les perspectives de ce que l'on peut qualifier de développement en Afrique. Il s'agit simplement de ne pas séparer les élites des peuples africains, et d'inscrire toutes les initiatives du continent dans cet être ensemble, cet entreprendre ensemble.

Pour nous, le rôle d'éducateur ou de pédagogue du philosophe est à assumer pleinement. Comment œuvrer à réaliser une culture politique dans le but d'instaurer réellement la démocratie ? Comment la quête et la réalisation de l'exigence démocratique en Afrique peuvent-elles être caractérisées par des dispositions spirituelles et morales ? I.-P. L. Lalèyê (2010:71), partant de ces exigences auxquelles l'Afrique doit répondre, arrive à la conclusion suivante :

> C'est pourquoi une réflexion, des analyses et un traitement de type philosophique sont plus que jamais nécessaires. C'est pourquoi aussi une telle réflexion peut s'avérer plus nécessaire et plus urgente que toutes les autres formes de pensée pour un continent comme l'Afrique. Car, au fur et à mesure que s'aggravent les conséquences inhumaines de ces savoirs objectifs très performants mais déconnectés d'une spiritualité, d'une morale et d'une politique humainement acceptables, une pensée de type philosophique devient non seulement nécessaire, mais urgente.

Par ailleurs, le philosophe doit inciter à l'acceptation de la pluralité des opinions (y compris celles qui s'opposent à ses pensées) et combattre les partis politiques claniques ou ethniques et non idéologiques, éduquer aux votes non claniques ou ethniques, etc. Il doit jouer pleinement son rôle d'élite en œuvrant à l'éveil des consciences africaines afin d'instaurer une véritable révolution des mentalités. Seule cette révolution peut participer au développement endogène tant espéré par les Africains eux-mêmes et développer davantage l'appartenance à la nation, plutôt que la revendication de sa filiation ethnique ou tribale.

De nos jours, notre continent se caractérise par une démographie galopante, une explosion du phénomène de migrations internes et externes, un dynamisme culturel et une vitalité religieuse quasi agressifs… toutes ces mutations doivent être analysées. Qu'est-ce qu'il faut faire aujourd'hui pour construire le lien social ou instaurer le vivre ensemble ? Qu'est-ce qui peut garantir et légitimer la régénération de ce lien social ? Les Constitutions des différents États africains, rédigées dans les langues étrangères à la population et inspirées par les philosophes du contrat de l'Occident, suffisent-elles à garantir et légitimer ce lien social jusqu'à constituer des nations ? Comment lutter contre le terrorisme qui s'empare de la plupart des États de l'Afrique ? Juguler le terrorisme suppose la mise en œuvre de

plusieurs moyens d'ordre militaire, économique, politique, sociologique, philosophique, etc. Comment déconstruire l'endoctrinement des jeunes appelés au Djihad ? La force du terrorisme réside dans l'idéologie islamiste véhiculée et qui prétend répondre aux préoccupations et aux aspirations de certains jeunes, de certaines femmes et de certains hommes. L'idéologie islamique est une des réponses au vide de pensée, d'idée ou de projet des hommes politiques. Combattre une telle idéologie, c'est surtout et avant tout un travail anthropologique, sociologique, philosophique, psychologique avant d'être un travail militaire. La guerre s'en prend au terrorisme dès lors qu'il se manifeste, devient une réalité violente, meurtrière, alors que les disciplines citées portent non seulement sur les causes, mais aussi sur les effets ou les conséquences. Le défi de l'émergence économique, sociale, politique suppose la construction d'un consensus national. Ce consensus doit être bâti en adoptant des valeurs communes conformes aux exigences de l'émergence et en se dotant d'institutions susceptibles de garantir la bonne gouvernance. Des pays émergents comme la Malaisie ont adopté une vision nationale claire exprimée par ce slogan : « Atteindre le niveau de vie des USA en 2020 ». Taïwan mobilise toute la nation autour de cette vision cardinale : « Être aussi puissant que la Chine continentale ». En somme, des efforts sont déployés pour que chaque citoyen s'approprie la vision de son pays, prenne conscience des enjeux dans le but de donner un sens à l'action collective. Comment emporter cette adhésion collective sans l'apport d'une pensée de type philosophique, littéraire, historique, etc. ?

L'homme politique africain ne semble pas être conscient de la nécessité de telles entreprises. Peut-être que les philosophes, les hommes de culture, de lettres ne l'ont pas assez instruit sur l'urgence de *l'appréhension de soi par soi,* de la *connaissance de soi par soi,* préalable à toute initiative visant le futur de l'Africain. L'action de l'homme politique africain doit commencer par cette incitation des hommes de culture et de savoir à s'adonner à cette tâche fondatrice des autres, c'est-à-dire produire une épistémologie africaine. À défaut de comprendre le bien-fondé, de percevoir l'urgence, qu'il s'abstienne de dire quoi que ce soit : la prudence commune conseille de s'abstenir de parler quand on ne sait pas.

Conclusion

Créer des conditions d'énonciation de la philosophie, ou toute autre activité permettant de susciter et de réaliser cette fiction ou cet imaginaire, tel devrait être le rôle des hommes d'État en Afrique. Sans ce sens élevé de leur responsabilité, sans cette vision prospective sur le futur du continent, ils se muent en hommes politiques cherchant à être à la hauteur de leurs opinions,

c'est-à-dire à verser dans le populisme le plus primaire. Ce populisme, teinté de scientisme sans que ceux qui le portent en soient forcément conscients, s'appuie sur la réussite fulgurante des sciences expérimentales telles que la biologie, la physique pour conclure à l'inutilité de la philosophie, des Lettres, des Sciences humaines et sociales comme disciplines scolaires et/ou universitaires. Pourtant, celles-ci ne doivent pas être enfermées dans l'enceinte des structures scolaires et universitaires. En effet, elles s'intègrent à la vie africaine actuelle, c'est-à-dire dans tous les pans ou les moindres replis de l'existence de l'Africain. La philosophie en Afrique s'entend comme cet effort de réflexion pour mettre en évidence les séquences de rationalité dans tout ce que le philosophe aborde. Elle doit continuer à faire ce qu'elle a toujours fait dans son histoire : construire des concepts nouveaux qui permettent de déchiffrer le réel. Dans ce sens, la philosophie est plutôt un élan qu'une retombée, une dynamique qu'un résultat. Si la philosophie est un élan, comme le dit Issiaka-Prosper L. Laléyê, nous dirions que peu importe son origine et sa nature, elle doit œuvrer à sortir du cadre de l'école et de l'université pour participer à la vie intellectuelle de l'Afrique actuelle et s'attaquer aux problèmes réels qui préoccupent les Africains ici et maintenant.

L'urgence qui revient aux différentes disciplines est de construire l'estime de soi de l'Africain, qui vit dans un monde mondialisé par la culture occidentale et dans lequel celui-ci est appelé à consommer les productions philosophiques, littéraires, économiques, scientifiques véhiculées par les concepts et notions de l'Occident. Un discours littéraire, philosophique et même scientifique doit être en rapport ou être l'émanation de la vie matérielle, spirituelle, morale, psychologique de son contexte de production. Des concepts comme ceux du développement, du progrès, de l'émergence doivent être appréhendés en partant des particularités du contexte africain tout en s'ouvrant aux approches des autres nations et des organismes internationaux. En effet, il faut partager le constat de Ki-Zerbo (2007:142-143) selon lequel « le concept de développement est aujourd'hui en voie de sous-développement des autres. Le concept alors bégaie parce qu'il n'appréhende pas correctement la réalité objective. »

Notes

1. Roch Marc Christian Kaboré, président du Faso, au cours d'une émission intitulée « Dialogue citoyen » sur la télévision nationale du Burkina, le 26 avril 2016, faisait le bilan de sa première année au pouvoir. Ces propos appellent de notre part quelques commentaires. Pour ce qui concerne les étudiants formés en philosophie, ils sont peu à être au chômage. L'enseignement de la philosophie au Burkina Faso, qui était ouvert aux sociologues et aux psychologues, s'est vu

ces dernières années non autorisé par le ministère de tutelle aux sociologues. Par conséquent, l'offre d'enseignement correspond à la demande. La multiplication du nombre de lycées, un lycée par commune, accroît le besoin d'enseignants en philosophie. À cela il faut ajouter cette avancée notable réalisée sous le régime Compaoré, l'acceptation par le ministère de l'Enseignement secondaire, supérieur et de la Recherche scientifique de l'introduction de l'enseignement-apprentissage de la philosophie dans les classes de seconde de l'enseignement secondaire général à la rentrée 2011-2012, ce qui vient compléter l'enseignement de cette discipline dans tout le cycle du secondaire, c'est-à-dire de la seconde à la terminale. Notre pays est-il en train de régresser dans sa volonté de participer à la formation de l'esprit critique des jeunes ? Une allocution tenue lors de la première édition de l'Université d'hivernage des élèves et étudiants du parti politique MPP (Mouvement du peuple pour le progrès) du 12 au 15 août 2016 à Dindérèsso dans la province du Houet (Burkina Faso).

2. Une allocution tenue lors de la première édition de l'Université d'hivernage des élèves et étudiants du parti politique MPP (Mouvement du peuple pour le progrès) du 12 au 15 août 2016 à Dindérèsso dans la province du Houet (Burkina Faso). Cette interpellation suscite plusieurs interrogations : la poésie est-elle différente de la littérature ? La littérature et la philosophie ont-elles pour finalité unique *d'encadrer nos vies* ? Les médecins et les techniciens sont-ils des hommes dépourvus de lettres et de philosophie ? Sont-ils sans lien avec la littérature et la philosophie ?
3. Joseph Stiglitz (né en 1943) est un économiste américain qui a obtenu le prix Nobel d'économie en 2001. Principaux ouvrages en français : *La Grande Désillusion* (2002), *Un autre monde. Contre le fanatisme du marché* (2006).
4. Les objectifs du millénaire pour le développement constituent la résolution 55/2 de l'Assemblée générale des Nations unies adoptée le 8 septembre 2000. Intitulés « Déclaration du Millénaire », les OMD contiennent huit objectifs à atteindre à l'horizon 2015.
5. Amartya Sen (né en 1933) est un économiste indien. Il a obtenu le prix Nobel d'économie en 1998. Principaux ouvrages en français *: Éthique et économie* (1993), *L'économie est une science morale* (1999).
6. Nous savons que nos responsables politiques sont plus riches que l'État. Cette situation se justifie par le partage très inégalitaire des richesses, l'accaparement des fruits de la croissance par des systèmes de redistribution de ces fruits entre élites politiques et administratives au détriment du reste des citoyens.
7. Le mot riche ne se mesure pas dans ce contexte en prenant en compte le produit intérieur brut ou l'indice de développement durable. La richesse renvoie aux ressources naturelles, aux potentialités qu'offrent ces ressources à certains pays africains (l'Angola, Guinée Equatoriale, etc.).

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Weakened States and Market Giants: Neoliberalism and Democracy in Niger and West Bengal

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Abstract

This article argues that the contemporaneous phenomana of the 'third wave of democratisations' and the 'second wave of liberalisations' – or neoliberalism as it were – has disrupted the promise of democracy in the Global South. While the mainstream literature considers that democracy and the promotion of open market economies are mutually reinforcing, I claim that they in fact clash around the roles of the state, which both democracy and neoliberalism seek to reform, but in opposite directions. Democracy requires a broadened and responsive state system, mediating between social classes, while neoliberal reform typically shrinks the state system and shapes it to the preferences of elite classes. In this article, this thesis is explored in historical and comparative ways. I build an analytical framework through a comparison between the Bolivian National Revolution of 1952 and the democratic reforms undertaken under Evo Morales. Using this tool, I compare the fraught relations of Niger with French nuclear giant Areva and those of West Bengal with Indian industrial giant Tata. These comparisons, developed following descriptions of historical backgrounds, show why the vexed issue of the reform of the state should constitute a central research agenda if we are to grasp the fundamental conditions of the prospects of democracy in the Global South today.

Résumé

Cet article affirme que la coïncidence de la « troisième vague de démocratisations » avec la « deuxième vague de libéralisations » – néolibéralisme – a bouleversé les promesses de démocratie dans les pays du Sud. Alors que la littérature traditionnelle considère que la démocratie et la promotion d'économies de marchés ouverts se renforcent mutuellement, nous pensons qu'en réalité, elles s'affrontent sur les rôles de l'État, que la

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démocratie et le néolibéralisme tentent de réformer, mais dans des directions opposées. La démocratie nécessite un système étatique élargi et réactif, assurant la médiation entre les classes sociales, tandis que, généralement, la réforme néolibérale rétrécit le système étatique et le façonne selon les préférences des classes élitistes. Dans cet article, cette thèse est explorée de manière historique et comparative. Nous construisons un cadre analytique en comparant la révolution nationale bolivienne de 1952 aux réformes démocratiques entreprises sous Evo Morales. Utilisant cet outil, nous comparons les difficiles relations du Niger avec le géant nucléaire français, Areva, et celles du Bengale occidental avec le géant industriel indien Tata. Ces comparaisons, développées à la suite de descriptions de contextes historiques, justifient la constitution d'un programme central de recherche sur l'épineuse question de la réforme de l'État si nous voulons saisir les conditions fondamentales des perspectives de la démocratie dans les pays du Sud.

Introduction

The 'third wave of democratisation' coincided with a 'second wave' of economic liberalism. The story of the democracy 'waves' – as detailed by Huntington (1991) – shows the first one surging from the American suffrage extensions of the early nineteenth century and ebbing with the advent of fascism in Europe in the 1920s. Allied victory led to a second, 20-year-long wave, which includes India (the 'second wave' democracy case in this study); and a third wave took momentum after Portugal's 'carnation revolution' of 1974, extending to countries in Latin America, Asia, Eastern Europe and finally Africa, up to the mid-1990s. This story accounts for the fact that, starting somewhere in the mid-1970s, political conditions gradually changed or shifted in many parts of the world in favour of some form of political liberalisation, mostly taking the shape of a revival of representative democracy. In the Global South particularly – in Asia, Latin America and Africa – this was to a decisive extent the result of the fact that authoritarian models of state-led development were failing on many scores. Where the economic engine of the model performed more satisfactorily, the authoritarian nature of state leadership created serious problems.[1] In the more numerous cases where economic performance was dismal, the political oppressions of authoritarianism added to economic misery. Whichever the case, increasing numbers of people saw authoritarianism, or more specifically, the lack of political participation, as the root cause of the problem. A democratic reform of the state appeared to be the solution in places as different as Bolivia and Niger – two of the three cases studied in this article.

At roughly the same time, as noted above, a wave of liberal economic reforms trickled out of institutions in Washington DC in the late 1970s, quickly gathering sufficient thrust to sweep through most countries in the Global South by the mid-1990s. Historically, an earlier age of liberalism had ruled the economy in many countries from the mid-1850s to the Great Depression[2] and the newer one was accordingly named 'neoliberalism'. The proponents of this neoliberal reform diagnosed that there was a fatal problem with the authoritarian model of state-led development that was then hegemonic in the Global South. But while advocates of democratic reform targeted the *authoritarian* part of the proposition, neoliberal reforms focused instead on its *state-led* segment.

It therefore so happened that, by the early 1980s, two reform agendas emerged in the Global South: one which was broadly based on domestic movements, and sought a democratic reform of the state, demanding the end of authoritarianism together with increased political participation in the 'state system' (see below); and the other which largely came from the outside and pushed for neoliberal reform of the state, insisting on an end of its stewardship of development and on a free rein for 'market forces'.

So, while the target of the two reform agendas was the same – the state – their objectives were very different and even, to some significant extent, incompatible. They were, at any rate, in competition, and the success of the one would scuttle the progress of the other.[3] Democratic and neoliberal reforms did not – and still do not – have compatible goals regarding the role of the state. The empirical record shows that the two reform agendas were not originally promoted by the same actors, nor did they rest on the same vision of the role of the state, much to the contrary. For the democracy promoters, key implications include the winding down of the state's repressive capacities and the preservation of its 'developmental' ones – meaning that the state was to remain a political engine capable of transforming the structure of the economy through direct involvement of its specific powers; for the promoters of neoliberalism, on the other hand, the imperative was for the state to create the conditions for market expansion, a mission which may well entail an overhaul of its repressive apparatus, at least at some early stage. To better clarify the significance of these and related implications, a brief theoretical analysis is in order.

Here, I draw especially on aspects of neo-Marxist perspectives on the state as developed by Ralph Milliband (2009 [1969]) as well as on the brief synthesis later provided by Robert Solo (1978). I am principally interested in their view of the state as a *system of power* made of several 'functional elements' that are operated firstly to create – through a degree of autonomy – a state of

equilibrium among social classes, but ultimately to further the overarching interests of the dominant class(es). In the case of Milliband, such functional elements include government, but also 'the civil service, the complex of public agencies, the military, the judiciary, and the police' (summarised by Solo 1978: 832). Such a concept of the state as a system of power has – for my purposes – at least two important dimensions: first, it prevents us from understanding state power as limited to itself and situated above all other forms of power intervening in the polity; and second, and more importantly, it is also helpful in evaluating the *magnitude of state power*, and the fine grain of the changes that can be made to increase or decrease that magnitude in relation to a set of objectives – such as happened in the interlocking courses of democratic and neoliberal reforms in the Global South.

Combined with a comparative synopsis of two major experiences of democratic reform in Bolivia – the National Revolution of 1952 and the current, Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS) attempt – this understanding of neo-Marxist theories of the state will be used to develop a conceptual framework on state reform agendas. The key elements of the framework will then be applied to an analysis of two case studies from Niger and the Indian states of West Bengal and Gujarat. So the comparison is chiefly between Niger and India, with Bolivia supplying only an exemplary story for building the theoretical fodder used in the case studies. Why Niger and India? The empirical challenge for this study was to find cases that are different in terms of geographic location, yet similar in terms of political system and reform policy. The difference of geographic location is a proxy for the more substantial – as far as the objectives of the study are concerned – difference of historical process and its implications for our times, which is why the South-South Research Consortium that funded the research project behind this article suggested that authors should compare cases across, rather than within, the three Southern continents. On the other hand, the significance of my study derives also from a comparison between democratic and neoliberal reform. This means that the selected cases should both have undergone such reforms in one way or another. Not many countries in Asia correspond to this description: either countries have known democratic but no neoliberal reform (South Korea, Taiwan), or they have known neither democratic nor neoliberal reform (most of South Asia). India was the only clear case in the circumstance, but its processes being of a complexity that evidently defies the parameters of a comparison with Niger, I have found more useful to break them down into an internal comparative case study focusing on West Bengal and Gujarat. Niger was chosen precisely for the apparent simplicity and linearity of its trajectory, which make for an economical examination of the issues at hand.

Bolivian Lessons: Towards a Conceptual Framework

In 2006, Bolivians started, under President Morales, a radical democratic reform of their politics. A new constitution adopted in 2009 reinvented the country as a 'plurinational state'.[4] To this ostensibly 'post-liberal-democracy'[5] evolution, MAS appended an ambitious National Development Plan grounded in the uplifting principles of Dignity, Sovereignty, Productivity and a Democracy of Living Well. The constitution and the plan organise a full *political* and *economic* framework with which to reform the Bolivian state in the name of democracy, and against the neoliberal reform that had been in force since the early 1980s. Vice-President García Linera (2006; García Linera and Ortega Breña 2010) provided – and continues to provide – sophisticated and influential analyses of the process, while on 1 May 2011, Morales signed a presidential decree intended to 'bury' the one from 1985 which had launched neoliberal reform.

Although these moves and measures ostensibly intend to overturn the neoliberal reform of the state of the past three decades, many serious analyses suggest that they have in fact simply 'reconstituted' (in the words of Jeffery Webber (2011)) the neoliberal state. The brief version of the story could run thus: by the late 1990s to early 2000s, the failure of neoliberalism to solve Bolivia's social and economic predicament had become so endemic that the country was once more in a state of prolonged crisis. Especially the privatisation of hydrocarbons had shorn the state of revenue, and in the early 2000s, it found itself unable to stave off the calamitous consequences of – among other things – coca eradication and the Argentinian economic collapse (Kohl and Farthing 2009; Farthing 2010). Escalating crises and social conflicts destroyed the presidency of Sánchez de Lozada and led to a referendum on the nationalisation of hydrocarbons in July 2004. The referendum sought (in the words of President Carlos Mesa) a 'relegitimisation'[6] of the state through reviving some of the policy orientations that obtained before neoliberalism. However, only MAS garnered the political power base needed to implement its key outcome, the nationalisation of hydrocarbons. Yet, after this was done the constraints created by the preceding neoliberal politico-economic regime effectively led MAS to conduct what Kaup terms a 'neoliberal nationalization': 'While it technically returned physical control of Bolivia's natural gas to the state, the space opened up for private investment in the hydrocarbon sector in the 1980s and 1990s still exists. Transnational firms still extract the majority of Bolivia's natural gas, and most of it is still sent to more profitable export markets' (Kaup 2010: 135). (I.e., instead of supporting the industrialisation agenda the referendum propounded.)

As has been pointed out by various critics, this turn of events seems to generally characterise MAS efforts at democratic reform. James Petras (2013) thus stresses that MAS has consistently stuck to largely orthodox economic policies. Social spending, public investment, pay raises for public sector workers all remain at very modest levels, while banks and businesses have been benefiting from the embrace of low taxes, stable currency and government blandishments – up to and including resisting strikes and labour pressures. The government holds on to foreign reserves earned through the export of boom-time commodities and increased royalties, a policy that better serves the purpose of luring foreign investors with the possibility of accessing hard currencies than that of investing in the internal economy. In the same vein, infrastructure spending has been chiefly aimed at facilitating transport of agro-mineral exports, a constant of Bolivia's various historical eras of liberal ascendancy. A similar orthodoxy-abidance is clearly noticeable in MAS's investment and labour policies, to the extent that, as a conclusion to his indictment, Petras labelled Morales a 'radical conservative' (2013), i.e., someone who cloaks conservative policies with radical affirmations. If using more moderate language, similar criticism has been levelled by various authors (Cunha Filio, Gonçalves and Dalla Déa 2010; Regalsky and Ortega Breña 2010; Webber 2011), with Webber mounting a solid case of Morales' governance as 'reconstituted neoliberalism'.

Maybe such assessments are too severe. Given MAS's clear thrust toward democratic reform, they may simply reveal that this agenda is being stemmed by the sturdier legacies of neoliberalism. It is useful, in this light, to contrast MAS's relative failures (for now) with the outcome of Bolivia's first effort at democratic reform, the National Revolution of 1952, which did succeed in transforming Bolivia's society while creating a new state, famously known as the *Estado del '52* ('the state of '52').[7] A brief comparison between democratic reform then and now may begin to put us on the track of understanding the nature of the limitations of MAS's attempt at offering to present-day Bolivians the fresh start they received from the *Estado del '52*.

The events leading up to the arrival of MAS and of the Movimiento Nacionalisto Revolucionario (MNR) to power respectively in 2004 and in 1952 were both marked by a structural crisis of the economy and violent conflict at the societal level. In particular, the novelty in 1952 was the rapid politicisation of labour (workers and peasants) as a result of the collapse of the elite order, after the Great Depression destabilised tin capitalism, and the Chaco War debilitated the military. In a clear sense, it was oligarchy (the tin barons and the so-called *rosca* state that served them) and autocracy (military leaders) giving way, for the first time in Bolivia's already long independent history, to democracy (workers, peasants and nationalist leaders). From an

analytical point of view, what happened was the convergence of a certain kind of political will from the top – that is, within the MNR leadership – and of a certain kind of popular agency from below, agreeing on a political programme of democratic reform (universal vote, nationalisation of mines and agrarian reform) and using certain transformative institutions (the Corporación Minera de Bolivia (COMIBOL), the Ministerio de Asuntos Campesinos and the Central Obrera Boliviana (COB) to execute the programme. These institutions were meeting-ground organisations, in the sense that they created a space of close collaboration between state agents and labour representatives.[8] All four elements – political will, popular agency, agreed-upon reform programme and meeting-ground institutions – had been necessary and sufficient to the initial success of the revolution, that is, the reform of the state so that it became capable of large-scale nationalisation of mines, wide-ranging land distribution and, more generally, efficient stewardship of the welfare of the larger population.[9] This process in turn put an end to the cycle of Bolivian history that started when the gradual rise of mining capitalism – going back to the presidency of Linares, 1857–61 – made Bolivia a poster child of classical-liberal economic governance.

Ideological divergences and pressures from its enemy within and without compromised the revolution before it set Bolivia on a definitive course.[10] The arrival of neoliberalism in the 1980s was, to a significant extent, a literal reversal of history: economic liberalism – recognisable under a new garb – was reasserting its pre-eminence against what was clearly its antagonist – democracy.

In these changed conditions, by the early 2000s, Bolivia was again in a state of crisis strongly reminiscent of the one which preceded the National Revolution. The new oligarchy proved even more brittle than the older *rosca*-supported one, and the piling up of social catastrophes traceable directly to neoliberal-inspired policies triggered a collapse in state legitimacy marked by unprecedented violence.[11] Similar also to the period leading up to 1952, there was a new type of popular mobilisation brewing in the country, in this case, that of politicised indigenous and mestizos groups. Thus, in general, the story of MAS's rise to power shows the presence of at least three of the four key elements detected as crucial for the success of reform in that of the MNR: political will from above, popular agency from below, and agreement around a programme of democratic reform.

This did not take shape without often tense – and occasionally murderous – conflicts, but as a final element, the MAS process added a 'transformative constitution' (Sunstein 2001) rather than the transformative *institutions* that were a hallmark of the MNR reforms. This particular fact is key. It shows that the reform undertaken by MAS is not directly aimed at the state.

The constitution establishes new legal norms for the relations of state and society, but although it can legislate the action of state power, it does not organise new functional elements (such as COMIBOL or the Ministry of Peasant Affairs in 1952) that would transform the magnitude of state power in support of a new class equilibrium, or in the service of a new dominant class.[12] It must be noted on this latter score that if reforming the state means, in this framework, building new organisations and getting them to work according to plans, neoliberal reform has been a simpler species of reform of the state: it has mainly consisted in removing, rather than building organisations. Overturning this process against the constraints – in state capacities especially – that it has created is the defining challenge of a democratic reform of the state *after* neoliberalism.

Equipped with these lessons, I now turn to the case studies, and, in the conflictual situations that are presented, I will discuss especially whether *or not* elements of political will, popular agency, a reform programme and transformative institutions tend to come into play, why, and with what implications for potential democratic reform.

The two case studies are about relations of states with market giants – Niger and Areva NC, West Bengal/Gujarat and Tata Motors – but my interest is not focused on the details of these relations. The cases have been selected on the basis of the light that they may shed especially on the power of the state following neoliberal reform, and given the peculiar social conditions in which they develop. In both cases, the four elements of the conceptual framework described above will be tested against the specific contextual elements of the case, and a short assessment will be drawn. Following this, I draw a brief conclusion on the meaning of the study for the issue of democratic reform in the Global South.

Niger: Rekindling the Social Contract

The Nigerien state was 'restructured' by neoliberal reform in the period 1982–98. Independent from France in 1960, the state saw prevailing revenue sources dry up in the early 1970s, when the great Sahel drought reduced the country's agriculture to a shambles and tropical commodities, such as groundnuts, Niger's primary export, lost much of their market value. But Niger's subsoil held large amounts of high quality uranium ore that had come online in 1968, and there was a mounting global trend in uranium consumption – significantly energised mid-decade by the oil shocks – which brightened the state's prospects, especially after 1974. In April of that year, military men had toppled the single party regime of the Parti Progressiste Nigérien (PPN), in the wake of rural famine and the general economic crisis that was

gripping the country. The windfall of uranium revenue led to ambitious plans of creating a 'société de développement' ('development society') one which would be based on defeating the spectre of hunger, transforming agriculture and improving education and health. Though authoritarian, the regime envisaged this development society to take shape through a gradual democratic reform of the state.[13] In the meantime, it drastically increased the rate of public investment, which grew to 27 per cent of GDP and spawned several new public enterprises, rural development projects and infrastructure overhaul agendas. Much of the new investment also went into infrastructure for mining, and the regime created an expert-led organisation, the Office National des Ressources Minières (ONAREM) to both prospect the territory and oversee the state's interests in existing operations (such as the French-led exploitation of uranium in the desert north).

Time was not on the side of the Nigerien state, however. While it took advantage of the easy international lending period of the late 1970s, guaranteed by its uranium revenue, the latter rapidly plummeted by the end of the decade. Soon, Niger found itself saddled with enormous debt, shorn of the best part of its revenue, and managing a large expenditure programme in agricultural development and social policy. A soul-searching 'national debate' on the agricultural sector organised in 1982 took stock of the unsustainability of development plans, and the government approached the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for financial relief. By the end of decade, public investment had been reduced to around 9 per cent of GDP.

The impact of neoliberal reform can also be measured in the evolution of the structure of GDP. In the first two decades of independence (1960–80), the growth input of the primary and tertiary sectors (the latter, largely dominated by the so-called informal economy, and more generally controlled by unproductive commercial capital) went down from a combined 82 per cent of GDP in 1960 to 42 per cent (primary sector) and 35 per cent (tertiary sector) 20 years later, with much of the de-growth occurring in the period 1975–81. Meanwhile, the secondary sector had grown to 23 per cent. If it had been possible to sustain this trend at a regular pace, Niger would have joined the ranks of so-called transitional economies by the early 2000s. As a result of the end of public investment, the primary and tertiary sector – and their insignificant wealth creation capacities – have gone up again while the secondary sector now fluctuates at around 4 to 5 per cent of GDP.

The stunted evolution has also put the Nigerien social contract in disarray. In the early independence period (1960–74), the elite class of the *commis*[14] had taken over a state that was supported by the peasantry through commercial agriculture and taxation. The *commis* legitimised their rule through the development agenda, to be achieved through their mastery

of modern science. By ruining agriculture – and literally decimating the peasantry – the great drought-cum-famine of the early 1970s seemed to upend the elite class's legitimacy and in any case put an end to the social contract of the country's First Republic (as the PPN's rule is formally known in Niger). Uranium, however, provided the basis for a successor social contract, whereby the specific distinction of the elite class (the mastery of modern science) was still serving the state, but for the more wholesome benefit of a now unexploited peasantry. The thinking[15] was that since drought and famine had shown that the peasantry could not contribute to development (let alone support the state) until agriculture had been radically transformed through higher productivity, the proceeds of uranium should be used to effect that transformation. After the debt crisis nipped this plan in the bud, structural adjustment did not propose an alternative solution. It destroyed the position of the elite class, both materially (layoffs following restructuration of state services) and symbolically (it was no longer in control of the development project that, despite its failings, still legitimised its leadership). When Niger democratised in 1991, the country no longer had a working social contract – that is, a specific relation of accountability between the ruling class and those being ruled. This was an inauspicious introduction to democratic reform.

The economic policy of neoliberal reform in this case was externally enforced austerity.[16] It would be properly described as a method of creating an acceptance of the reality of 'under-development': lacking the financial capacities for jumpstarting a process of economic transformation, the state simply had to be cut down to size and let things follow their 'natural' market-led course. The entire apparatus set in place to engineer the transformation of agriculture was thus gradually scaled down and phased out. By 1991–92, its two pillars, the agricultural credit institution Caisse Nationale de Crédit Agricole and the national development bank were both gone, which led to the rapid collapse of the cooperative system put in place in the early 1960s to create a policy space for the state in the rural areas.

Parallel to this process, budget cuts starving the country's sole university of credits had led to student unrest.[17] After an incident in February 1990 that caused three deaths among students, the regime became reluctant to use repression, folded and gave way to a democratisation process (Summer 1991) led by the leaders of burgeoning political movements, unions and student organisations. The objective was vocally that of democratic reform directed against structural adjustment. A slogan then popular on the streets of Niamey (Niger's capital) was the alliterative French-language phrase 'Le PAS ne passera pas'.[18] At this juncture, there were elements of political will and popular agency at work, but the latter, only faintly. The driving

actors of the democratic reform movement belonged to the elite class of the country, and this shows that political will was distinctly more important than popular agency. And while democratisation initially put a break on structural adjustment, the endemic fiscal crisis led the new leaders of the state of Niger to relent by 1995 and to accept further retrenchment, especially since international aid – which, after the fall of uranium, had become the principal source of revenue – grew increasingly tied to agreements with the IMF and the World Bank, the two armed hands of neoliberal reform.

While in theory, these institutions only advocated economic liberalisation, in practice they insisted on a radical makeover of the state system. By the late 1990s, this was effectively achieved. In 1999, when the first government of the fully 'neoliberalised' state of Niger – the government of President Mamadou Tandja, 1999–2009[19] – took office, the state of Niger had a thinner system, limited to government apparatus, basic administration and defence and security. Such a system essentially removed it from society and erased the complexes of organisations which used to determine responsiveness and policy formulation and implementation in the past. To ensure a modicum of governance, decentralisation was adopted in 1998: local communities could elect their own home governments, which could collect smaller taxes than national policy would have demanded. Though dramatically substandard, local government is cheaper, and is something Niger's indigenous peasants could afford.

Hence, the Nigerien leader who got himself voted as the head of the state after 1998 was no longer heading the same state as those in the previous era. In particular, he would have at his disposal far fewer tools and apparatuses for developing and conducting policy. Since the state system is a unit, changes in some component parts affect the entire functioning of the unit. Thus, not all state organisations were eliminated by neoliberal reform, but their overall policy impact was modified and, in general, reduced by the disappearance of suppressed entities.[20]

In the mining sector, the above-mentioned ONAREM existed until 2007, when it was divided into two distinct entities, one in charge of its duty of overseeing the mining interests of the state (the Société du Patrimoine des Mines du Niger, SOPAMIN) and the other succeeding to its prospection mission (the Centre pour l'Exploration Géologique et Minière, CRGM). SOPAMIN and CRGM, together with a mining code adopted in 2006, underline the continued hopes which the state of Niger invests in mining as the primary source of public funds. But as we have seen, this reliance dates back to 1974 and was initially part of a project which had organised state power in certain specific ways to achieve its aims. Three decades later, after neoliberal reform, this emphasis on mining revenue had become an

orphan strategy, even though the Nigerien state finds it must still pursue it. Thus, upon taking office, Tandja and his government immediately focused on increasing mining revenue. As various officials told this researcher, his party had come to power in a world where 'there [were] no friends, only interests'.[21] Aid is volatile and conditioned to often unrealistic prescriptions and expectations, and increased taxation remains a problematic proposition in the conditions of Niger.[22] Increasing revenue from mining, on the other hand, could finance a degree of state autonomy. The Nigerien Fifth Republic maintained excellent relations with the IMF and its leaders never appeared to reject neoliberal principles – in fact, its ruling party, the Mouvement National pour la Société de Développement, tended to present itself as a 'liberal' party, in the French sense of the word (i.e., economic, not political/social). But state autonomy was sought for two interrelated reasons: first, the ability to arrange public spending in ways that would help the prospects for re-election of the president; and second, the latter was a member of the military junta that tried to spur the transformation of agriculture in the 1980s, and he explicitly wanted to revive that policy, at least in part. Significantly, however, Tandja did not resort, in pursuance of this double goal, to amending the state system. Instead, he used a non-institutional mode of action popularised by aid regimes, putting in place a so-called 'special programme' of the President of the Republic – a fundraising outfit which both enhanced his personal prestige and channelled money into projects targeting the agricultural sector and the '*monde rural*' ('rural population'). As his attempt at overturning the constitution and restoring autocracy in late 2009 clearly shows, Tandja's project was far from a democratic reform of the state. He strongly identified with Niger's elite class, using the 'special programme' in a framework of evergetism that enhanced his elite stature, and reserving the discussion of issues of central relevance to the state to members of the elite class. He said as much in a televised speech where, after glorying in his paternal care for the hungry peasants of Niger, he concluded: 'As for important topics, such as the issue of uranium, of petroleum, they do not concern those poor people.'[23] The rhetoric of care for the peasantry has been a staple of Niger's elite class since the *commis* of the 1960s, but in the neoliberal era, it no longer corresponds to a structure of responsibility such as the one evidenced by the social contracts that existed under the First Republic and the military regime.

Such specious elite views, non-institutional modes of action and the temptation of autocracy – underlined by a greater reliance on the repressive functions of the state[24] – are at least strongly stimulated by the neoliberal state system if not caused by it. A parsimonious system with little direct connections to society is hence better controlled by and for the advantage of

the elite class. With many fewer public institutions, it leaves extensive room for non-institutional manipulations that sidestep the need for democratic accountability. In such a context, it appears natural to argue that the more 'important' issues are not the concern of the people. If the case of Tandja provides a vivid illustration of the exercise of power in a neoliberal state system, it should not be construed as an isolated instance of the fact. After Tandja was removed in 2010, the Nigerien political class which, in its majority, had opposed his attempt at autocratic restoration, tried to rekindle the process of democratic reform of politics which started in 1991 and had run into the sand of neoliberalism.[25] A new constitution adopted in 2011 legislated strong legal protections for journalists and opposition figures, casting opprobrium on the repression of the Tandja era. Language in both the constitution and the political programme of the Parti Nigérien pour la Démocratie et le Socialisme (PNDS), which won the elections, indicted autocracy and called for the strengthening of democratic institutions. Unlike in previous Nigerien constitutions, the framers of this one went out of their way to name and reject 'dictatorship' as a form of government, while the first point of the PNDS's (2011) programme insists that 'Niger needs strong institutions rather than strong men', stressing that 'strong, creditable and sustainable democratic institutions' must be built to protect the 'respectability' of 'the republic'.[26]

The stance implies that the PNDS government, unlike its predecessor, demonstrates a degree of political will toward democratic reform. If its criticism of neoliberalism is not strident, it certainly also quietly guides its key actions. In a deliberately anti-Hayekian move, the new government resurrected, in its first cabinet, the Ministry of Planning that was an early casualty of neoliberal reform in the 1990s. The public sector soon thereafter went on a veritable recruitment binge. In the first two years of its tenure, the PNDS government hired over 30,000 people in the public sector, significantly more than the entire private sector (over 22,000 recruits) – and also more than the MNSD (Mouvement National pour la Société du Développement) government during much of its ten-year tenure.[27] In particular, it offered positions in provincial and rural health units to *all* new medicine graduates who applied to serve the state while also ramping up the provision of state scholarships to students. Given the systemic nature of state action, these and other moves of the PNDS can, however, achieve their aims only if they succeed in transcending the neoliberal state system that has solidified in Niger since the mid-1990s. In my hypothesis – derived from the conceptual framework described in the first section of this article – this would be possible only as a result of a successful democratic reform of the state, insofar as this specific reform agenda has been the historical

antagonist of neoliberal reform. Are the elements of such a democratic reform of the state – political will, popular agency, common programme and transformative institutions – present enough in today's Niger to sustain a shift in that direction? The question posed in this way can obviously receive no straightforward response, especially in the short space of this article, and what I propose here is to end this exploration of the Nigerien case with the 'important topic' of mining as a way to approaching the aforementioned four elements.

As previously noted, under the Fifth Republic, there were renewed efforts at increasing mining revenue. Niger's mining law was revised in 2006, raising royalty rates for larger exploitations from 5.5 to 12 per cent. However, if the new rule applied to petroleum – which had come online in the late 2000s – the biggest prize, uranium, held by French industry giant Areva NC, was shielded at the time from the new levy by the fact that the contract tying Areva to the state of Niger would expire only in 2013.[28] Not only did Areva continue to pay low-end royalties to Niger, it also kept the generous fiscal exemptions and related benefits it had inherited from the previous mining law, adopted in 1993. In 2013, when Areva needed to negotiate an extension contract, it faced a PNDS government that had hedged its bets for the revival of state-led development on increased revenue from the mining sector. Indeed, while in 2000 the sector contributed only 5.5 billion CFA francs to state revenue, by 2007 it was contributing over 82 billion – an incredible 14-fold increase in just over six years.[29] The vagaries of commodity markets have since brought this down several notches – still, always above 50 billion – but if uranium – by far Niger's choicest mineral riches – were to pay high-end royalties as legislated in 2006, the impact on state revenue would be quite dramatic. Areva resisted this. The company had signed the expired contract under the law of 1993, an investor-friendly piece of legislation from a time when foreign capital was snubbing the country's mines. On the other hand, its mining titles were secured in 1968 for 75 years. In 2003, WAEMU put out a community mining code which guaranteed 'fiscal stability' for the duration of mining titles in member countries. Claiming that community law supersedes national law, Areva argued that, as per WAEMU's regulations, the exemptions and tax breaks it received in 1993 should last until 2043 – that is, 75 years after 1968, the duration of its mining titles.

The ensuing showdown between Areva and the state of Niger – and more generally, Niger's relationships with mining companies – has mobilised sections of the populace in support of the state's positions in the protracted negotiations. Outwardly, the mobilisation was concentrated in civil society and the student union, and geographically limited to the capital and the northern city of Agadez. However, it ended up extending into the written

press, social media, and both television and radio debates and editorials, including and especially in 'national languages', in a country where only about 10 per cent of the population use the official language (French). For the first time in Niger's history, uranium and other mining interests thus became a topic of discussion among 'the poor people' (to quote Tandja's nonchalant phrase). Demonstrations were strategically directed at the media – including the international media, which have an echo in France – even though the aim commonly agreed upon by leaders of civil society organisations and unions involved was to maintain pressure on the government of Niger. But it also became manifest that the Nigerien government hardly needed prodding and was intent on modifying the terms on which Areva exploits Niger's uranium. Additional demands required Areva to rebuild transport infrastructure and, more importantly, to cede to Niger the control of Cominak and Somaïr, the two companies from which the state draws shareholder dividends – a move which amounts to a renegotiation, if not a rejection, of the entente that underlies Areva's operations in Niger since 1968.[30] The consensus on the issue also extended to the opposition parties, and if the Areva negotiation was still a current story at the time of writing, it is in fact only a sequence in Niger's struggle to redefine its mining policy.

So there is clearly a congruence of political will and popular agency on this particular issue. To be sure, popular agency is here outwardly limited to the elite class. Mine workers have remained quiescent and the popular classes, both urban and rural, only comment and observe. Given the historical context described at some length in this section, however, the meaning of this episode is easier to interpret. Niger's natural resources do not belong in the major league in their categories. While uranium is abundant and of high quality, it is also difficult to export given the distance to the sea – nearly 2,500 kilometres – and the worsening security situation in the country's desert north. Regarding petroleum, with only 20,000 barrels a day, Niger counts among the smallest producers in Africa. And gold, produced in Western Niger, is far more volatile in value than either uranium or oil. But Niger's experience has shown that the surplus capital needed to jumpstart the process of development can come neither from taxation, nor from agriculture (in its current state) – while aid (at least Western aid) is tied to austerity prescriptions, which do not aim at transforming the economy. Thus, the mining rent appears as the state's only remaining option, especially as it seeks to revive the *state-led* development project disallowed by neoliberal reform. The desire to hold on to power (Tandja), or a more ideological intention at reforming the state (Issoufou), have created political will to redefine Niger's mining policy to the advantage of the state. This political will is supported by popular agency – limited to the elite class – and quieter popular support from other classes of Nigerien society.

However, this has not led to an agreed-upon reform programme. There is clearly *elite class consensus* around the notion that capital from mining rent – together with the investment and lending that it would attract – would rekindle Niger's social contract and ultimately re-establish the legitimacy of the elite class as the country's ruling class. But this consensus does not appear to crystallise into a reform programme that would also associate the other classes in the Nigerien polity. If it limits itself to shoring up elite rule, as it appears to be doing, it is safe to say the PNDS's thrust – or pledge – to institutionalise democracy in Niger will make only trivial dents in the neoliberal state system of the country.

West Bengal: Renouncing Political Will

The case of India is very different from Niger. Even leaving aside the size and complexity differentials (India is more comparable perhaps to Africa than to a sub-unit of Africa such as Niger), in the spectrum of structural economic transformation, or development as it were, Niger lies at an initial point – with Bolivia further ahead, but closer to Niger than to India – while India is now largely a transitional economy. If the main concern of the state of Niger is primary capital extraction from natural resources, the Indian state coordinates capital-intensive industrialisation and is faced with the problem of redistribution; and while Niger's sociology is a comparatively simple one (simpler, certainly, than in the pre-colonial era), India's is much harder to chart with the required tact and accuracy, given in particular the fact that caste and culture play an important role alongside class. Sticking to a class framework, it can be said that India has three key class-groupings: the monopoly (now corporate) capitalist and big bourgeoisie layers; the rural gentry and closely linked small bourgeoisie; and the masses of the toiling people, in town, country and forest.[31] In this way, the underlying story of India's evolution broadly lends itself to the conceptual framework set out in the first section of this article, and the fact that India is so different from Niger is a good test of its relative worth as an analytical tool for the purposes of this article.

More than in the case of the Nigerien state, the product largely of the independence era, key functional elements of the Indian state were created during the colonial period. That was especially the case of those elements which neoliberal reform tends to preserve: basic administration, defence and security. The colonial government needed economic order and security for the sake of imperial investors. Given the vital importance of India to the imperial economy of Britain, these requisites had the benefit of providing India with good basic state institutions by independence.[32] Also, it was under British domination that the class distribution of modern India – as

distinct from the one extant in the Mughal and Rajput period – gradually took shape, leading to an early independence social contract where, similar to what we have seen in Niger, the modern-educated elite seized control of the state in the name of development.

The large internal economy of India and its more complex class distribution complicated this, however. In particular, not only were the interests of the propertied and popular classes distinct, there were also significant differences among the propertied classes, with differing interpretations of the meaning and implication of development. The early development policies of the Indian state show, at any rate, that the preferred model was state-led, and the dedication of India's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, to parliamentary democracy also ensured that this state-led model of development was not to be authoritarian as in much of the Global South at the time. The state ramped up its power, built infrastructures and formulated an industrial policy as well as an agricultural intensification policy that led to a 'green revolution' toward the end of the 1960s. These mainstays of development policy would satisfy the propertied classes, while populist programmes undertaken especially under Prime Minister Indira Gandhi (1966–77) directed state patronage toward the poor. Indira Gandhi also used the power of the state to expand credit and savings into the rural areas and through the country's large 'informal' sector (bank nationalisations of 1969).[33] All of these policies, though serving chiefly the propertied classes, sometimes at the expenses of the popular classes,[34] had real overall transformative potentials and (in some cases) effects.

The Indian model ran however into a crisis of transition by the mid-1960s. While the propertied classes had successfully replaced – with the indispensable help of the state – imperial capitalists through the first decade of independence, the next stage was to successfully compete with international capitalists to avoid being consigned to a peripheral and menial position in the world economy. Also, without transition, India's vast poor population was feeling more acutely the brunt of exploitation and neglect.

The transition crisis not only generated a conflict within the ruling class – between those who tied their ideal of prosperity to a state-protected internal market and those who wanted the state to open up the country – but it also happened in a difficult context, both nationally and internationally (in the late 1960s, drought and famine, war with Pakistan, and currency instability; in the 1970s, the oil shocks and recession). The transition crisis translated politically into a crisis of the state and of parliamentary democracy through much of the 1970s. While a fragmented and weak political opposition failed to defeat Indira Gandhi at the polls, she turned toward so-called 'pragmatic' policies, which no longer reflected the choices of the now

deeply divided ruling classes, but essentially seemed to strengthen her hold on power. Economically, those were inadequate policies, fostering a corrupt status quo[35] and increasing dissatisfaction in the ruling classes. The latter phenomenon took several forms, including a high-minded defence of democracy by the elderly socialist Jayaprakash Narayan in 1975–76, but mostly, the objective became to put an end to Gandhi's rule. Lashing out against her opponents during the state of emergency she had proclaimed in June 1975, Gandhi succeeded in uniting their political representatives in the motley Janata Party, which beat her at the polls in 1977. But the economic situation only further deteriorated – in part because the Janata Party proved incapable of backing the policies of its ablest Prime Minister, Charan Singh (1979–80) – and Gandhi returned to power in January 1980.

In the changed conditions of the 1980s, Gandhi – imitated after her assassination in 1984 by her successors – started reorienting the state toward market liberalisation. This was announced – indirectly – in both the Industrial Policy Statement of July 1980 and the Sixth Five-Year Plan, which showed a new willingness to stimulate the transition of the Indian economy into international levels of competitiveness. Measures linking industrial growth to export performance were taken in diverse policy areas, and were poised to expand corporate capitalism, even if in limited ways. Some incoherence marked those policies, where exports ended up being absorbed by domestic demand and where liberalisation spurred both a costly – in terms of balance of payments – import of capital goods and the transformation of state-protected monopoly capitalism into international-allied monopoly capitalism, among other policy miscarriages.[36] Overall, however, they were not a failure from the point of view of policy-makers. They managed to expand the scope of corporate capitalism without undermining the state system. Liberalisation was a means toward the end of the transition to higher industrialisation, which was still to be organised by the state. Thus, the fiscal crisis resulting from the policy incoherencies of the 1980s, though apparently similar to the one which destroyed the fragile economies of Bolivia and Niger in the early 1980s, became here the pretext for using that instrument (liberalisation) more freely.

Indeed, in the case of India, a radical break that could be characterised as 'neoliberal reform' did not occur. The break, if such it was, came in 1980,[37] when market liberalisation became a key policy option for the Indian state, and when segments of the industrial sector emerged or grew thanks to its decisions. This in turn made possible some of the reforms developed in the 1990s, both technically and – more importantly – politically. While the central Indian governments of the 1990s may well have harboured neoliberal reformers,[38] it remains that neoliberal reform as a package could not easily be implemented in

the context of a country where the ruling classes had recognised the pacifying value of the democratic process – certainly after the troubles of the late 1970s – and where there was no firm consensus among them on neoliberalism. How then are we to characterise what happened in India after 1991?

The balance of payments crisis had to be solved, and this was done chiefly by drastically reducing public investment. The general effect of the market liberalisation initiative, combined with this decline in public investment, expanded the power of corporate capital as an agent in the Indian development model. Moreover, the central state's activism was reduced across the country, giving that much salience to regional disparities, as responsibilities for development were gradually offloaded onto individual states. (This process is akin, in a more informal way, to the decentralisation reform seen in the case of Niger.) On the other hand, despite the continuing – yet still modest – opening up of the economy to international market forces, the measured pace of neoliberal-style reforms has preserved the coherence of the internal economy and the dominance of national industry actors. What was accomplished by the reforms was to put India's wealth – land, labour, government work – at the service of those actors through the steady but disparate birthing of a market economy – the neoliberal concept of development as it were – across the country. The state-led development model has, in this way, lost most of its significance, but it has not been straightforwardly replaced by neoliberal reform (as in Niger or Bolivia). Rather, it is now left to individual states within the Union to define – in accordance with regional conditions – the uses to which they would put the liberalisation instrument, in a context where competition to attract private investment greatly constrains or reduces their choices. It is this ambiguous situation that I now propose to explore by engaging in an exercise similar to the one conducted with the Nigerien case: that is, approaching the issue through a single revealing event – here, the transfer of a car plant from West Bengal to Gujarat – and assess thereby the implications for democratic reform in the case country.

The short story is this: in the early 2000s, Tata Motors, an Indian market giant, created stiff competition among states for receiving the site of the plant for its new project, the 'Nano' a cheap mini-car with the famously low price tag of 'one lakh' (100,000 rupees or US$2,300), designed for India's struggling majority population. West Bengal beat the competition by leasing land to the company in Singur, a small rural town in the vicinity of state capital, Kolkata. The land, intended to host both the car plant and its ancillaries in an industrial complex, was expropriated from farmers using an abusive interpretation of eminent domain law, and cash compensation. Some of the farmers protested, first in the courts (where they lost their case),

then on the streets, causing repression and the intervention of a coalition of rights-defending organisations and individuals, as well as that of opposition politicians. Given the turmoil and violence, Tata Motors reviewed its options and, in October 2008, was invited into Gujarat by an SMS from that state's Chief Minister, Narendra Modi (now the country's Prime Minister). Gujarat offered land already occupied by the state at Sanand to the 'Nano' project, thus avoiding controversy.

The event has been abundantly analysed and commented on by Indian scholars.[39] I am here interested in two aspects of what had transpired at that point: the attitudes of actors in West Bengal relative to the Tata project and the underlying idea of development behind its support by the West Bengal government; and a comparison of these attitudes with the Sanand denouement.

The West Bengal state was run at the time by the Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI-M), which of course inspired no end of irony owing to the fact that it had courted a market giant while trampling on the rural proletariat. This is all the more curious since CPI-M, which, by then, had been in power in Kolkata uninterruptedly for 31 years, had grounded its hegemony in rural supremacy. The scholarly consensus on this subject is that CPI-M in West Bengal had created stability at the expense of development. More specifically, since the late 1970s, the party had successfully displaced the larger landowning classes – favourable to Congress – and brought about a West Bengal of smallholders, including through 'Operation Barga', a policy of land reform which secured the rights of sharecroppers against rich landowners. These actions provided a stable basis for the party's dominance in the majority poor population of the state. At the same time, West Bengal was, however, also taken into the general Indian dilemma of transition to a higher stage of development which had started to brew in the country in the 1970s.

In this case, the lack of development was directly connected to the hegemonic structure of CPI-M, since a system of smallholding, largely subsistence agriculture, can hardly provide the surplus capital needed for starting such a process (compare to Niger). As a result, large sections of the peasantry suffered a process of marginalisation, while even the beneficiaries of CPI-M policies were confronted with the limitations of stagnant development. Democratic reform might have provided a solution through the ideal combination of political will and popular agency leading to transformative institutions, and this was clearly what was envisaged by the reform of the Panchayat (rural government) system in 1983. Not only was the new Panchayat Act adopted that year destined to better organise popular agency at local levels, it also aimed at providing the institutional space the state needed to implement its rural development policies (including the then on-going Operation Barga). But as the instability created by economic

stagnation increased, the party also increasingly resorted to patronage and intimidation – rather than to democratic practice – to maintain its hold on power, an objective which eventually became paramount.[40] By the early 2000s, the CPI-M was moving toward neoliberal reform in order to attract private capital, arguing that 'land reform was not an end in itself and industrialisation was necessary for moving into the next phase of development'.[41] The key implication here is that the party had decided to give up on the transformation of agriculture – which, from a political point of view, would have entailed democratic reform – and opted to climb onto the national bandwagon of corporate-led development.[42] From this perspective, its mistreatment of smallholders is logical, although it was also self-defeating. Indeed, all analysts are agreed that the population of Singur was not hostile to the Tata project, and many among them expected to profit from industrial work and attendant business. However, they did not understand this to mean that agricultural work needed to be forfeited altogether. The underlying concept of development for the rural poor combined the relative *security* of agriculture – relative to potential salaried jobs – to the relative *opportunities* of industry, while the government in fact viewed agriculture and industry as opposites because, in the existing scheme of things (which it was principally responsible for creating), the latter produced capital, and the former did not.

The situation in West Bengal was therefore this: there was no political will for democratic reform among the rulers of the state at that point;[43] yet there was much popular agency, both among the smallholders and the petite bourgeoisie that staffed civil society; a reform programme could not take form in the absence of the political will factor and potentially transformative institutions (Panchayats, Ministry of Land and Land Reforms) remained therefore in a state of inaction. In Gujarat, the state took over the Tata project and the process went down quietly. There is no space here to engage into an effective comparison between the two processes, but the Gujarat case might well show that, within the larger framework of corporate-led development that emerged from the liberalisations of the 1980–90s, differing forms of appropriation of the model are possible, and it is perhaps right-wing Gujarat that swerved farther away from the orthodox neoliberal approach – although, certainly using another method than democratic reform. In the case of West Bengal, the people eventually voted the CPI-M out in 2011, replacing it by a coalition led by the All India Trinamool Congress (TMC), the party of Mamata Bannerjee. One of her first decisions was to organise the vote of a law that would return 400 acres of land to the unwilling farmers of Singur, but Tata – which still holds the lease – has successfully resisted the law at both West Bengal's High Court and India's Supreme Court.

Conclusion

Despite the received wisdom of the mainstream literature in political science, the coincidence of the 'third wave' of democratisations and the 'second wave' of economic liberalism was a misfortune for democracy. The mainstream literature generally assumes that neoliberal reform and democracy are mutually sustaining, and that roadblocks to democracy are to be found in a country's internal factors, a conclusion preordained by the premise. Indeed, since, in this view, democracy and neoliberal capitalism are the two faces of the same coin, the notion that neoliberalism may be one such hurdle is essentially meaningless. Moreover, since neoliberalism is bound up with globalisation, there is a clear reluctance to stress the negative role of external factors, such as the agendas of multilateral organisations or the strategic operations of Western powers.[44] By looking at a single historical process, such as the reform of the state, in which competing forces representative of democratisation and neoliberalism can be shown to be at work, this 'internal/external factors' debate can be displaced by a more fruitful comparison. For in studying the effects of two divergent reform agendas of the state, we are comparing effective processes, not biased conjectures.

On this score, it is obviously fair to say that in the poorer countries of the South, the democratic reform of the state was meant to strengthen it, not weaken it. The intention was that the overhauled strength of a reformed state could be put to work on development, on the basis of participation from all classes of society, instead of being used and misused by the small cliques that profited from authoritarian rule. And it is equally fair to say that neoliberal reform, on the other hand, sought to weaken the state and let competition in the marketplace determine winners and losers, with no demonstrated concern for the society that people form under a state. The comparison between Niger and India (and, arguably, that between West Bengal and Gujarat *within* India) reveals that in this struggle, the neoliberal has tended to gain the upper-hand, and it is here that the study shows that we may put the stress on internal factors. If democracy was essentially promoted by internal forces, and neoliberalism by external ones, the relative defeat of democracy should primarily be explained by failings from the (internal) forces that supported it. In this study, such failings have been analysed through an interpretive outline derived from Bolivian history, and a longer study could delve into the living details of how the outline worked in each case, what caused success, and what prompted failure.

Another major conclusion of the study indicates that neoliberal reform especially weakened the weaker – Niger rather than India and, within India, West Bengal rather than Gujarat. And finally, given that democratic reform

is in fact the antagonist of neoliberal reform when it comes to the state and to development, one may conjecture that only by embracing it could countries that have been subjected to the neoliberal regimen transcend their predicament. Further research in both reform agendas – their social conditions, political implications and economic parameters – is however needed to effectively understand both the theory and the practice of democratic reform. Such understanding, I believe, is much needed.

Notes

1. The best case in point is perhaps that of South Korea, an economic 'miracle' under the dictatorship of Park Chung-hee, but also a political impasse, leading to the massive instability of the late 1970s that included the assassination of Park (1979), the Gwangju massacre (1980) and its fractious aftermath. Only democratic reform ultimately gave the country a way out many years later.
2. Among the cases studied in this paper, Bolivia is a poster child of the first age of economic liberalism. It embraced the policy early on, under the presidency of Linares (1857–61) and became one of its major victims following the Great Depression.
3. Of course, the mainstream literature in political science holds the exact opposite to be true. During the heyday of the 'third wave', well-respected authors Diamond, Linz and Lipset, writing on the countries of the Global South, thus claimed that 'all democracies … are to some degree capitalist; production and distribution of goods are determined mainly by competition in the market, rather than by the state, and there is significant private ownership of the means of production' (Diamond, Linz and Lipset 1989: xxi). Over thirty years later, the same pronouncement was repeated unblinkingly by Leon (2010): 'All liberal democracies are also market-oriented economies.'
4. This is glowingly described by Albro as 'for now the culmination of a long process … to shape the postcolonial terms of political participation, which has been historically defined by the profound marginalization of its indigenous and popular majority'. Quoted from 'Confounding Cultural Citizenship', p. 71.
5. See Wolf (2013).
6. 'After the referendum', Mesa had told the daily *La Nacion*, 'the state has recovered an important degree of legitimacy'. Quoted in *The Free Library/South American Political and Economic Affairs*, an online resource.
7. 'It was a state of vast reach', write Arze and Kruse (2004: 24), 'playing a central role not only in capital formation and allocation but also employment. It was a provider of services and the focus of social demands, making itself present as never before in people's daily lives and the agendas of social struggle.'
8. This includes COB which, though a union federation, was deeply unmeshed with the revolutionary state, its main leader, Juan Lechín, being First Minister of Mines and Petroleum, and then vice-president in 1960–64.
9. For a well-rounded presentation of the effects of this third role of 'the state of '52', see Klein (2011).
10. See Malloy (1970).

11. In their paper, Arze and Kruse note, for instance, that 'the second administration of President Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada … killed more people in 14 months than did Gen. Hugo Bánzer's seven-year military dictatorship' (2004: 23), which was noted for its peculiar brutality.
12. Kohl's review of MAS 'governance' (i.e., state action) stresses several parameters of a 'chaotic style of governance' (2010: 113) that especially denote the fact that this type of institution-building is either very slow to emerge, or altogether not forthcoming in today's Bolivia. This may be partly related to the emphasis on the concept of 'cultural identity', which has played a far greater role in MAS's popular agency than in MNR's. Some scholars – generally sympathetic to neoliberal reform – consider this a welcome change from class identification (see Haarstad and Andersson 2009), ignoring that emphasis on cultural identity does not preclude, and may indeed reinforce, class identification – especially in a conservative fashion: but maybe they know this all too well!
13. See the long theoretical preamble – a veritable essay – of the National Charter adopted to this effect in 1987. The Charter, write the authors of the *Historical Dictionary of Niger*, 'defined the development society, the concept of the state, and the organization of the executive councils tasked with the mission of pushing the country forward using rules for (the motto went) 'consultation, dialogue and participation'.
14. From a French word meaning 'clerk' or 'civil servant' depending on the context. During the colonial period, the *commis* occupied clerical positions in government and business, and became the slim buffer class between the colonial rulers and the African population, developing a lifestyle closer to that of the Europeans and essentially growing into a local bourgeoisie after independence. In Niger, the PPN was the party of the *commis*, which came to power upon defeating – mostly through fraud and violence – the Sawaba party, a leftist formation that represented the country's semi-urban proletariat of the *talakawa* ('little folks'). See Van Walraven (2013).
15. This is mostly found in the grey literature of ministry reports and consultancy documents. The narrative part of this analysis is based on documentation graciously provided by the Niamey-based Bureau Nigérien d'Etudes et de Conseil en Développement Rural, as well as on interviews with officials from the agriculture ministry, both former and current. See also Raynaut's (1999) introduction to *Politique Africaine*'s special issue on Niger.
16. See Gervais (1992; 1995) who interprets this as a story of Niger dragging its feet to implement much needed reforms.
17. Students – as well as civil servants – were routinely singled out in the neoliberal literature of the time as the enemies of 'reform', which they would oppose in view of keeping their 'privileges'. See, for Niger, especially the work of Gervais (1992; 1995; 1997).
18. Literally, 'SAP [structural adjustment programmes] will not come to pass'. For an early analysis of such democratic resistance to neoliberal reform, see Beckman (1991).
19. Tandja remained in office nearly two months after the expiry of his second term, in December 2009, and had to be forcibly removed from power by the army in February 2010.
20. For a full analysis of the rationale of neoliberal reform of state institutions in Africa, see Mkandawire (2009).

21. This now very conventional wisdom in Niger – leaders of the student union repeated the same phrase during interviews – seems to encapsulate a (neoliberal) zeitgeist that stresses individualism and competitiveness, including with regard to inter-state relations.
22. Increased taxation is the preferred avenue for revenue mobilisation in neoliberal reform, as is shown by prescriptions from both the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) and the IMF. The state of Niger is trying to comply, with limited success and the memory of the serious popular unrest that rocked the country after IMF-pushed tax hikes in 2005.
23. From the Nigerien weekly *La Roue de l'Histoire* (2014). Interestingly enough, this was stated four years after his fall, which underlines the strength of his class beliefs.
24. One symbol of this was the establishment, in 2003, of the high security prison Koutou Kalé, in a craggy wilderness some 30 kilometres outside the capital. Though officially destined for 'hardened criminals', it soon became famous for hosting pesky journalists and troublesome opposition figures arrested on trumped-up charges or through harsh interpretations of the law.
25. At that specific juncture, the events of 1991 received for the first time symbolic public recognition: a street was renamed after the National Conference of the summer 1991, and the sports hall in which it had convened was also given the name 'palace of the sovereign national conference' following a solemn christening ceremony.
26. Constitution of Niger's Seventh Republic, Preamble, and 'Niger: La Renaissance. Programme PNDS Tarayya 2011', p. 5.
27. A recent investigation by this researcher among university graduates shows a newly-expressed preference for public sector jobs, while until very recently all studies indicated preference for the private sector in that population.
28. However, in order to grab a newly-found giant uranium deposit, the biggest in Africa, Areva accepted, in 2007, a 50 per cent increase in the kilo price paid to Niger.
29. See the report commissioned in 2011 by the Niger branch of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, chapter II, ab initio (pages non-numbered). Online resource.
30. Areva, which is 91 per cent owned by the French state, is a successor company to the constellation of French public institutions and enterprises that dealt with the fledgling state of Niger in the 1960s. France took control of Somaïr through aid, when the Nigerien state borrowed from its cooperation agency to buy its shares in the company. French control of Somaïr and Cominak in particular means that the state of Niger lacks intelligence in the commercialisation of the ore and the profitability of the companies, something which has constantly strengthened the French hand during negotiations.
31. Inspired and adapted from 'Indira Gandhi: an attempt at a political appraisal', an anonymous (signed 'K.B.') essay in a 1985 issue of *Economic and Political Weekly* ('K.B.' 1985).
32. For a summary, see Maddison (2006 [1971]).
33. This is of notable importance, contributing to creating India's peculiarity as a poor country with large domestic savings – later useful for sustaining large-scale investments.
34. This was especially visible during the building of large dams, which would necessitate land confiscation and the displacement of masses of people, who were generally poor.

35. This situation, characterised by disparaging phrases ('Hindu rate of growth', 'license-permit-quota-subsidy raj', 'political economy of stagnation'), was summed up by Mansingh as 'a nexus among corrupt politicians, corrupt bureaucrats, and corrupt business houses' (2006: 30). The paroxysm of Gandhi's authoritarian tendencies was reached when she declared a state of emergency in June 1975. Writing in hindsight, Mansingh described the episode (which lasted 21 months) as an 'aberrant … period of incipient authoritarianism' (*ibid.*: 207), which is just what it was, although analysts pondering events at the time feared the worst (Kozicki 1975). For a rich contextualisation, see chapters 9 and 10 of Ananth (2010).
36. See the detailed contemporary analysis of the new measures and their economic effects in Kurien (1989).
37. Here, there is agreement between Kohli (2006) and Corbridge Harriss and Jeffrey (2013). The latter also show the underlying continuities between what had gone on since the 1960s and what became possible after 1980.
38. Such would have been Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister in 2004–14 and Finance Minister in 1991.
39. See in particular Sud (2008) to be read against the background of her earlier piece (Sud 2007); Roy (2011); Baumik (2011); and Kumar (2012).
40. See the analysis of Bandhyopadhyay and Dinda (2010: 10).
41. *ibid.:* 14.
42. Before the Singur debacle, the CPI-M had encountered a similar fiasco at Nandigram, in March 2007, when it tried to transfer farmland to the Indonesia-based Salim Group's industrial project of a Special Economic Zone there. It did not learn from the episode.
43. But perhaps there was some among the larger ruling classes, especially if we believe the claims of Mamata Bannerjee, then the major opposition figure, now Chief Minister and also Minister of Land and Land Reforms – the one potentially transformative institution for rural West Bengal.
44. The role of China in defeating the promotion of democracy, human rights and good governance is one exception in the more recent literature – for no obvious reason other than the fact that China is not a Western power, since the same behaviour, or even worse, is observable in American or French foreign policy, for instance.

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Why the African Union Should be Dismantled and Buried with Gaddafi

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Abstract

One enduring project of pan-Africanists is an all-Africa union as the solution to Africa's socio-economic predicament. They view the lack of such a union as one of the major causes of the predicament. From Nkrumah to the African Union (AU) passing by the Organization of African Unity (OAU), their disagreements have been about the means and ways of achieving this goal. In their view, the development of sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) is inseparable from that of North Africa. I argue that this is not and should not be the case, because SSA socio-economic outcomes and their causes diverge organically from those of North Africa. As the institutional symbol of this pan-African view, the AU should be dismantled. SSA should be allowed to reconstitute itself, without North Africa, into a self-sustaining, organically integrated Unifederation that can finally address and solve its predicament. Gaddafi's demise allows SSA to do so.

Résumé

L'un des projets les plus durables des panafricanistes est la création d'une union panafricaine comme solution au problème socio-économique de l'Afrique. Ils considèrent que l'absence d'une telle union est l'une des principales causes de la situation. De Nkrumah à l'Union africaine (UA) en passant par l'Organisation de l'unité africaine (OUA), leurs désaccords ont porté sur les voies et les moyens pour atteindre cet objectif. À leur avis, le développement de l'Afrique subsaharienne (ASS) est indissociable de celui de l'Afrique du Nord. L'auteur soutient que ce n'est pas et ne devrait pas être le cas, car les résultats socio-économiques de l'Afrique subsaharienne et leurs causes divergent organiquement de ceux de l'Afrique du Nord. En tant que symbole institutionnel de cette vision panafricaine, l'UA devrait être démantelée.

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L'Afrique subsaharienne devrait pouvoir se reconstituer, sans l'Afrique du Nord, en une uni-fédération autonome, organiquement intégrée, capable d'aborder et de résoudre ses problèmes. La disparition de Kadhafi le permet.

Introduction

The 'Arab Spring' of 2011 displayed a peculiar feature. Although many of the regimes (Yemen, Bahrain, Syria and Egypt) used force against their populations, only Libya provoked NATO's and the international community's wrath and bombardments in support of the internal armed opposition against the Gaddafi regime. Only later, due to a different set of geopolitical reasons, was Syria subjected to international military pressure. Internal opposition and NATO bombardments provoked three noteworthy reactions. First, there was spontaneous and relatively uncoordinated support for the Gaddafi regime by the masses in several SSA countries. Second, the AU extended tepid support to the Gaddafi regime and timidly proposed a cease-fire between the regime and its foes. Third, the AU-proposed cease-fire was rejected out of hand by the Libyan armed opposition, whose members are supposed to be part of AU.

Both the AU's tepid support for and the opposition's rejection of the cease-fire contrasted with Gaddafi's vocal and militant support for the AU and his bigger financial contribution to the organisation. Gaddafi's leadership was instrumental to the birth of the AU. The first major move toward the union was the Sirte Declaration in Libya in 1999. After the Constitutive Act of the African Union was adopted in Lomé (Togo) in 2000, it was in Sirte again that the establishment of the Union was proclaimed in 2001 before the official birth of the Union in South Africa in 2002. Libya's financial contribution to the AU and SSA countries under Gaddafi was quite impressive. In addition to its 15 per cent share of the AU budget (of about US$257 million in 2011), Gaddafi's Libya paid the membership fees for some very poor countries that could not afford them, which raised Libya's contribution to the AU annual budget to about a third of the total. By some estimates, Gaddafi's Libya provided about US$97 billion to SSA in investments and aid. The initial spontaneous support of young people in SSA countries for the embattled Gaddafi was consistent with this financial aid (Allison 2012; Larson and Vogl 2011).

The overall reactions to Gaddafi's demise, however, revealed that, despite Gaddafi's impact on the pauperised masses in SSA countries because of his financial largesse, his investments in the AU have not paid off. It is almost a sure bet that after Gaddafi there will be no strong support left for the AU in North Africa, let alone in Libya. The lack of a payoff for Gaddafi's anchoring support for the AU is both a symptom of and a metaphor for the

ill conception of the AU and its inability, as an institution, to meet the goal of solving the SSA predicament. The fall of the Gaddafi regime provides, thus, an opportunity for declaring the death of the AU and proposing on its ashes an intellectual alternative that pointedly addresses SSA's socio-economic lag.

African Predicament and Enduring Continental Grouping Project

With a few exceptions, Africa obtained its independence in the 1960s, later than South America and Asia. Expectedly, South America and Asia founded regional organisations before Africa did. This was the case of the Arab League in 1945 and the Organization of American States (OAS) in 1948. Another regional grouping in Asia, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), was created in 1967, four years after Africa's regional organisation, the OAU, was founded in 1963. All these regional organisations rested on functional integration that promoted solidarity, economic cooperation, peace and security, and the protection of sovereignty of the member states. Yet Africa's type of grouping differs from the three others in two major respects: membership and objectives. Africa's grouping was and remains continental, encompassing the whole African continent as opposed to sub-regional groupings in Asia. And unlike the OAS, it is entirely made up of developing countries. It has more member states (fifty-four countries) than any other regional grouping in the world. Although Africa's broad goal of functional integration and cooperation resembles that of South America and Asia, its specific objectives differ from theirs. To grasp this difference, one needs to bear in mind that Africa's flirtation with a continental grouping has had four phases. All four lead back to Kwame Nkrumah, the first president of Ghana, who passionately called for the total unification of the African continent.

Nkrumah was so painfully aware of the deep political and socio-economic underdevelopment and deprivation of Africa that he looked to the US, Soviet and West European models of political organisation for answers. He shunned the models of grouping offered by Africa's fellow Third World regions of South America and Asia. High premium was put on solving the severe state of underdevelopment of Africa (Nkrumah 1970: 194–222). Nkrumah's project faced stiff opposition from his African peers and their foreign backers. To bridge the gap between Nkrumah and the opposition, the OAU was created. The OAU constituted the second phase in Africa's quest for a continental grouping. It was a 'compromise recognition' of Nkrumah's rationale and prime reason for the unification project: the severe socio-economic and political underdevelopment of Africa and the need to solve it.[1] The third phase in the process was the commitment to the idea of functional economic cooperation among African countries. Sub-regional

economic organisations were its pillars. No fewer than 200 sub-regional economic organisations have been created in Africa since independence.

The OAU and its auxiliary sub-regional economic organisations had some success in the decolonisation of the continent. Overall, however, they failed as an institutional framework for Africa's development. Several well-known reasons account for the inadequate performance of the OAU and the sub-regional economic institutions. They need not be rehearsed here. Worth repeating is the fact that the OAU and its sub-regional offshoots consecrated the principles of national sovereignty, sanctity of colonial borders, and non-interference in other states' internal affairs. Although they were not the core reason for its failure (as I will argue), these principles undermined at its core the political and economic policy goal around which revolved the Pan-African project. Deprived of any effective means of policy implementation, including financial contributions by member states, the OAU could not pursue any consistent and effective policies that would meet its enunciated goals.

Against this backdrop of failure and the deterioration of the African socio-economic situation, the AU was launched in 2002 to replace OAU. The AU constituted, thus, the fourth phase in the African quest for continental grouping. It was in effect Nkrumah's revenge against his peers. Indeed, the socio-economic standing of Africa had so deteriorated in the years after Nkrumah passed away, from the 1970s onwards, that there was now the incontrovertible recognition of the implacable socio-economic and political situation that Nkrumah wrestled with in his days. Most commentaries lauded the advent of the AU because of its potential, as a political union, to finally help Africa emerge as a force that could solve its problem of severe underdevelopment. The AU Constitutive Act itself stressed the need to accelerate the socio-economic development of Africa via a common vision of a united and strong Africa. This required strengthened and empowered common institutions.

Through its four phases of continental grouping, Africa distinguishes itself from South America and Asia. Unlike these two continents, it is the only developing region that has consistently and explicitly in the post-1945 period called for a continental political union to deal with its predicament. It has done so not only through an intellectual articulation of the problem, as in Nkrumah's and many other writings, but also through its artists and populace. More is expected of Africa's grouping efforts because there is a recognition, however vague and intuitive in most cases, of the exceptional socio-economic ills of Africa. Unfortunately for Pan-Africanists, the AU is not the answer.

The African Union: A Mismatch Between Sub-Saharan Africa and North Africa

Like any big organisation or institution, the AU was bound to experience 'growing pains'. Since its launching in 2002, the AU has not had a smooth sailing. It has faced budget shortfalls, has not been able to put in place some of its agreed-upon institutional organs, and some of the existing ones have not functioned well. In 2004, an audit revealed a case of gross mismanagement and embezzlement of seven million dollars earmarked for a 'Conference of African and Diasporan Intellectuals' that was supposed to provide the intellectual impetus and cover for AU. The relationship between the president of AU Commission and the 54 African heads of state has been fraught with conflicts and misunderstandings. A clear manifestation of this was the row and split between the former President of the Commission, Alpha Oumar Konaré, and the heads of state on the issue of democracy in Togo, Central African Republic and Mauritania. Konaré held steadfastly to the principles of democracy, human rights and the respect of the rule of law and constitutions to the chagrin and annoyance of many heads of state, who either maintained the undemocratic status quo or opposed him on the basis of the 'African reality'. In a sense, the split is indicative of the chasm that exists between the really educated elite committed to change in Africa and the parvenus, who hold dearly to political power and the status quo. The New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD), designed to serve as the connecting bridge between the AU and Western and industrialised democracies and that promised economic and political assistance to the AU, has not lived up to expectations. Personality clashes among the main African protagonists of NEPAD, divergent agendas, and the inability of Western countries to keep their promises have brought NEPAD to a halt.

The 2012 marathon election (four rounds) of the new President of AU Commission once more revealed the split between 'Francophone' and 'Anglophone' countries as each camp supported its own candidate; in the end the Anglophones won by electing the South African Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, the former wife of President Zuma. More importantly, perhaps, the two tactical and policy positions held by two major views of the AU have negatively impacted it. Although all heads of state signatories to the Constitutive Act of the AU profess their commitment to an all-Africa political union, they hold two different views about how to implement this policy. On the one hand, the advocates of the fast track approach (e.g. Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal) argue for the immediate institutional implementation of political union since, in their view, the failure of the OAU and the advent of the AU militate in favour of such an approach. On

the other hand, those who prefer a step-by-step approach similar to the one followed by the European Union (EU) (e.g., South Africa) warn against a rush to political union and hold on to national sovereignty.

Yet these 'growing pains' are *not* the reasons why AU is the wrong answer and should be dismantled. Many of these difficulties are to be expected. In any case, they are secondary reasons. So are the aforementioned reasons generally advanced to explain the failure of the OAU and its auxiliary sub-regional organisations. Another set of reasons should also be discounted. It is not because the AU cannot manage administratively the whole continent of Africa that lacks infrastructure and efficient bureaucracy. India and China have larger populations than the whole continent of Africa. Yet both have been able to administer their territories with some efficiency.

Nor is the AU deficient because North Africa is made of 'Arabs' and SSA of blacks' and the masses of North Africa feel more attached to the Arab world than to 'Africa'. The expected diminishing support for the AU in North Africa after Gaddafi is not the reason either. To be sure, there is a 'racial' and 'cultural' split between North Africa and SSA. Denying it is disingenuous. President Nasser of Egypt, a strong Pan-Africanist, held misguided views about SSA that he regarded as the 'Dark Continent' to be civilised and dominated by Egypt. His Pan-Arabism trumped his Pan-Africanism (Thompson 1969: 68; Nasser 1955). Gaddafi, a visceral proponent of African unification via the AU at the time of his death, espoused in the early days of his rule an aggressive policy of land grabbing and regime destabilisation toward SSA countries in the name of Arab nationalism. In reaction to this, Mobutu, the former dictator of Congo-Kinshasa, attempted to take the leadership of 'Negro Africa' against Arabs in an attempt to counter the Arab penetration of SSA. In fact, Gaddafi's wholesale embrace of a union with SSA came as a reaction to his many failures to create political unions with his fellow Arab leaders in North Africa and the Middle East, including with Syria. At an Egyptian exhibit in the American city of Houston, the Egyptian representative once proclaimed to the chagrin and consternation of African Americans that the mummies represented Egyptian culture and history and not 'African culture'. He sought to distance ancient Egyptian civilization from SSA. In an attempt to differentiate itself from SSA, Morocco once sought membership in the EU only to be told that it was not a European country. And, by the way, Morocco ended its membership in the OAU/AU long ago over Western Sahara. Among the North African populace, the split from SSA is perhaps best illustrated by the Libyans who chanted 'We are native Arabs, not Africans' when Gaddafi announced to them in 2000 the creation of AU (Spencer 2003: 116). As a Libyan respondent to a survey by

BBC News (23 January 2004), who does not think of himself as 'African', put it, '98 per cent of Libyans are against any African Union'. Africans, he opined, have brought suffering to Libyans by spreading HIV/AIDS. These sentiments are shared by many Egyptians and other North Africans, who do not want to be associated with SSA, preferring to proclaim their 'Arabness' or 'whiteness'. As one observer writes, 'Perversely the Arab nations of North Africa tend to consider themselves streets ahead of sub-Saharan Africa in terms of culture and mentality' (Harter 2005: 22). Of course, they have a permanent fixture that boosts this superiority complex: the presence of SSA slave descendants in North African countries.

Nevertheless, this 'racial' and 'cultural' split is not the reason why the AU does not meet the requirement as an institutional response to North Africa and SSA. After all, one finds just as many instances of and anecdotes about North Africans proclaiming their African proclivities and connections to SSA. One is reminded of Algeria's former president Ouari Boumedienne's retort to the Arabs: 'If you force me to choose between the Arab world and Africa, I choose Africa' (Kodjo 1985: 261). And despite his misgivings, Nasser was closer to Nkrumah's views than were many of Nkrumah's own SSA peers. Personally, I have had conversations with Algerian students who eschew their identity with Arabs in the Middle East in favor of their 'Africanness'. In the aforementioned BBC survey, many respondents believed in a linkage between North Africa and SSA. *Jeune Afrique*, easily the most important weekly and media linkage between North Africa and SSA, was founded by the Tunisian Bechir Ben Yahmed in Tunis. Samir Amin, the late famed scholar of the Third World, lived and worked more in SSA than in his native Egypt.

None of these reasons explain why AU should be dismantled because they are all secondary reasons. They are symptoms of and subordinated to more systemic and organic causes on which SSA and North Africa diverge. Organic causes are exceptional factors shared by SSA countries but not by North Africa. They dictate that the institutional format proposed to tackle these organic causes and their effects should not involve North Africa; it cannot be the AU. Indeed, the AU is an institution. Institutions involve some well-defined organisational patterns, regular rules and procedures governing the behaviour of groups or collectivities. Although they suppose some routinisation and stability, institutions are made; they do not just occur out of the blue. They are an outcome of a 'situation' that requires or necessitates their existence and emergence. There are many 'situations' that can necessitate the existence of an institution. In most cases, however, politics and its consequences are the main triggers.

Politics is a society-rooted competition over property, resources, goods, services, values, and – as a crucial corollary – political power. Because of the competition involved, politics generates differential socio-economic outcomes; moreover, it triggers the building of institutions designed to structure the competition, to deal with its effects, and, more importantly, to solve or respond to the problems that the collectivities involved in the competition face (Sangmpam 2007a: 30ff; 2007b: 201–24). In this sense, institutions that work best are those that are tailored to reflect and respond to the socio-economic consequences of politics of which they are themselves an outcome. As an all-Africa institution, the AU does not meet this requirement with regard to North Africa and SSA. The reason lies in the vast differences in socioeconomic outcomes between North Africa and SSA that politics imposes and the causes of this differential impact.

Recently there has been much euphoria about 'Africa, the next Asia', 'Africa's robust growth', and the 'decrease of Africa's poverty level'. The claim is that these differences are being erased. The euphoria emanates from 'Afro-optimists' and Sinophiles who extol the merits of China's investments in Africa as the path to African development. Their optimism flows from Africa's share of foreign direct investment and the sectoral growth achieved in some African countries in recent years (the IMF projected about 5.5 per cent growth rate in 2012). In 2011, for example, foreign direct investment to Africa grew by 27 per cent. Most of the growth has been spurred by the export of raw materials and minerals, such as oil, copper, cobalt and agricultural cash crops. From 2002 to 2007, the share of raw materials in Africa's GDP was 24 per cent, by far the leading sector. Exports of raw materials have stimulated growth in other sectors, including government spending. No surprise that China, the most important beneficiary and consumer of raw materials, has invested more than US$12 billion since 2003 in Africa (US$10 billion in 2018 alone). A side effect of this has been China's involvement in infrastructure building in African countries.

True as all this may be, the Afro-optimists would be well advised to temper their euphoria. Africa has experienced this type of commodity boom in the past (notably in the late 1960s to the early 1970s) only to go bust when conditions changed. Moreover, the reliance on commodities and their attendant infrastructure is not historically a novelty for Africa either. One needs not be an apologist of colonialism to recognise that European colonial rule did generate tremendous growth in many of the colonies. Belgian Congo, South Africa, Rhodesia, Kenya and Egypt are examples. In these countries, much of the growth was spurred by commodity exports, minerals and cash crops. And expectedly, the level of infrastructure in these countries, especially around the areas that produced the raw materials, was higher than elsewhere.

Yet colonial economic growth and its attendant infrastructure did not prevent SSA from becoming the 'poorest region'. The issue here is not colonial exploitation or Chinese exploitation. Rather, Afro-optimists fail to properly account for the reasons why SSA is 'the poorest region' and lags behind its fellow 'Third World' peers. They crave 'some good news from Africa'. Afro-optimism and Afro-pessimism should give way to 'Afro-realism'.

Table 1: SSA Lagging Socioeconomic Outcomes

YEAR		**SSA***	**MNA***	**SA/EA***	**SAM***
1960-2003	GDP(in 2000 US $)	511	2140	283	3168
	Life Exp	47	64	56	66
	Inf Mort	105	78	74	35*
	Poverty % Change**	+20	---	-21/-43	-1
1988-2003	GDP Change**	-20	+197	+103	+206
	Life Exp Change**	-2 Yrs	+3 Yrs	+4 Yrs/+1 Yrs	+2 Yrs
2003-2009	GDP Index (1980=100	98	125	201/259	112
	Life Exp	50	69.5	64/71	73
	Inf Mort	94.5	34	62/24	22.5
	Pol Strife Index (AV)	42.5	35	39/40	33
	Peace Index	96	78	75	83
2010	GDP in $ (AV)	2270	3565***	7530****	7556
2011	GDP in $ (AV)	2442	4279***	13611****	8084
2010	HDI Rank (AV)	141	87***	86****	79
2011	HDI Rank (AV)	155	99***	98****	84

*SSA=Sub-Saharan Africa; MNA=Middle East &North Africa; SA=South Asia; EA=East Asia; SAM=South America. / ** Change from previous year.
*** North Africa by itself. / **** Asia as a whole

Sources: Calculated by compiling data from World Bank, World Tables 1988-89 Edition, pp.14-15 and World Tables 1989-90 Edition, pp.2-3; World Bank, World Development Indicators, 2004; World Bank, GDP Per Capita, 2012 WWW.ata.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD; IMF, World Economic Outlook Database, April 2012 WWW.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2012/01; UNDP, Human Development Report 2005; UNDP, Human Development Report 2010 & 2011; The Fund for Peace/ Foreign Policy Magazine, "The Twelve Indicators," 2008; Institute for Economics and Peace, "Global Peace Index 2009"; Jeffrey Sachs, The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for our Time. London: Penguin Books, 2005, pp. 21, 22-23, 28-29, 70, 305.

The reality is that, although SSA still shares many socio-economic traits with North Africa, Asia and South America, it stands alone at the bottom of the comparative scale. Its socio-economic indicators lag behind those of North Africa and all other developing regions. SSA oft-repeated cases of 'success' are very small countries (e.g., Botswana or Mauritius) with no major impact on the overall development of SSA. South Africa is so beset by apartheid-era-induced internal poverty that its economic attraction to the struggling populations of other SSA countries is fraught with dangers of xenophobia and violence against these migrant populations. The data in Table 1 tell the story of Afro-realism.

The data clearly show that SSA has lagged behind North Africa and all other developing regions on all the indicators since 1960, except Asia's early GDP. Pan-Africanists either are unaware of the reality conveyed by this data or simply ignore it. As a result, they rely on three erroneous premises. First, they invoke the geographical contiguity between North Africa and SSA to advocate a common union for the two sub-regions. Certainly the importance of territorial contiguity is not to be discounted in regional groupings. However, North Africa's contiguity with SSA is not enough of a reason for a continental union with SSA. Mali, Senegal or Niger may be geographically closer to Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia than they are to Kenya, Malawi or Congo-Kinshasa; but their GDP per capita (average US$714) are closer to those of the latter three SSA countries than they are to the three North African countries (average US$4,246). Contiguity does not seem to close the gap.

Second, Pan Africanists' call for an all-Africa union is based on the negative memory and experience of colonial and Western domination shared by North Africa and SSA. From this flows the 'Africa as a great power' assumption, according to which to be heard in the world and to fend off Western or other forms of domination the whole continent of Africa must be united to create continental strength (Nkrumah 1970; Kodjo 1985; Kamgang 1993; Maathai 2009: 105–6). In truth, fending off imperialist encroachment is not exclusively African. It is the goal of all developing regions, and should not determine why an all-Africa political union is needed. Assuming that all developing regions are equally successful in fending off imperialism via their regional groupings, there still remains the gap between SSA and the three other developing regions. The issue for Africa is not how continental strength will deter and fend off Western powers, but rather why SSA lags behind North Africa and its peer developing regions and how to solve this lag. Creating a union between SSA and North Africa on the basis of shared colonial experience does not answer this question, and is not the solution.

Third, because political and economic unions have been successful in other regions of the world, Pan Africanists assume that a similar union will solve the African predicament. As the US, USSR and EU are evidence that 'l'union fait la force' that solves their problems, so, too, an all-Africa union that includes North Africa and SSA is supposed to provide the strength that solves African problems. A glaring aspect of this imitation today is the pairing of the EU and AU. Not only is the 'African Union' an imitation of the 'European Union' in naming, the Constitutive Act and Charter of AU are modelled after the EU. So are the AU institutional organs. Lost in this imitation is the question of whether the problem to be addressed and solved by the continental institution in Africa is the same as that addressed by EU? And more importantly, is the problem to be solved the same in North Africa and SSA?

SSA Organic Politics versus North Africa

I have argued that in order to propose an institutional format that solves the SSA predicament, we need to pay attention to politics and its differential socio-economic effects in North Africa and SSA. What, then, caused SSA politics and its consequences to diverge from North Africa's? The definition of politics provided above suggests that politics is inseparable from the type of society in which political competition takes place. Resources, goods and values, which are the objects of the competition, are society-based. Politics is ultimately tributary to and structured by the physical, ecological, anthropological and historical backgrounds of society.

This specification helps explain why politics in non-Western or developing countries differs from politics in Western countries. And given that politics shapes institutions and the state itself, the difference in politics also explains why political institutions and the state in Western countries differ from those in non-Western/developing countries. This is so even when these institutions are formally and in appearance similar to those of Western countries. Even routine and regular elections do not eliminate these differences as most recent events reveal: coups in Paraguay, Mali, the Maldives and Guinea Bissau – all in 2012 – and in Niger (2010), Honduras (2009) and Fiji; the rejection of election results by the opposition in Mexico (2012) and in other countries; the military's suspension of the elected parliament in Egypt in 2012; and a bloody fight in the parliament in Bolivia (2012).

Regardless of their level of economic development or regime type (democratic or authoritarian), developing countries share a common property: over-politicisation. The latter defies liberal compromise in the political competition of non-Western countries and, for this reason, distinguishes their political outcomes from those of Western countries.

Their state, in contradistinction to the liberal democratic state in Western countries, is an overpoliticised state. Liberal compromise (not just any type of compromise) means that a basic compromise about the values, beliefs and goals of the political community has been reached, taking off the table irresolvable issues. As a result, political competition leads to institutional/procedural and policy compromise and relative stability. Over-politicisation is the opposite of liberal compromise. It is a pattern of political behaviours that reflects the absence or tenuity of a compromise in politics. Because irresolvable issues are not off the table, basic compromise is hard to reach, and politics does not lead to institutional/procedural and policy compromise. Hence, the general tendency toward institutional 'instability' and 'deviations' from the Western norm (Sangmpam 2007a: 30ff).

SSA shares over-politicisation with North Africa, Asia and South America, but to different degrees and with variations. Variations in their politics and its effects are due to variations in physical, historical and anthropological backgrounds of their respective societies. What are the backgrounds (or factors) that have shaped SSA? Methodologically, SSA's lagging socio-economic indicators suggest that they are *not* caused by a factor SSA shares with the other developing regions, such as the Cold War, imperialism, colonialism, the world capitalist system, neocolonialism, deterioration of the terms of trade, dependency on foreign aid, inadequacy of aid, price control/protectionism, or the generic 'bad governance'. These shared factors cannot explain why (only) SSA has diverged from other developing regions. It stands to reason that *exceptional* factors or backgrounds explain why SSA has diverged in socio-economic terms from its peers. 'Exceptional' means that these factors either exist in all developing regions, including North Africa, but display a very unique feature in SSA, or exist only in SSA and not at all in the other regions. Compared to North Africa (and the two other developing regions), SSA has exceptional physical, historical and anthropological backgrounds that shaped its society in a peculiar way, with severe political implications. There are four such exceptional factors: geo-ecology, tribal horizontality, slavery, and extremely fragile traditional economic organisations. Only a skeletal outline is provided here.

Geo-ecology

The geo-ecology of SSA demarcates itself exceptionally from that of other regions in a negative way. Partly because of its northern boundary imposed by the Sahara desert and its consequent almost total confinement within the tropics, SSA maintains a physical/geographical unity among its sub-regions. As a result, the overall tropical climate, soil, vegetation and ecosystems of SSA

are more closely shared by its sub-regions and countries (except the Cape in South Africa) than is the case in Asia and South America (Gallup *et al.* 2003: 11–12). Compared to the two regions, SSA is the most tropical. It has the fewest benefits associated with temperate climate, monsoon and with high lands. It has the most rainforest negatives, the most savanna negatives, the most desert impact, the fewest fertile river banks/valleys, the highest soil limitations for production, the fewest navigable rivers and the most landlocked countries (except for Central Asia). SSA holds the first rank in all tropical infectious diseases (river blindness, bilharzia, sleeping sickness, Guinea worm, yellow fever, yaw disease, malaria, HIV, ebola). In short, Asia and South America hold a geo-ecological advantage over SSA (Gourou 1966: 11–12; Crosby 1986: 139; Curtin 1988: 1; Nicholson 1996: 60–84; Ofosu-Amaah 1997: 119–21; Chapman *et al.* 2001: 133–44; Maddox 2006: 1).

The overall climatic impact on North Africa differs sharply from the impact on SSA for two reasons. First, the effects of the desert are mitigated in North Africa by massive mountain ranges: the Rift Range (about 7,000 feet in elevation), the Atlas Mountains, the Anti-Atlas range, the Kabyle Range, and the Aures Range. As a result, mountain ranges in North Africa soften the noxious effects of the desert and shield North Africa's populations from its taxing impact. SSA lacks comparable mountain ranges and their benefits; its eastern highlands are no match for North Africa's. Due to its high elevations, North Africa, unlike SSA, is not home to the disease-causing tsetse fly that attacks cattle and livestock and is the main vector of sleeping sickness in humans. Although malaria has occurred in North Africa, this has been of the least fatal variety. North Africa does not have the SSA specific type of malaria-causing mosquitoes that carry and transmit the very lethal pathogen *Plasmodium falciparum*.

The second reason has to do with the real impact of the desert on populations and their livelihoods. It turns out that such an impact is far more negligible in North Africa than in SSA. Vast areas of the North African countries affected by the desert are empty. As a result, the majority of North African populations live in the cities in the northern end of the countries, along the Mediterranean coast. Or they are concentrated in the most fertile areas of the countries, such as the Nile Valley in Egypt and the Tell region, a hilly region in Algeria. This means that, despite the desert, the majority of the North African population lives in the Mediterranean climate, a transitional climate between dry tropical and temperate climate. It differs from the SSA predominant climate cluster, and makes North Africa's climate resemble that of Chile in South America and California in the US (Carpenter 1979: 79–108; Allen 1996: 307–23; Taylor 1996: 287–304; Krabacher *et al.*

2009: 104–54). Due to the Mediterranean climate, North Africa is much more productive than the Sahel and other SSA desert-affected countries (Meadows 1996: 169; Areola 1996: 145; Mones 1988: 224–45; Diamond 1999: 386). Unlike SSA, with its record-breaking landlocked territories, all North African countries have direct access to the sea, which has economic and commercial implications.

SSA's exceptional geo-ecology is, thus, overwhelmingly negative and more taxing on people than in North Africa and other regions. Although there is some direct cause-to-effect relation between SSA geo-ecology and its socio-economic outcomes, I do *not* draw such a direct causal relation. Instead, SSA's exceptional geo-ecology helps us *define intermediate exceptional factors* (variables) that it has generated and that more directly cause variations in SSA politics. Tribal horizontality, slavery, and fragile traditional economic organisations are three such intermediate exceptional factors.

Tribal Dispersal and Horizontality

SSA does not have the monopoly on 'tribes'. North Africa and other developing areas have 'tribes' as well. Yet 'tribes' in SSA and North Africa do not shape politics the same way because of their differential historical fates. What explains this difference is not colonialism, as often claimed, but the exceptional nature of SSA geo-ecology. Historians agree that the tribal distribution of Africa was more or less set between the seventh and eleventh centuries, although it continued up to the nineteenth century. The tribal distribution involved higher levels of dispersals and migrations of peoples than in most other regions because of the geo-ecological constraints they faced. In most cases, poor soil conditions, diseases, drought and famine set the limits to the population density. Quarrels ensued, and the result was new migrations and tribal splits. The most famous migration in SSA is the Bantu migration. In West Africa, in addition to Bantu migration, 'changes resulted from many small, essentially kin-based groups searching for more advantageous places to live… Soil, fertility, water supply, and distribution of disease, particularly sleeping sickness and river blindness, undoubtedly influenced settlement patterns as much then as they did later. The preferred locations developed as population centres, where many of the languages within the Atlantic, Mande, Gur, Kwa, Benue-Congo, and Adamawa-Ubangi branches of Niger-Congo originated' (Newman 1995: 107).

In Central, East and Southern Africa, migrations led to the emergence of small and dispersed tribal groups. The very slow movement of the Bantu from East Africa to Southern Africa (6 kilometres/year) and the limited fertility of soils explain the dispersal of populations in tribal settlements along the way.

The famous Shaka-Zulu-driven social and political revolution that engulfed the Nguni people from the late eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century and that reordered the tribal composition and structure of the whole of Southern Africa up to Tanzania in East Africa had its origin in the ecological imbalance, drought and dwindling land resources for herding. Wars broke out and made new tribes or amalgamated others (Ehret 1988: 616–42; Lwanga-Lunyiigo and Vansina 1988: 140-62; Ngcongco 1989: 90–123; Vansina 1992: 46–73).

By contrast, the tribal dispersal in North Africa was circumscribed and much more limited by two very powerful factors. First, the continental dispersal of populations that followed the Sahara desiccation had reduced the territorial space over which North Africans could settle. The population concentration in cities along the Mediterranean and Atlantic coasts and in the fertile valley did not allow for a vast tribal dispersal of people. Second, because the Phoenician, Roman, Arab, Ottoman and Portuguese colonisations and invasions occurred centuries, and even thousands of years, ago, they created a settlement pattern in North Africa that deterred the type of tribal profusion that occurred in SSA. Given the type of colonial rule and its longer time span, these different groups came to coexist in a form of settlement colonies, in which the invaders reordered the indigenous Berber social life politically and religiously/culturally. The integrated social order that emerged out of this reordering became vertical, dominated hierarchically by the invaders, notably the Arabs. In a sense, the 'Arab tribe' 'ate up' all other indigenous Berber tribes – despite the latter's revolts and resistance from time to time. This tribal verticality differs fundamentally from SSA tribal horizontality (I return to this concept below), where European colonialism never succeeded in reordering tribal verticality.

Thus, geo-ecology caused a higher dispersal, profusion and number of 'tribes' in SSA than in North Africa and the two other developing regions. There are about 4,600 'tribes' in SSA. North Africa (minus Western Sahara and Mauritania), by contrast, counts about 96 'tribes', most of which are Berber. SSA has about 48 times the number of 'tribes' of North Africa. It displays an 'anomaly' when compared to other regions. Indeed, SSA has had historically the lowest average population density of the three comparative regions (18 people per square kilometres versus 25 people per square kilometres in North Africa, 31 people per square kilometres in South America, and 70 people per square kilometres in Asia); yet it has the highest number of tribes. By comparison with North Africa, Asia and South America, the SSA 'tribe/population' ratio is higher. There are far more tribes per population cluster in SSA than is the case in North Africa and the

two other regions.[2] This tribal dispersal and profusion was exacerbated by slavery, thus further distancing SSA from North Africa (and contributing to SSA's tribal horizontality versus North Africa's tribal verticality).

Slavery

SSA did not hold a monopoly on slavery either. Slavery has existed in almost all continents. Yet, by any standard, slavery in SSA was exceptional because of its three exceptional features. First, slavery in SSA was the largest migration in history. It differed from all others by its highest rate of mortality and social dislocation. Second, its impact was not confined to SSA but extended to all the continents, except Oceania. In all of them there were sellers and buyers of SSA slaves. Third, its effects have persisted and endured in all the continents up to the twenty-first century as attested to by refugees (e.g., Somalia 'Bantu people' in the US), political debates, and the intractable socio-economic low status of and discriminatory practices against the descendants of the slaves in all continents. What, then, explains the exceptional nature of slavery in SSA?

The answer is SSA exceptional geo-ecology. Consider the five major reasons imputed to SSA itself to explain slavery: lack of private property, better epidemiological resistance to diseases by SSA slaves, the Ham Curse, states' weakness and inability to fend off slavers, and the active participation of SSA rulers in the slave trades. All five reasons resulted from SSA harsh geo-ecology. For space reasons, I make only bare skeletal points. In SSA, slaves were used by some individuals/rulers and by lineages. Why this reliance on slaves? Because of SSA formidable geo-ecology, a special premium was put on land. This forced the dispersed tribal groups to opt for communal land ownership. Indigenous slavery compensated, thus, for the lack of private property in land by serving as a source of private wealth for some individuals/rulers; it also served as a source of extra labour power for lineage members to alleviate the burden of the lineage and its members within such a forbidding environment. This situation imparted to SSA indigenous slavery its distinct character. Because some individuals and lineage members depended so strongly on this geo-ecology-induced wide and deep indigenous slavery system, SSA rulers easily participated in slave trades when goaded by Arabs and Europeans. As for the other causes, suffice it to mention that the epidemiological advantage of African slaves and the Ham Curse, which is linked to skin colour, are direct by-products of SSA geo-ecology that imparted to the people of SSA their phenotype and differential resistance to the parasites and disease load. The 'strong states' of South and Southeast Asia emerged in a fertile environment of intermediate tropical zone as opposed to the equatorial wet zone. In

SSA, the ever-wet and most tropical environment and the attendant tribal dispersal could allow only fragmentary and small states unable to fend off the encroaching slavers.[3]

Fragile Traditional Economic Organisations

Harsh geo-ecology had a negative impact on SSA's ability to build viable economic organisations. It is no mystery why food production did not take place as early as was the case in Asia and the Nile Valley in Egypt. The paucity of domesticable native plant species, the much smaller area suitable for indigenous production, and the often stingy climatic zones deterred such an occurrence (Diamond 1999: 376–401). The very features that made SSA geo-ecology exceptionally negative required survival and subsistence type economic activities at the expense of vibrant forms of production. Both tribal dispersal and slavery exacerbated and codified this fragile subsistence economy. Geo-ecology and tribal dispersal determined both the relations of production that came to rest on communal ownership of the land and the attendant technology that remained rudimentary. For its part, slavery reinforced the traditional economy through generalised insecurity that prevailed from roughly the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries and through its strengthening of the tribal dispersal. The latter had implications for state formation and centralisation that impacted negatively on long-term economic development (Nunn 2007).

Organic Nature of Politics and its Modifiers in SSA

Thus, geo-ecology generated three intermediate exceptional factors that modify politics in SSA: tribal dispersal, fragile traditional economies and slavery. Slavery's major impact on SSA was not, as is often maintained, the demographic loss or the fostering of autocratic rule. Although these did occur, their impact is exaggerated. Instead, slavery had three particularly severe internal consequences for SSA: it strengthened and exacerbated tribal dispersal; worsened the fragility of traditional economic organisations; and devalued SSA and its people. Tribal dispersal, fragile traditional economies, and slavery directly impact SSA politics through their three structurally exceptional effects. The first structural effect is *tribal horizontality*, which is exclusive to SSA and not observed in North Africa and the two other developing regions. Tribal horizontal relations differ from vertical ones. Tribal vertical relations are pyramidal, unequal, and dominated by one tribal ('ethnic') group politically, economically and socially. Tribal vertical relations characterise North Africa, Asia and South America, where some 'ethnic' groups dominate all other groups (Arabs in North Africa and the Middle East, Europeans or Mestizos in South

America, Han Chinese in China, Indo-Aryans in India). By contrast, tribal horizontal relations characterise SSA. Tribal horizontality rests on assumed and built-in equality among tribal groups. The expectation is that no single group dominates the others by controlling political power exclusively; power is potentially accessible to all tribal groups. And this is so even in countries such as Rwanda, where the Tutsi are temporarily dominant. The reality is that the Tutsi have not controlled power all the time or exclusively. The Hutu have also controlled power and are likely to do so again in the future. That tribal horizontality characterises SSA exclusively is the result of the tribal dispersal visited upon SSA by its exceptional geo-ecology and slavery.

The higher tribal dispersal and profusion caused by SSA geo-ecology was reinforced by slavery in all the sub-regions of SSA through consolidation and splitting. Tribal consolidation took place in those instances, where slave trades and capture dictated wars of territorial expansionism by SSA rulers and slave traders. Tribes were made bigger and new 'sub-tribes' made appendages of the expansionist tribes. The Ashanti and Bemba super-tribal groups and their relations with neighbour tribes are examples. It also occurred when some tribes coalesced to fight off enslaving forces. The Mossi are an example. Territorial splitting, on the other hand, was the main outcome of the flights of hounded populations and their resettlements in protective places. This often led to the formation of new tribes. Tribal dispersal reinforced tribal horizontality in SSA politics.

The second structural effect is *a more extreme form of socio-economic deprivation* that dominates political competition more in SSA than in North Africa and the two other regions. It is an effect of fragile traditional economies, themselves structurally conditioned by the combination of geo-ecology, slavery and tribal dispersal.

The third structural effect impacting directly on politics is *a higher level of insecurity and inferiority complex* that characterises SSA political leadership than is the case in North Africa and the other regions. It derives from the devaluation of SSA and its people by slavery in two major ways. The first way is the devaluation by outsiders, that is, people from all the other regions of the world. The reasons for this are twofold. The slave ideology contained in itself the venom of the devaluation of the people in SSA. In addition, the presence of SSA slaves in Europe, the Americas, North Africa, the Middle East and Asia had established the 'objective basis' for the denigration of their land and culture of origin as SSA. SSA slaves automatically invoke and remind one of the 'low value' of their ancestral home and people. This is made easier by the low socio-economic a standing of most descendants of slaves and the consequent social behaviours they display (e.g., crime). In

many South American countries, the descendants of slaves themselves, who are forced to denounce and dissociate themselves from SSA because of the social opprobrium they face, facilitate the devaluation.

The other slavery-derived type of devaluation is self-devaluation by the people of SSA themselves. This behaviour has deep roots in slavery and is tied up with the tale of the *white revenants*. The wealth obtained from the slave trade by Arab and European slave traders so impressed the Africans that they explained it through the social death of slaves: when slaves were taken to the Americas and the Arab world, they died. And as spirits, they reappeared as w*hite revenants* with massive wealth. This tale or myth derived from the reality of slavery of centuries ago has become 'part of the culture'. The wealth and magic of the 'white man' are held in higher esteem, and one can accede to it only through sorcery-sanctioned death of a human being. Consider here the ritual killings of Albinos in Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya, Burundi and Congo for wealth making. Consider also the routine invocation of the link between sorcery and wealth and fortune in SSA music and daily scenes. Slavery did not create sorcery, but it fortified it. The death of slaves and of the sorcerer's victim is the symbolic devaluation of Africans by Africans themselves in the face of the 'white man's' wealth and prestige. Because myths become routine, they acquire structural strength by becoming 'reality'. Both the intelligentsia and the populace in SSA recognise the daily empirical manifestations of this situation. A Ghanaian returnee best summed it up: 'Nothing pleases a Ghanaian worker more than to have a white boss. The more abusive the boss the better, and the more endearing the staff are to them.' He contrasted this attitude to the aversion of the same Ghanaian workers and populace to value their fellow Ghanaian bosses (Awuah 2006: 2). Slavery-derived devaluation of SSA by both outsiders and the people of SSA themselves creates a complex of superiority for the outsiders and of inferiority for the people of SSA. It adds an extra layer on top of the colonial devaluation SSA shares with all colonised non-European peoples. It has implications for politics.

Thus, tribal dispersal, slavery, and fragile traditional economies modify politics and directly impact it through their three structural effects. A characteristic feature of the three is their *organic and systemic nature* as highlighted in four specific areas. First, they all relate to and bear the imprint of SSA's exceptional geo-ecology. Second, the three determine and reinforce each other: tribal dispersal and fragile traditional economies prevented the emergence of 'strong' states to fend off slavery; slavery, in turn, exacerbated tribal dispersal and the fragility of traditional economies; tribal dispersal codified and put its imprint on traditional economies (e.g., collective land ownership and subsistence), which, in turn, reinforce tribal dispersal by

provoking the overuse and degradation of the land and soils and, hence, the migrations of the populations to new settlements. Third, the three factors are found in all SSA sub-regions. Although the three factors and the underlying geo-ecology display variations in individual countries, they impact directly or indirectly on all SSA countries alike. Fourth, their three structural effects are found in all SSA countries and directly affect politics in roughly the same way. In this sense, they are to their variations in individual SSA countries what the trunk of a tree is to the branches. Attempts to save one or several dying branches of an infected tree remain ineffective unless one treats the infected trunk of the tree.

As structural effects, tribal horizontality, the more extreme form of socio-economic deprivation, and the more acute form of inferiority complex make SSA politics exceptional when compared to politics in the other developing regions. This process is more complex than can be analysed here. Suffice it to say that because of the three factors, politics, which is by definition conflict-ridden, acquires in SSA *a more Hobbesian character* than in the other developing regions. Political compromise, generally difficult to reach in developing regions, is made even more so in SSA. Because politics makes and shapes the state, exceptional politics in SSA makes its state exceptional as well. Herein lies the difference between the SSA variant of the over-politicised state and that of North Africa and the two other regions. This explains why in SSA the institutions of the state have been more predatory and viciously appropriated by some groups or individuals, often and almost always tied up with tribal claims and interests; e.g. why extreme forms of political buffoonery verging on sadism have occurred there (e.g., Idi Amin, Bokasa, Doe, Abacha); why SSA has brewed more civil wars than any other developing region; why it has a higher political strife index and lower peace index than the other developing regions; why in the 'consolidated democracy era', SSA has witnessed the larger number of military coups (e.g., in Mauritania, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Madagascar, Niger, Mali); and why there are more so-called 'failed states' in SSA than in the other developing regions.

Yet we know that the state is the institutional format through which public policies are taken to tackle the problems of security, welfare and the conflicting demands on scarce resources. In other words, it is the state that is the catalyst for socio-economic development. The viciously Hobbesian character of politics in SSA and its variant of the over-politicised state prevent the state from acting as such. Beyond the causes of 'Third World underdevelopment' SSA shares with the other regions, it is the cumulative result of this exceptional political competition that explains the gap in socio-economic outcomes between SSA and North Africa (and other developing regions) as shown in Table 1.

Unifederation as the Organic Institutional Solution

The consequences of politics in SSA are, thus, different. The causes of the SSA lag are *organically embedded in the SSA fabric*. They systemically affect all SSA sub-regions and countries, albeit with local variations. The design of the institutional format apt to solve SSA predicament needs to reflect and respond to these organic differential causes and consequences of politics. In light of this, the natural impulse to let each SSA country fend for itself and solve its own development problems loses its rationale. This includes the impulse to rely on 'ethnicity' as the basis for political reorganisation in each country. Ethiopia, the first SSA country to clearly subscribe to the strategy of reorganising the polity on the basis of 'ethnicity', has not moved away from the collective fate of other SSA countries. Solutions to individual SSA countries may temporarily impact local variations and alleviate some aspects of the predicament. But they will not solve the problem for the organic SSA. The shared causes and 'untreated' countries, like the infected trunk of a tree and its untreated branches, will re-infect the 'treated' ones. For the manifestations and causes of the SSA predicament resemble the Greek mythological hydra, the gigantic monster with nine heads, all of which were anchored by a central immortal head. As one head was cut off, two grew in its place. Only by burning out the roots and severing the immortal central head from the body did Heracles destroy the monster. Whatever country-based solution is proposed to SSA socio-economic ills will not be able to sever the immortal central head of the hydra. It will not treat the infected trunk of the tree. For example, the socio-economic situation of Congo-Kinshasa was relatively better than that of Rwanda before the 1990s. So was that of Côte d'Ivoire compared to its neighbours. Today both Congo and Côte d'Ivoire are 'basket cases' because failure to solve Rwanda's and Côte d'Ivoire's neighbours' problems has re-infected Congo and Côte d'Ivoire via tribal political strife. The need to respond to the organic socio-economic outcomes in SSA and their causes requires that the response be organic as well. The common pitfall of Pan Africanists is to be oblivious to the specifically organic nature of the SSA predicament. The latter requires the administrative and political separation of SSA from North Africa (hence the repudiation of the AU) and the urgent need to organically tackle the predicament for SSA as a separate whole.

What, then, is the institutional answer for SSA? The concept of organic SSA militates against country-based solutions and regional economic organisations that emulate those proposed in other developing (and developed) regions. It also militates against identity-seeking Pan Africanism that links SSA to its dispersed diaspora. Although there remains a historical and 'racial' bond

between SSA and its slavery-created diaspora in the world, SSA issues are no more the diaspora's than they are North Africa's. The problems faced by SSA differ from those experienced by its diaspora. Rather, the concept requires that the solution for SSA *differs radically* from that proposed for other regions. To devise such an organic institutional solution, one needs to answer the question of how to tackle the organic causes of SSA socio-economic lag.

The answer is *the state*, the institutional format through which public policies are devised to tackle the problems of socio-economic development. Although the state is made and shaped by politics, the state and its institutions structure politics in return. SSA rests on a paradox. The causes of exceptional politics and of the SSA variant of the over-politicised state are organically regional and applicable to SSA as a whole; yet the (over-politicised) states themselves are national and 'sovereign'. The challenge is to make the state as regionally organic as the causes of exceptional politics so as to allow it (the state) to structure and shape politics positively in return for SSA as a whole. Such a revolutionary transformation of the state, which makes it the centre of decisions for the whole of SSA, requires that the national state lose its sovereignty.

In contrast to the EU model copied by AU and the generally loose and functional integrative model that guides most regional integrations, SSA should rely on a *tight integrative model* that reflects its organic exceptionalism. A tight integrative model assumes unique sovereignty of the integrative state as opposed to multiple sovereignties of the constitutive states. It rests on rearranging the SSA political space that dismantles the highly instrumentalist national state to allow its transformation into a SSA organic state.

The rearrangement involves a new institutional format. Let me resort to a neologism to refer to this institutional format as a *Unifederation.* By Unifederation I mean a reconfigured and unified political and territorial body whose local and sub-regional entities make no claim to complete sovereignty as in the AU and other regional groupings in the world. Neither do they claim complete but progressively delegated sovereignty as in the EU. Nor is their claim about 'residual sovereignty', which is the source of interpretative frictions between the federal government and the states in the US (Tribe 2000). Rather, local and sub-regional entities are decentralised under the complete and unified sovereignty of a newly constituted SSA multi-territorial state. Unlike other regional groupings, in which institutional decisions are either not binding or loosely and selectively binding, the new institutions attached to the SSA organic state impose sovereign and constraining obligations on all members. It also means that territorial borders separating the previously sovereign countries lose their meaning as a new geo-spatial space is created.

The idea of decentralisation implies autonomy for the decentralised entities. In this sense, the Unifederation has much in common with federalism. Yet this does not make the SSA situation less exceptional. Federalism, like unitarism and confederalism, is a simple institutional means to manage power relations within a state. It can be and has been adopted by small and big countries alike without overshadowing the *historical reasons* that led to federalism. The fact that SSA adopts a form of federalism does not mean that its reasons for doing so are similar to those of Canada or the US. Its historical uniqueness is that, institutionally, it maintains the decentralisation and practical autonomy of its constitutive entities while deriving its unique sovereignty *from the organic nature of the causes* of the SSA predicament. The Unifederation reflects SSA exceptionalism.

Conclusion: Payoffs and Feasibility

An SSA-centred Unifederation with its unique sovereignty would help to better overcome the organic causes of SSA exceptional politics and the attendant lagging socio-economic outcomes than do the current individual states. It can do so because it is the centre of decisions for the whole SSA, targeting roughly the same problems in all SSA sub-regions. It is the means through which a unified and purposeful policy can tackle, beyond national variations, the organic nature of the factors that modify politics negatively in SSA. There are four specific payoffs.

First, the Unifederation sets up conditions for democratisation through territorial reorganisation. By rearranging the geopolitical and economic space at the SSA level, the unifederal organic state frees the competing groups from their dependence on the national instrumentalist state. The freeing leads to broader and multi-territorial political coalitions within the unifederal larger space. Previously competing groups at the national state level, including tribal groups easily mobilised by the prospect of equality offered by tribal horizontality, have now to contend with many other groups of similar strength or coalitions of many groups at the unifederal level from all the sub-regions of SSA. This creates a perfect or semi-perfect equilibrium of political forces. The result is a search for compromise. Compromise begets democracy. Unifederal broader political coalitions minimise the fear of domination and injustice generally felt by minority groups and regions. They also blunt any claim of 'greatness' harboured by some tribal groups or regions.

As a second payoff, the unifederal organic state provides the political framework and means to tackle SSA's socio-economic lag. Because the fragility of traditional economic organisations is for a major part due to SSA harsh geo-ecology, it is almost impossible for individual countries to solve

the latter's intractable socio-economic consequences. The unifederal organic state remedies this situation by being the centre of decisions for the whole of SSA; it provides resources and coordination in the transformation of traditional economies. It allows different sub-regions of SSA to compensate for their specific geo-ecological disadvantages by benefiting from the geo-ecological advantages of the other sub-regions. Because of its rearranged socio-economic space, it reduces tribal dispersal and horizontality and, thus, transforms the traditional forms of economic organisations. Only within such a rearranged space can the much-talked about and much-needed land reform, improvement in rural agricultural production and upgrading of human resources and skills succeed in SSA. Successful integrated industrialisation is possible only with these improvements.

Most studies on globalisation cite SSA as the region the least integrated into the current global economy. Because it is a better institutional solution, the Unifederation accommodates globalisation better than does the AU or individual countries. It uses its unique sovereignty to dictate the direction and goal of SSA integrated involvement in world markets as opposed to being dictated serially by global actors. Moreover, the Unifederation allows for a more vibrant and open economic and political system, a bigger and organically integrated geographical space, and a larger and more skilled population. These conditions favour globalisation's information technology, foreign investments, international travel, trade, financial markets and the movement of capital in SSA.

Third, the Unifederation addresses the issue of SSA's inferiority complex. Much of the devaluation of the African self results from SSA's extreme form of economic deprivation. The expected socio-economic payoffs of the unifederal organic state have the added benefit of curing the people of SSA of their complex of inferiority vis-à-vis economically better-endowed outsiders. Beyond this, the Unifederation deters and eliminates the policy consequences of the acute insecurity and inferiority complex felt by the political leadership. Indeed, Unifederal broader political coalitions and the attendant equilibrium of political forces deprive the political leadership of its three main allies in enacting inferiority complex-driven policies: the leader's own arbitrariness, his fellow tribesmen and unenlightened expatriates. Unifederal coalitions constrain the leader's freedom of arbitrary actions; render insignificant his tribe's or region's support in the face of other coalesced tribes and regions; and take away the usually exorbitant power and influence expatriates have over political leaders.

Fourth, because it rearranges the SSA space, democratises it, and stands as the centre of sovereign decisions, the Unifederation helps eliminate

the conditions that breed strife, civil wars, militarism and undemocratic behaviours. It fosters peace. Hence disappears the need for costly military assistance or interventions by the US and other SSA 'partners'. The socio-economic outcomes of the Unifederation enhance security and deter the conditions that have emboldened Islamists and Al Qaeda in SSA. Moreover, they reduce the need for US and other foreign powers' development assistance (as was the case with US assistance to Europe, Japan and South Korea). The Unifederation helps, thus, reach the goal of Pan Africanists – deterring foreign encroachments – without resorting to the ill-conceived continental union with North Africa.

The 'unification of Africa', as proposed by Pan Africanists, has often been derided as a 'pipe dream' by critics. The scepticism is likely to be strengthened now that the EU, the model for the AU, is facing an existential crisis. AU aforementioned growing pains are likely to serve as powerful re-enforcers for the sceptics. In fact, the election of the South African Dlamini-Zuma as the AU commissioner strengthened the position of the AU wing opposed to a rush to political union. The scepticism is justified. An AU-driven 'unification of Africa' is indeed a pipe dream. Not so much because it is difficult to implement as because it *will not solve* SSA lagging socio-economic outcomes. By contrast, the Unifederation is not a pipe dream because it squarely addresses SSA's lagging outcomes and their organic causes. It has the chances of fundamentally altering SSA's status as the 'poorest region' of the world. Reliance on individual SSA countries' ability to make themselves 'the next Asia' and the excessive faith of Sinophiles in China's ability to develop SSA are the real pipe dreams. China or India will not eliminate the organic causes of SSA's socio-economic lag. Unless people in SSA have resigned to their fate and have accepted at the outset that they will always occupy the last rank, compared to all other developing regions, only SSA itself can do this. And the Unifederation is the way. Unlike the AU, the Unifederation passes the only feasibility test that matters: how the institution addresses the organic causes of SSA politics and socio-economic lag.

Yet one has to still deal with the question of how to actually implement the project. Proposing today that the AU be dismantled would seem to be pure folly in the face of the efforts deployed by Pan Africanists for the last 50 years. Actually, it is not. The AU has performed one major positive deed that facilitates its own demise in favour of the Unifederation. And this is the establishment of constitutional norms in its Constitutive Act that join and are consistent with the two most powerful movements of the post-1991 period: globalisation and democratisation. Indeed, under the aegis of the AU, all SSA countries have been sensitised to today's international democratic norms,

even when the AU itself does not always follow them in some disputed cases. Sensitisation to the democratic norms serves, thus, as the necessary transitional period before the implementation of the Unifederation. It has provided the masses in SSA with enough incentives and means to redirect their efforts democratically toward implementing the Unifederation.

Relying on the democratic gains of the last 20 years, the implementation should feature two concomitant strategies. First, at the national level, where the popular masses fight for democracy. Each SSA country organising elections or other non-electoral actions should feature political parties and mass organisations that explain to the general populations why SSA lags socio-economically behind its previously equal fellow 'Third World' regions; why the solutions proposed since independence by their nation states and leaders have not worked; and why the AU, the organisation aimed at solving the problem at the continental level, is ineffective when compared to the SSA-based Unifederation. Second, at the AU elite level, where the AU edifice was built. The frustrated elite and 'intellectuals', who have worked within the AU bureaucracy only to decry its ineffectiveness, should join the masses in the fight for the dismantling of the AU and its transformation into an SSA Unifederation. Their expert advice and clear understanding of the causes of their frustration and of the unavoidable failure of the AU should strengthen the democratic process of liquidating the AU in favour of the Unifederation. We, thus, have both a bottom-up and a top-down strategy of implementing the Unifederation project.

The implementation process benefits greatly from globalisation's lower communication costs and breakdown of trade and cultural barriers among countries. By challenging state sovereignty, globalisation facilitates the process of territorial and sovereignty rearrangement dear to the Unifederation. Globalisation allows people in SSA to challenge the 'tyranny of place' associated with the current SSA state. As one of the legacies of the Westphalia Treaty of 1648, state sovereignty is not as sacrosanct as is believed. USSR, Czechoslovakia, and East and West Germany are examples of altered sovereignty in two opposite directions.

As high as the hurdles faced by this process seem, they are by far the more salutary for SSA than the 'growing pains' of the AU, which will never eliminate the gap between SSA and other developing regions. The choice is between the status quo and its attendant perpetual lowest ranking for SSA, on the one hand, and the implementation of a salutary intellectual alternative for a positive transformation, on the other. The difference between these two options can be measured. Ask the best statisticians in the world to gather all the available data. Let them calculate and compare

the human, economic, financial, political and psychological costs of maintaining the status quo represented by the AU and SSA today and of implementing the alternative in the form of a Unifederation. There is no doubt that the cost of the status quo for SSA is exponentially higher than the cost of implementing the alternative.

Notes

1. Haile Selassie of Ethiopia, the author of the compromise, recognised that political union was the only solution for the predicament.
2. Data were computed from Yakan (1999), perhaps the only relatively exhaustive and encyclopedic description of tribal groups in all African countries. Population density was calculated by using figures from Hammond (1990: 48); World Bank (1989: 221); Krabacher *et al.* (2009: 104–53); Madison (2001: 175).
3. There is a vast literature on slavery. This paper is informed by Curtin (1968); Miers and Kopytoff (1977); Rodney (1982); Lovejoy (1986; 2000); Meillassoux (1991); Thornton (1992); Inikory (1992); Manning (1996); Fage (2002).

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Appréhender la pauvreté pour mieux la réduire : nécessité de prise en compte des perceptions et représentations locales pour un meilleur impact des projets et politiques en Afrique subsaharienne

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Résumé

La pauvreté est devenue une réalité endémique de l'Afrique subsaharienne. Cependant, la définir et la mesurer constituent de grands défis conceptuels et méthodologiques non relevés. Par ailleurs, plusieurs projets et politiques sont élaborés suivant les conceptions et mesures globalisées de la pauvreté aux fins d'assurer un mieux-être aux populations pauvres. Ces initiatives ont montré leurs limites quant à leur impact réel sur l'amélioration des conditions de vie des bénéficiaires. Pourtant, les perceptions et représentations sociales de la pauvreté sont aussi riches, abondantes que diversifiées dans la plupart des pays d'Afrique subsaharienne et leur prise en compte dans l'élaboration des projets et politiques aiderait à améliorer leur impact sur les pauvres.

Mots-clés : pauvreté, projets, politiques, représentation sociale, perception

Abstract

Poverty has become an endemic reality in sub-Saharan Africa. However, defining and measuring it remain major conceptual and methodological challenges that remain unresolved. In addition, several projects and policies aimed at improving livelihood for the poor are developed using globalized concepts and measures of poverty. These initiatives have shown their

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limitations as to their actual impact in improving the living conditions of beneficiaries. Yet perceptions and social representations of poverty are as enriching, abundant, and diverse in most sub-Saharan African countries, and their inclusion in project and policy development would help to improve their impact on the poor.

Keywords: poverty, projects, policies, social representation, perception

Introduction

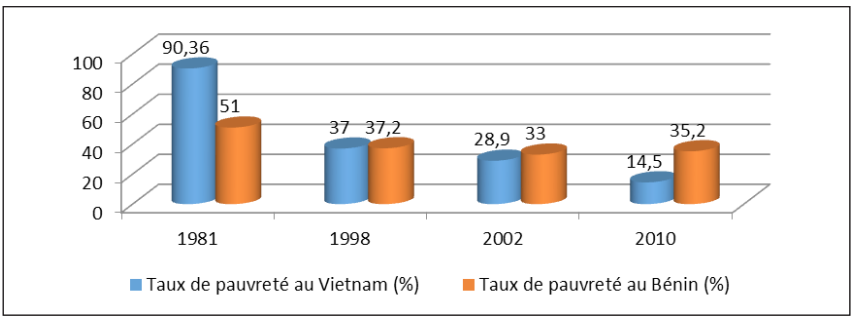
La question de la pauvreté et de son traitement est récurrente dans la pensée sur le développement. Tous les « pionniers du développement » depuis les années 1940 ont abordé chacun à sa manière ce sujet central d'économie politique. En effet, depuis plus d'un demi-siècle, l'attention du monde est fixée sur un fléau qui touche des milliards de personnes de part et d'autre de la planète : la pauvreté. Depuis les années 1980, toujours plus nombreux sont les individus qui se trouvent acculés à élaborer une stratégie pour survivre. Que l'on soit sociologue, démographe, médecin, économiste, il est actuellement devenu impensable de l'ignorer et de ne pas l'évoquer dans ses réflexions ou études. Par ailleurs, la réalité de maintes sociétés africaines est marquée par un faible développement économique et une persistance de la pauvreté (Dieng 2014). Cependant, il est important de souligner que lorsqu'elle touche une masse importante de personnes, la pauvreté ne lèse pas seulement les pauvres, tous les membres de la société en subissent les conséquences et il n'est de l'intérêt de personne qu'elle se perpétue (IFAD 2001). Pour cela, Espindola (2002) estime que la pauvreté continue de mettre en danger les populations de notre planète. Ainsi, Gabas et Laporte (2012) estiment que « La pauvreté et la misère qui existent dans le monde menacent la sécurité de tout un chacun ». On pourrait en effet établir une relation étroite entre la pauvreté et les menaces environnementales, le développement du phénomène d'immigration, d'exode rural, la prolifération des maladies infectieuses, la montée des violences de tout genre, etc. De même, l'avancée de la déforestation dans le monde en général et dans les pays sous-développés en particulier, l'appauvrissement des terres et des plans d'eau, la pollution et l'assèchement de nombreux fleuves, lacs et rivières, les tentatives d'immigrations clandestines à haut risque de certains habitants des pays sous-développés pour atteindre les pays de l'Occident, la multiplication des révolutions et soulèvements populaires dans les pays du tiers-monde, etc. sont autant d'exemples qui appellent à s'atteler durablement à la lutte contre la pauvreté. De ce fait, depuis le sommet mondial des Nations unies en 2002 qui a consacré la définition des OMD, l'éradication de la pauvreté n'est plus perçue seulement comme essentielle, mais comme urgente pour l'atteinte

de la durabilité environnementale (Chokor 2004) et celle de la survie de l'espèce humaine. Ainsi, Bedock *et al.* (2012), dans une étude portant sur un échantillon de pays (33 sur 48), ont abouti à un large consensus sur le fait que la plupart des gens voient la pauvreté comme le problème mondial le plus important. Pourtant, au niveau international, il n'existe de consensus ni sur les concepts, les idées et les méthodes de mesure, ni sur les outils de politique visant la réduction de la pauvreté et les inégalités (Gabas & Laporte 2012). Le présent article est une analyse critique qui vise à montrer le caractère endémique de la pauvreté en Afrique subsaharienne, la limite de sa définition et des méthodes de sa mesure dans une vision globalisée qui aboutit à la conception de projets et de politiques pour sa réduction, et leur contraste avec les perceptions locales et représentations sociales des pauvres eux-mêmes. En outre, il fait ressortir la richesse, l'abondance et la diversité des perceptions locales et représentations sociales de la pauvreté en Afrique subsaharienne dont la prise en compte dans l'élaboration et la mise en œuvre des projets et politiques de réduction de la pauvreté aiderait à améliorer leur impact sur le bien-être des pauvres.

Débats sur l'évolution de la pauvreté dans le monde et en Afrique

Selon Espindola (2006), en termes absolus, le monde compte plus de pauvres qu'il y a cinquante ans. Le rapport de développement humain (PNUD 2014) estime que 1,5 milliard de personnes dans 91 pays en développement vivent en situation de pauvreté marquée par des carences cumulées en matière de santé, d'éducation et de niveau de vie. En outre, selon la Banque mondiale (2012), de nos jours, plus d'un milliard d'habitants sur notre planète, dont près de la moitié en Afrique, vivent dans une situation de pauvreté extrême, avec moins de 1 dollar par jour. Ainsi, les données mondiales sont particulièrement révélatrices de la situation du continent africain où plusieurs pays sont considérés comme les plus pauvres de la planète (PNUD 2010 ; Lemay 2011). De ce fait, la réalité de maintes sociétés africaines est marquée par un faible développement et une persistance de la pauvreté (Dieng 2014). Pourtant, la situation des économies africaines permettait beaucoup d'espoir au début des indépendances. En effet, dans les années 1950, les économies africaines étaient en plein essor avec la montée des prix des matières premières due à la forte demande venant de l'Asie, la reconstruction de l'Europe et la forte croissance des États-Unis d'Amérique. Ainsi, à la fin de l'ère coloniale dans les années 1960, il y avait un grand espoir pour l'Afrique en ce qui concerne l'autosuffisance et la prospérité. Mais à partir des années 1970, cet espoir s'est estompé progressivement, alors que la plupart des autres parties du monde, à savoir l'Amérique du

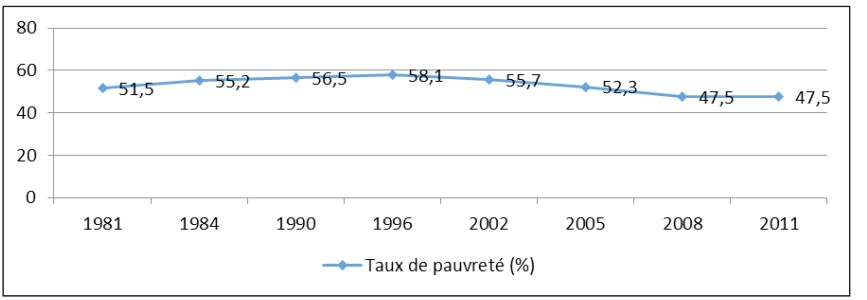
Sud et l'Asie de l'Est, qui avaient des situations similaires et parfois plus désastreuses que celles des pays africains au début des années 1960, ont connu une croissance solide et parfois spectaculaire. Par exemple, en Asie de l'Est et au Pacifique, notamment sous l'impulsion de la Chine, la réduction de la pauvreté est spectaculaire (mai 2014). Selon ce dernier, le Vietnam et d'autres pays comme le Laos, les Philippines et le Cambodge ont vu leur taux de pauvreté diminuer significativement dans la dernière décennie. En effet, selon lui, en 2011, seulement 161 millions de personnes vivent avec moins de 1,25 dollar par jour dans cette région du monde (soit 7,9 % de la population), alors qu'elles étaient plus d'un milliard en 1981 (78 % de la population). Selon les conclusions du Forum économique mondial (2008), l'Afrique comptait en 1970, 10 pour cent des pauvres du monde, mais ce taux est passé à 50 pour cent en 2000. En outre, même si toutes les régions du monde ont vu l'extrême pauvreté reculer au cours des trente dernières années, le constat pour l'Afrique subsaharienne est moins positif. Ainsi, la part de la population concernée par l'extrême pauvreté n'a que légèrement reculé en 30 ans en Afrique (47,5 % en 2011 contre 51,5 % en 1981) (Jacquemot 2012). C'est le seul continent où le nombre de personnes extrêmement pauvres a augmenté. En effet, le nombre de pauvres a doublé sur la même période en passant de 210 millions en 1981 à 415 millions en 2011 (Banque mondiale 2012). Les illustrations sur les graphiques 1, 2 et 3 ci-dessous permettent d'affiner la comparaison.



Graphique 1 : Évolution des taux de pauvreté au Vietnam et au Bénin de 1981 à 2010

Source : Banque Mondiale (2012), Mai (2014), INSAE (2002, 2011)

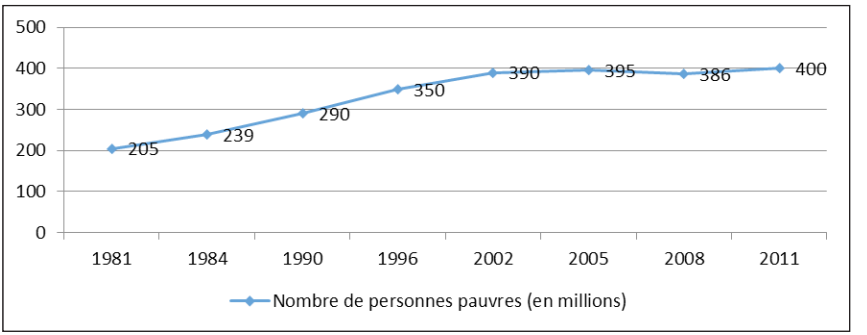
L'analyse du graphique 1 montre qu'en 1981, le Vietnam était plus pauvre que le Bénin avec un taux de pauvreté près de deux fois supérieur à celui du Bénin. Mais à partir de la décennie 2000, cette tendance s'est totalement inversée et en 2010, le Vietnam a affiché un taux de pauvreté plus de deux fois inférieur à celui du Bénin.



Graphique 2 : Évolution du taux de pauvreté en Afrique subsaharienne de 1981 à 2011

Source : Banque mondiale (2012), Jacquemot (2012)

L'analyse du graphique 2 montre que le taux de pauvreté en Afrique subsaharienne n'a pas baissé significativement pendant trois décennies, passant seulement de 51,5 pour cent en 1981 à 47,5 pour cent en 2011.



Graphique 3 : Évolution du nombre de personnes vivant en situation de pauvreté en Afrique subsaharienne de 1981 à 2011

Source : Banque mondiale (2012) ; Jacquemot (2012)

L'analyse du graphique 3 montre qu'en Afrique subsaharienne, le nombre de personnes vivant en situation de pauvreté a presque doublé en trois décennies, passant de 205 millions en 1981 à 400 millions en 2011.

De tout ce qui précède, on est tenté de se demander les raisons de cette persistance de la pauvreté, surtout en rapport avec les ressources naturelles considérables dont regorgent les pays africains, mais cela amène aussi à poser la question de l'utilité de l'aide publique au développement. Par ailleurs, plusieurs questions se posent quant à la pertinence des approches de définition et de mesure de la pauvreté elle-même.

La pauvreté, un concept multidimensionnel et complexe à appréhender

Selon Charbonnel (2014), alors que tout un chacun a son idée sur le sens du mot, la pauvreté reste cependant, au sens sociologique du terme, une prénotion, c'est-à-dire une idée vague et latente pour rendre compte d'une réalité sociale, laquelle est également désignée par les termes de « misère », « indigence », « situations défavorisées ». Sa définition fait dès lors l'objet de multiples débats, donnant lieu à des concepts différents. En effet, le concept de pauvreté ne fait pas l´objet d´une définition unique, malgré l´abondante littérature sur le sujet (Lipton & Ravallion 1995). Cependant, pour Gaudreault (2013), la pauvreté fait l'unanimité sur un point : il s'agit d'un concept complexe, dont la définition varie considérablement selon les auteurs, les contextes et les époques. Selon lui, la pauvreté laisse place à de nombreuses controverses, autant dans la communauté scientifique que pour le sens commun, puisqu'aucune définition n'est d'emblée admise comme universellement valide. En outre, selon Thorbecke (2008), la plupart des questions qui restent non résolues en matière d'analyse de la pauvreté sont directement ou indirectement liées à sa nature multidimensionnelle et à sa dynamique. D'après Barrat (1998) cité par Nganda Afumba (2011:18), étymologiquement le concept « pauvreté » provient du latin *paupertas, paupertatis,* qui veut dire : « état d'une personne qui manque de moyens matériels, d'argent ; insuffisance de ressources » (Barrat 1998). Cependant, on distingue deux écoles de pensée qui se sont intéressées à la définition de la pauvreté, à savoir l'école welfariste et les non welfaristes. Cette dernière se subdivisant entre l'approche en termes de capacité et en termes de besoin de base. Mais la constante est que le pauvre est celui à qui il manque « quelque chose ». Les écoles se différencient par ce qu'elles mettent sous ce « quelque chose ». Ainsi, l'approche welfariste estime que la chose manquante est le bien-être économique, qu'il revient à chacun de définir. Un individu avec une grande maison, sans véhicule pourra se dire pauvre alors même qu'un autre vivant dans une case, sans mobilier ni voiture pourra se dire comblé. Le premier est donc pauvre tandis que le second ne l'est pas. Pour pallier le caractère subjectif de cette approche, ce qui est pris en compte, c'est le revenu réel et les dépenses de consommation comme indicateur du bien-être économique. Selon Moustapha et Vodounou (2001), par rapport à l´éventail des dimensions du bien-être considéré, les « welfaristes » centrent leur approche sur le niveau de vie. C´est l´approche couramment utilisée par les économistes évaluant le bien-être à partir de la consommation réelle de biens et de services matériels. Les « non welfaristes » privilégient une vision sociale plus large et mettent l´accent sur les droits et les opportunités des personnes en termes d´accès aux ressources et de consommation potentielle (Sen 1982, 1987). Selon Sen (2002), la pauvreté pourrait se définir comme

une privation de liberté, de capacités et de droits d'accès. Pour Bastiaensen *et al.* (2005), elle pourrait aussi se traduire par l'exclusion des pauvres du processus institutionnel local. À cet effet, Prévost (2011:33) estime que « les trappes à pauvreté dont les populations les plus démunies n'arrivent pas à s'arracher résultent d'un cumul de privations qui sont enracinées dans les institutions ».

Par ailleurs, la réduction de la pauvreté est devenue une préoccupation majeure de la politique du développement. De ce fait, pour éclairer les décideurs politiques, la recherche en matière de pauvreté s'est concentrée sur des mesures de la pauvreté fondée sur le revenu ou la consommation. Selon cette approche de mesure de la pauvreté fondée sur le revenu, la pauvreté est simplement un manque de revenus ou de consommation (Datt & Ravallion 1992). Selon ses défenseurs, une personne est pauvre lorsque son niveau de revenu ou de consommation est inférieur à un seuil, défini comme étant le minimum requis au regard des standards de la société considérée. Il y a pauvreté lorsque certaines personnes, dans une société donnée, ont si peu de revenus qu'elles ne peuvent pas subvenir à des besoins de base définis par rapport à la société. La Banque mondiale, en ce qui la concerne, se préoccupe aussi de la pauvreté depuis son rapport sur le développement dans le monde de 1990. Elle a adopté un seuil de pauvreté absolue exprimé en termes monétaires qui définit comme pauvre toute personne dont le revenu est inférieur à un dollar par jour. En outre, selon Nolan et Whelan (2010), la recherche et le suivi de la pauvreté dans les pays riches reposent premièrement sur le revenu des ménages qui permet de cerner les conditions de vie standard et de distinguer les pauvres. Ainsi, la plupart des recherches sur la pauvreté en Europe prennent comme point de départ que les individus sont pauvres quand leurs ressources sont largement en dessous de celles recommandées. Mais pour Nolan et Whelan (2010), le manque de revenu n'est pas l'unique type de privations dans de nombreux aspects de leur vie, au-delà de ceux qui sont définis comme constituant les besoins de base, même s'ils ont à leur disposition suffisamment de biens. Cependant, ce seuil de pauvreté pose évidemment de nombreux problèmes théoriques : est-ce qu'une famille située juste au-dessus de ce seuil vit dans des conditions réellement différentes d'une famille dite « pauvre » ? Le patrimoine n'est pas pris en compte, or il influence largement les conditions de vie. Et surtout, ce seuil de pauvreté est unidimensionnel, il ne tient compte que du niveau de revenu : les ressources non monétaires (réseaux familiaux et communautaires, autoconsommation, statuts sociaux) n'apparaissent pas (Lazarus 2012). En effet, la définition de la pauvreté basée sur le revenu ou la consommation est très contestée, car elle ne tient pas compte des variations des prix à l'intérieur de chaque pays, pas plus que de l'acquisition

de biens hors du marché (Bey 1999:875-876 ; Codjo 2014:45-46). Ainsi, selon Girard et Schéou (2013), la pauvreté n'est pas réductible à une question de richesse monétaire quotidienne et l'on sait qu'elle varie en fonction de nombreux critères géographiques, culturels, sociologiques, psychologiques, etc. ; ainsi, « cette conception réductrice de la pauvreté se traduit par une catégorisation parfois arbitraire et stigmatisante, qui marque du sceau de la pauvreté des personnes qui ne se considèrent pas forcément comme telles, avec pour conséquence de se tromper potentiellement de cible et, dans certains cas, de contribuer à un passage de la pauvreté à la misère ». Dans le même sens, Fontaine (2007) estime que la pauvreté n'est pas seulement un état dont les seuils seraient facilement repérables : c'est un phénomène relatif, socialement construit et qui dépend des perceptions que chacun a de soi et de son environnement. Sen (1987) considère comme insuffisantes les approches fondées sur les moyens (les revenus par exemple) et celles fondées sur les instruments (tels que les droits) dans l'évaluation du bien-être. Sa conception exprimée en termes de « capacités » revient à privilégier les « libertés substantielles qui permettent à un individu de mener le genre de vie qu'il a raison de souhaiter ». En outre, la notion de « capacités », sous son inspiration, devient centrale et oriente fortement l'approche de mesure de pauvreté adoptée par le PNUD. En effet, le PNUD fonde son approche de la pauvreté sur la question des inégalités d'accès à un certain nombre de ressources (Bey 1999 ; Codjo 2014). Cette approche fait référence à deux principaux indicateurs que sont : l'Indicateur de développement humain (IDH) et l'Indicateur de pauvreté humaine (IPH). L'IDH prend en compte l'espérance de vie, le niveau de connaissance, le PIB réel par habitant tandis que l'IPH prend en compte la longévité, le savoir, les conditions de vie et l'exclusion, l'accès à l'eau potable, à la santé, etc. Selon le PNUD (2010), en général, dans les pays en voie de développement, la pauvreté est caractérisée suivant trois dimensions principales, à savoir, le manque de revenu et de sécurité économique, le manque d'accès aux infrastructures et aux services sociaux de base indispensables au développement humain (santé, eau et éducation de base) et le manque de pouvoir de société. Il estime en effet que le défi que représente la lutte contre la pauvreté exige une offre suffisante d'infrastructures de base et une participation plus accrue des pauvres dans la sphère décisionnelle.

Ainsi, les défenseurs de l'approche plus intégrale, sociale et subjective de la pauvreté estiment qu'elle n'est pas seulement une question de revenu ou de consommation (Sen 1987 ; Narayan 2000 ; Paugman 2005 ; Loisy 2010 ; Leyens 2011). Elle peut être définie comme un manque de capacités fonctionnelles élémentaires pour atteindre certains minimas acceptables (Sen 1987 et 2002 ; Lachaud 2007). Ainsi, Fusco (2007), Gondard-Delcroix,

(2007) et Dupré *et al.* (2011) affirment que l'expérience de la pauvreté dépasse largement la seule dimension monétaire et qu'en cela son caractère multidimensionnel doit être pris en considération dans toute tentative de définition et de mesure (Gaudreault 2013). Loisy (2000) fait remarquer que la pauvreté n'est pas une question de revenu, mais c'est aussi être exclu des grandes décisions qui touchent sa propre vie et ne plus être représenté auprès des instances politiques locales ou nationales. De ce fait, Sen (1987) utilise plus précisément le terme de *functionnings* ou modes de fonctionnement pour désigner les façons d'être et d'agir des individus. Être bien nourri ou être en bonne santé, lire et écrire, être heureux, avoir le respect de soi-même, participer à la vie de communauté, etc. sont autant de fonctionnements constitutifs de la liberté réelle des individus. En outre, il mentionne parmi les libertés fondamentales indispensables à prendre en compte : le filet de protection sociale qui permet de garantir que « les personnes ne se trouvent en aucun cas réduites à la misère » ou encore « l'ensemble des dispositions prises en faveur de l'éducation, de la santé ou d'autres postes qui accroissent la liberté substantielle qu'ont les personnes de vivre mieux ».

Cette abondante littérature nous montre qu'il est impossible de donner une définition concise et précise de la notion de pauvreté qui soit acceptée de tous. Ainsi, définir la pauvreté ou la conceptualiser nous soumet à un exercice complexe, ce qui nous renvoie à sa nature multidimensionnelle. Par ailleurs, mesurer la pauvreté est aussi complexe que la définir.

La prédominance des approches quantitatives de mesure de la pauvreté dans les études africaines

En Afrique, la plupart des approches de mesure adoptées dans les études à l'échelle de chaque pays s'inspirent fortement des approches quantitative et monétaire développées par les pays occidentaux (cf. *Rapport sur la situation de la pauvreté dans les pays de l'UEMOA de la BCEAO* en 2012). Ainsi, la plupart des recherches menées dans les pays africains et dans le monde (Datt & Ravallion 1992 ; Bourguignon 2004 ; Forster 2005) sont principalement basées sur les indicateurs quantitatifs, dont principalement le revenu des ménages ou la consommation (Hulme & Green 2005 ; Lachaud 1994 ; Tovo 1995 ; Moustapha & Vodounou 2001 ; Hounkpodoté 2009). Selon Gabas et Laporte (2012), l'exercice de mesure quantitative de la pauvreté et d'élaboration de modélisation de nouvelles techniques d'aide semble polariser une large part des ressources des bailleurs de fonds. À l'inverse, l'analyse qualitative des mécanismes de production de la pauvreté, notamment ceux concernant les rapports de pouvoir ou de domination, reste grandement absente des travaux actuels sur la lutte contre la pauvreté. Selon Kibora

(2012), au Burkina Faso, les études nationales sur le développement et la lutte contre la pauvreté sont le plus souvent effectuées par des économistes. La mesure de la pauvreté est alors une question de statistiques et de données économétriques quantitatives. Les quelques rares études scientifiques qualitatives qui ont pu être entreprises depuis les années quatre-vingt-dix sont restées souvent assez parcellaires et ne concernent que quelque deux à trois régions. Ainsi, selon le même auteur, l'insuffisance de la prise en compte de l'aspect qualitatif caractérise les recherches sur la pauvreté dans le pays. En outre, la prédominance des approches quantitatives de mesure de la pauvreté est relevée au Togo, au Sénégal, en Côte d'Ivoire, au Niger, en République Démocratique du Congo, etc., où la plupart des études de mesure de la pauvreté sont conduites par les Instituts nationaux de statistiques et de développement, en plus des études de mesures conduites par le PNUD et la Banque mondiale dans ces pays.

C'est aussi le cas au Bénin où plusieurs études ont été réalisées sur la mesure des indicateurs de pauvreté, mais elles ont été pour la plupart quantitatives. En effet, nous pouvons citer, entre autres :

- les enquêtes sur le budget, la consommation des années 1986-1987 par J.-P. Lachaud qui ont été les premières tentatives de mesure des indicateurs de pauvreté au Bénin ;
- les travaux de Tovo en 1995 qui ont permis de déterminer les niveaux de pauvreté à partir des coûts de base des besoins essentiels après la dévaluation du FCFA ;
- les enquêtes sur les conditions de vie des ménages (PNUD ; DANIDA ; MDR ; INSAE : 1995-1996, 1999-2000) ;
- les perceptions des dimensions de la pauvreté, du bien-être et de la richesse en milieu rural au Bénin du PNUD-MDR, en 1993 ;
- l'approche nutritionnelle appliquée au cas du Bénin qui a été développée par Aho, Larivière et Martin (1997) et Ponty (1998) ;
- les travaux d'Adégbidi *et al.* (1999) et ceux du MIMAP-Bénin (Adégbidi 2002) ;
- les études QUIBB et EMICOV de l'INSAE à partir des années 2000, qui ont été périodiquement conduites sur l'ensemble du territoire jusqu'à nos jours ;
- la thèse de doctorat de Attanasso Odile en 2004 ;
- les travaux de Medédji (2006), de Houngbo (2008) et de Hounkpodoté (2009) sur les dynamiques de la pauvreté avec une approche quantitative ;

- les travaux sur la pauvreté chronique conduite par Mongbo et Floquet à partir de l'année 2007 dans le cadre du CRPC (Centre de recherche sur la pauvreté chronique) ;
- la thèse de doctorat de Houngbo Emile en 2008 ;
- les rapports annuels de la Banque mondiale sur la pauvreté au Bénin et dans le monde ;
- les rapports annuels du PNUD sur le développement humain au Bénin et dans le monde.

Cependant, c'est à partir des années 2000 que deux études qualitatives véritables, basées sur les perceptions, traduites en langues locales, des facteurs locaux de bien-être ont été réalisées. En effet, c'est à partir de l'année 2002 que les travaux de Gohy (2002) pour l'Unesco ont relevé les premières traductions en langues locales (Fon et Yoruba) des thèmes prospérité et pauvreté qui découlent des perceptions des pauvres eux-mêmes. Ensuite, il y a eu en 2003 les travaux de *« poverty assessment »* de la Banque mondiale (Mongbo & Floquet 2003) et puis récemment, en 2016, la thèse de doctorat de Alokpaï qui a porté sur la pauvreté rurale et les stratégies de survie sur le plateau d'Abomey et la place des projets de développement dont les travaux ont été conduits suivant une approche d'évaluation qualitative de la pauvreté. Ces travaux constituent jusqu'à nos jours les premières et seules études de mesure de pauvreté qualitative basée sur les perceptions des acteurs et conduites suivant des approches participatives facilitant l'expression locale de ces thèmes et les déterminants y afférents.

Cependant, l'approche quantitative de mesure de la pauvreté est fondamentalement limitée et exclut une large part des réalités sociales de la pauvreté qui est un phénomène multidimensionnel (Sen 1983 et 2002 ; Gardes & Loisy 1998 ; Benicourt 2001 ; Kakwani 2006 ; Lachaud 2007 ; Nolan & Whelan 2007 et 2010). En effet, selon Bidou *et al.* (2005), les enquêtes sur la pauvreté comme les enquêtes-ménages mesurant le revenu et différents indicateurs du bien-être sont construites à partir d'un cadre de référence et d'une représentation de la pauvreté qui appartiennent à ses concepteurs, souvent issus d'une autre culture. En effet, les indicateurs quantitatifs standardisés sont naturellement limités et peuvent ne pas prendre en compte l'ensemble des dimensions qui font que la vie d'un Homme « vaut la peine d'être vécue » (Mongbo & Floquet 2003). Destremeau et Salama (2002), dénoncent aussi « les limites des indicateurs et mesures quantitatifs de la pauvreté résidant dans le fait qu'ils évacuent une large part de l'expérience humaine et de la subjectivité attachée à un état social, mais aussi dans la nature de leur référent normatif et des postulats qui les fondent ».

De ce fait, Bertin et Leyle (2007) estiment que les questions relatives à la mesure de la pauvreté sont aujourd'hui encore au cœur des débats scientifiques, non seulement en raison de leur pertinence dans le ciblage des populations indigentes, mais également dans une perspective plus large de politiques économiques de lutte contre la pauvreté et les inégalités. Ainsi, selon ces derniers, il est important de privilégier une approche plus qualitative qui permettrait de cerner la manière dont les populations perçoivent leurs conditions de vie et la manière dont elles apprécient les actions du gouvernement et des autres institutions de développement conçues pour améliorer ces conditions (feed-back). Par ailleurs, selon Chokor (2004), la compréhension profonde des perceptions, des adaptations et des circonstances sociales dans lesquelles vivent les communautés rurales les plus fragilisées aiderait beaucoup à l'atteinte des objectifs des programmes de réduction de pauvreté, d'où l'importance des perceptions locales et les représentations sociales dans les études sur la pauvreté.

Les représentations sociales et perceptions de la pauvreté dans le contexte africain et débats sur les interventions des projets pour sa réduction

Dans la plupart des pays africains, la pauvreté ou la prospérité sont appréhendées en référence aux représentations sociales, économiques, culturelles et parfois cultuelles propres à chaque communauté. Par ailleurs, la conception de la pauvreté n'y est nullement réduite aux possessions matérielles et monétaires. Ainsi, selon Rahnema (2003b), si la culture occidentale célèbre la richesse et déplore la pauvreté en liant indissolublement ces deux notions aux domaines du matériel et du monétaire, ce n'est pas encore le cas dans toutes les cultures, bien que la tendance constatée d'un appauvrissement des conceptions de la richesse touche l'ensemble de la planète. Alors qu'il existait une incroyable variété de mots pour qualifier les multiples perceptions de la pauvreté, le fait de n'utiliser plus que le mot pauvre et d'imposer son utilisation sur l'ensemble du monde n'est pas seulement le signe d'un considérable appauvrissement des langages, mais aussi celui d'une lecture simplifiée, pour ne pas dire « simpliste », de la complexité de la question de la pauvreté. Selon Bidou *et al.* (2005), cet état de choses traduit une vision souvent décalée des représentations locales de la pauvreté et de la richesse qui sont induites par la culture, l'histoire, les rapports sociaux ou la religion des populations concernées.

Ainsi, plusieurs auteurs se sont intéressés à la définition de la pauvreté en Afrique en rapport aux représentations sociales et les déterminants y afférents. Selon Magassa (2002), la pauvreté n'est pas vécue en Afrique

comme une statique fatalité qui habille les démunis de ses multiples facettes. La pauvreté est appréhendée de manière beaucoup plus subtile que ne le suggèrent les indicateurs qui veulent en rendre compte. En effet, selon lui, malgré une condition de vie économique chroniquement difficile, le Malien se considère riche d'hommes et de légendes parce que « quand on est inséré dans des liens qui comprennent entre 50 et 300 personnes, on n'est pas du tout pauvre ». Dès lors, les impératifs de l'organisation communautaire et du cahier des charges de la solidarité des réseaux familiaux et para-familiaux excluent à la limite de l'insécurité humaine toute recherche individuelle d'un patrimoine qui ne saurait se dissoudre dans le bien public. En outre, selon Verger,

> L'approche internationale de mesure de la pauvreté fondée sur une vision globalisée et monétaire apparaît déconnectée de l'approche populaire de la pauvreté dans le contexte malien pour au moins trois raisons. Tout d'abord, alors que la première considère que la majorité de la population est « pauvre », car victime d'un manque matériel, la plupart des Maliens considèrent que quelqu'un qui a de quoi s'habiller, manger et se loger n'est pas pauvre. Ensuite, la pauvreté telle qu'elle est vécue et comprise au Mali (*bolontanya)* n'est pas seulement un problème matériel pouvant trouver une solution financière, mais un problème social lié à la notion de pouvoir : l'abondance matérielle ne vaut que parce qu'elle donne la possibilité de redistribuer et de multiplier les échanges sociaux. (Verger 2007 31-32)

Ainsi, selon cet auteur, tous les actes de la vie en communauté donnent lieu à des placements en termes de relation personnalisée. Dans l'idéal, un tel modèle de comportement social n'autorise pas l'abandon de la charge d'un déficit, d'un manque, à la seule personne supposée en supporter le coût de transaction institutionnelle (Codjo 2014:47). En outre, les travaux de Misangumukini (2016), qui ont pour objectif d'analyser les facteurs qui expliquent la pauvreté objective et la pauvreté subjective des chefs de ménages au Mali, ont abouti aux résultats selon lesquels près d'un cinquième des chefs de ménage maliens, pourtant objectivement non pauvres, se considèrent subjectivement comme pauvres et souffrant de leurs conditions de vie.

Kadio *et al.* (2014), dans une étude sur l'accès des indigents aux soins de santé au Burkina Faso, ont affirmé que la communauté perçoit la pauvreté au-delà de l'aisance économique. La dimension sociale de la pauvreté (dont l'incapacité de l'individu à participer pleinement à la vie de la communauté) a largement déterminé l'identification d'indigents dans des ménages dont le niveau économique est a priori élevé. Pour Kibora (2012), dans de nombreuses langues burkinabè, les signes de la pauvreté font référence à

l'habillement, à l'incapacité physique, à l'absence d'activités, au manque de ressources, etc. En plus des différents critères matériels couramment utilisés pour décrire et comprendre la pauvreté, celle-ci est fortement liée aux facteurs psychosociaux et culturels de la société. Selon ce dernier, le concept de pauvreté existe bien dans les cultures burkinabés, est symbolisé par des expressions comme *taalga* chez les Mossé et *fantaya* chez les Dioulas, même si une définition opérationnelle n'est pas donnée en dehors des manifestations du phénomène. Les principales stratégies pour sortir de la pauvreté sont : une plus grande ardeur au travail, l'utilisation des réseaux familiaux de solidarité, compter sur Dieu, le recours à l'aide institutionnelle, le recours à la migration, compter sur ses enfants comme sécurité future. Lors d'un de ses séjours au village, un de ses oncles à qui il demandait pourquoi il ne venait pas en ville, lui répondit à peu près ceci :

> « Ici je me sens bien. Si j'arrive à remplir mes deux greniers à l'issue d'une bonne saison des pluies, je suis heureux. Je vais au marché, je vais aux manifestations socioculturelles du village, et lorsque le temps est très chaud, je discute et somnole sous l'arbre à palabres. Je n'ai besoin de rien sauf de temps en temps de quoi m'offrir une calebasse de bière de mil. Tant que je me porte bien et que je mange à ma faim, je suis heureux. En ville, il faut tout acheter et personne n'a le temps. Pour rien au monde je n'irai vivre là-bas. »

Ainsi, il en releva les interrogations et commentaires ci-après qui, à notre avis, sont édifiants quant à la nécessité de contextualiser la notion de pauvreté : Peut-on mesurer le bien-être d'un tel individu en termes d'insuffisance de biens matériels ou d'absence d'un certain nombre de services sociaux de base dans son environnement ? Cet individu, qui est loin d'être considéré comme pauvre par ses proches et lui-même, ne saurait échapper à cette catégorie si on lui applique une unité de mesure économique pour évaluer sa pauvreté. Par exemple, la famille nombreuse, synonyme de richesse sociale du point de vue culturel, peut, dans certaines circonstances, constituer un facteur aggravant de la pauvreté de l'individu si les personnes à charge sont dans l'incapacité de participer à la production.

Pour Fall (2007), la perception qu'a le pauvre de son état ainsi que le regard que lui portent les autres sont autant d'éléments qui s'ajoutent au sentiment d'être pauvre. Selon lui, la parole donnée aux acteurs dans la société sénégalaise révèle des valeurs estimées par eux comme fondamentales, comme l'importance des liens sociaux, car le « manque à être » ne se limite pas « au manque à avoir » et sans doute d'autant moins dans des sociétés de type communautaire comme la société sénégalaise. Ainsi, ses travaux ont montré que dans la société sénégalaise, « le démuni est celui qui ne peut avoir accès à un réseau, le déficit relationnel est ici synonyme de relégation ».

Dans l'imaginaire populaire nigérien, la perception de la pauvreté n'est cependant pas tout aussi uniforme. C'est un phénomène perçu différemment en fonction du lieu, de la période, de la catégorie sociale et/ou de la position sociale occupée (Gueye *et al.* 2007). Selon ces derniers, qui renvoient aux travaux de Fatimata Mounkaïla,

> Dans la littérature orale des Songhay-Zarma, il y a une « représentation analytique » de la pauvreté à travers trois états de manque : le *haraay* ou manque de vivres ; le *banji* ou manque de vêtement ; le *moori* ou manque d'argent (Gueye *et al.* 2007:7).

Elle serait aussi « caractérisée par un état total de dénuement matériel qui inclurait un manque de champs, d'animaux et d'argent. Cet état total de dénuement est désigné dans la terminologie populaire par *talakataray*. Celui qui vit dans le *talakataray* est un *talakata* » (Gueye *et al.* 2007:7). Enfin, le *talakata* serait une personne « ne bénéficiant pas de considération de la part de ses concitoyens qui ne l'associaient pas au processus de prise de décisions » (Gueye *et al.* 2007:7).

En zone *Zarma-Songhaï, le* Talaka (pauvre) correspond à celui qui récolte moins de 50 bottes de mil, ne possède aucun animal et fait aussi référence au paysan sans terre. Par ailleurs, Gilliard (2006), en référence à une étude sur la pauvreté et la mobilité au Niger, estime que « la pauvreté ne se définit pas uniquement par des seuils de revenus, mais aussi par la mise en évidence d'un ensemble de processus, d'actions, de dynamiques spatiales et de changements sociaux ». Dans ce cadre, il a relevé l'importance des réseaux sociaux d'entraide et la disponibilité alimentaire comme facteurs déterminants d'un mieux-être socioéconomique au Niger. Pour lui, la pauvreté au Niger serait liée à l'isolement social.

Une enquête menée par Paugam (2005) à Madagascar fait ressortir que les plus pauvres, d'un point de vue monétaire et matériel, ne sont pas ceux qui se considèrent comme les plus pauvres. Les travaux de Bidou *et al.* (2005) en Guinée Maritime ont relevé une vision spirituelle ou religieuse de la pauvreté auprès de la plupart des enquêtés. Selon les résultats de leurs travaux, les gens estiment qu'elles sont pauvres parce que c'est le « destin ». Cependant, il a été souligné que certains attribuent leur situation de pauvreté au manque d'actifs (terre, main-d'oeuvre ou capital) pour démarrer une activité et d'autres attribuent la pauvreté à une transmission inter-générationnelle : on est pauvre parce qu'on est né d'une famille pauvre et donc on n'a pas eu de capital (souvent financier) correct pour démarrer. D'autres mettent en avant les caractéristiques personnelles (au sens de Sen) : ne pas être un battant ou être victime d'un handicap ou d'une maladie. Enfin, un petit groupe relie la pauvreté au fait de vivre à la campagne et ne pas pouvoir

s'en échapper ou d'avoir trop de charges par rapport à ses ressources. Pour Sauquet (2007), dans plusieurs langues africaines, la pauvreté désigne la solitude, l'absence de liens. Ainsi, un dicton wolof au Sénégal dit qu' : « un pauvre est quelqu'un qui n'a pas d'amis » (Girard & Schéou 2013). Dans le même sens, un membre d'une ONG au Botswana confiait ce qui suit : « La richesse est la couverture qui nous protège. La pauvreté, c'est ce qui arrive lorsqu'on perd cette couverture » (PNUD 1997 ; Gohy 2002).

Au Bénin, Gohy (2002) et Alokpaï (2015) nous proposent plutôt un panorama d'appellations locales des concepts de « pauvre » ou « pauvreté » dans la taxonomie fon (l'un des principaux dialectes du Bénin). Le Fon distingue plusieurs types de pauvres : « Wa mamonnon » : celui qui travaille sans résultat positif, ce qui fait référence à la dimension spirituelle de la pauvreté, « Yatonon » « gbèdonanon » : qui n'arrive pas à joindre les deux bouts, qui croupit dans l'indigence ; qui a du mal à sortir de son état de pauvreté à partir de ses efforts sans vaincre cette fatalité, « Hintonon » : le nécessiteux, en état d'insuffisance tant matérielle, psychologique que sociale. Selon Mongbo et Floquet (2003), la pauvreté ou la prospérité au Bénin sont liées à la possession ou non d'actifs et à la réalisation de certaines activités. Cependant, les actifs ne sont pas nécessairement relatifs au revenu monétaire, mais à toutes les ressources capitalisables. Enfin, Tévoédjrè (1978), en s'inspirant des réalités africaines et surtout béninoises, perçoit « la pauvreté comme la richesse des peuples ». Dans ce cadre, il n'insinue aucunement une culture de la pauvreté ou une satisfaction des pauvres concernant leur situation, mais il met en évidence comment la simplicité du mode de vie peut constituer la finalité d'un modèle de développement tant personnel que social. Selon lui, c'est notamment parce que cette simplicité suppose un autre rapport au temps, lequel est la « première richesse pour posséder le monde, le voir, le connaître, l'assumer, et qui ne peut être réduit à l'argent. La course à l'argent, à toujours plus d'argent ne peut donner cette richesse du temps, et l'on arrive à cette absurdité que plus la richesse d'un pays paraît augmenter, en fait plus son dénuement humain se précise… car c'est la qualité de la vie de chacun et de tous ensemble qui tend à disparaître ».

En référence à ce qui précède, Girard et Schéou (2013) font la distinction entre la misère et la pauvreté qualifiante qui peut être envisagée au niveau individuel (la frugalité « modestie, sobriété » d'un individu). À cet effet, ils font allusion à Rahnema (2003a) qui la désigne par l'expression de « pauvreté volontaire » résultant d'un « choix libre et éclairé pour un mode de vie basé sur une éthique de simplicité, de frugalité et de respect pour le prochain ». Pour lui, c'est la forme suprême de richesse parce que c'est l'expression même de la liberté. Par ailleurs, Girard et Schéou (2013) estiment que la

sagesse dans la tradition philosophique grecque est fortement liée à l'idée d'une autonomie individuelle qui s'acquiert en sortant de l'emprise des besoins matériels et de l'état de dépendance et de frustration que cette emprise entretient. Dans le langage de la modernité, on pourrait dire que la liberté du sujet consiste non pas dans le pouvoir de satisfaire des besoins sans limites, mais dans la capacité à maîtriser ses besoins ; c'est pourquoi la « pauvreté » peut être voulue.

Ainsi, même si la possession de biens matériels et monétaires traduit un signe extérieur de richesse dans toutes les conceptions de la prospérité au monde, elle ne constitue pas, dans le contexte africain, le seul facteur de bien-être dont la privation confère le statut de pauvre. En effet, les perceptions de la pauvreté en Afrique sont aussi liées à l'absence d'un ancrage social, culturel ou cultuel, sans oublier la liberté de choix qui est fondamentale dans leur mode de vie. Ainsi, Paugam (2012) souligne que « si la question de la privation de biens sociaux susceptible d'empêcher la réalisation de la conception que les sujets ont de la dignité humaine se pose dans toute société, on peut considérer que tant la liste des biens sociaux que les seuils pour identifier une privation varient selon les cultures ».

La nécessité de la prise en compte des perceptions et représentations locales pour une meilleure conception et réussite des projets de développement

Selon Kibora (2012 :135), la réalité actuelle est que « les perceptions des populations ne semblent pas être suffisamment prises en compte dans les politiques de lutte contre la pauvreté parce que la recherche qui s'occupe de ce volet n'est pas mise en avant ». Les considérations économiques semblent l'emporter sur les considérations sociales et culturelles. Ainsi, la littérature sur les représentations sociales et les perceptions de la pauvreté dans le contexte africain relève un décalage et beaucoup d'insuffisances dans les approches modernes et formelles d'appréhender la pauvreté, ainsi que dans la conception et la mise en œuvre des projets de développement dans les pays sous-développés en général et africains en particulier. Elle renchérit sur la nécessité d'adopter une approche inclusive consensuelle de définition et de mesure de la pauvreté dans le contexte de chaque société. En effet, comme le souligne Ferrarotti (1983:32), l'intérêt d'une telle approche réalisée au niveau micro est qu'elle « permet d'atteindre des faisceaux sociaux et des structures de comportement qui, par leur caractère de marginalité et leur état d'exclusion sociale, échappent irrémédiablement aux données acquises et élaborées formellement ainsi qu'aux images officielles que la société se donne d'elle-même ». Dans le cas contraire, les interventions pourraient aboutir

à une aide secrète au contre-développement, surtout dans un sens où les pauvres sont considérés comme des non acteurs pour lesquels il faudra tout faire (Tshiebue 2011). Pour Rahnema (2003b), le langage est un révélateur de notre compréhension du monde et le fait de nommer tous les pauvres du monde avec un terme unique, autrement dit qualifier un ensemble de situations sociales très diverses sous une même catégorie, c'est ouvrir « la voie à des modes d`intervention arbitraires pour décider de leur sort ». Kibora (2012:138) estime que « si les politiques de développement économique et social mises en œuvre dans la lutte contre la pauvreté ont montré leurs limites, ce n'est pas seulement en raison de la complexité du phénomène de pauvreté jugé multidimensionnel, c'est aussi dû à la faiblesse de sources scientifiques autres qu'économiques, d'approches théoriques disponibles pouvant guider la prise de décision efficiente ». Pour lui, la représentation socioculturelle de la pauvreté est essentiellement dynamique et doit être comprise comme telle pour toute politique de transformation sociale. Enfin, selon Godinot (2014), les politiques de lutte contre la pauvreté, pensées sans les pauvres, se retournent trop souvent contre eux. En matière d'exemple, nous pouvons citer Gilliard (2006) qui, faisant référence à une étude menée par Boyer (2005) sur les Touaregs de Bankilaré au Niger, a bien illustré cet état de fait. Cette étude a montré comment la mise en place d'un projet de lutte contre la pauvreté (Programme cadre de lutte contre la pauvreté) s'oppose aux pratiques traditionnelles des Touaregs qui ont l'habitude de contourner la pauvreté par la migration et, en les obligeant à se sédentariser, les isole des solutions traditionnelles qui sont les leurs et leur enlève toute capacité de réaction. Aussi, selon Girard et Schéou (2013), « le problème des programmes de « lutte contre la pauvreté » est-il d'ignorer cette variation possible si bien qu'en imposant comme allant de soi une liste des biens sociaux et des seuils de privation, ces programmes peuvent paradoxalement priver des communautés ou des sociétés d'un bien social premier : le pouvoir de définir les biens reliés à la dignité humaine, c'est-à-dire la capacité de « choix » d'un mode de vie ». De ce fait, Bergamaschi (2011) estime que la lutte contre la pauvreté crée la controverse. Ainsi, il fait référence aux travaux d'économie du développement de certains praticiens au Mali qui reprochent à la doctrine de la lutte contre la pauvreté de nier les dimensions géographiques, sociales et politiques de la « pauvreté » en donnant l'impression que « tout est plat, tout est pauvre, tout est uniforme ». Pour ce même auteur, l'appropriation et la lutte contre la pauvreté sont des notions contestées ; à ce titre, elles façonnent, à leur tour, des pratiques diverses et parfois concurrentes. De ce fait, Espindola (2006) estime qu'il est « essentiel que non seulement les gouvernements, mais aussi les organisations internationales aient comme priorité absolue d'écouter la voix des plus pauvres et des exclus, car ce sont eux qui nous montrent que

la pauvreté est multidimensionnelle et complexe ». Il se réfère, à cet effet, au père Joseph Wresinski qui disait à juste titre que « les pauvres sont les premiers experts en pauvreté ».

Conclusion

La pauvreté est donc un phénomène multidimensionnel qu'il convient d'explorer avant tout en écoutant la voix des plus pauvres ou des concernés. En effet, plusieurs études africaines ont montré qu'elle n'est pas seulement liée à un seuil de revenu ou au volume des avoirs matériels. Elle peut être aussi définie suivant plusieurs formes et plusieurs considérations qu'il est opportun d'appréhender dans chaque contexte afin de mieux cadrer les interventions de projets conçus pour sa réduction. En outre, le concept de pauvreté doit être analysé en étroite relation avec les stratégies développées par ceux qui s'estiment pauvres. Ces stratégies résultent des expériences et apprentissages liés à la trajectoire de vie de chaque individu, mais aussi à leur environnement qui peut être assimilé à un système, les projets de lutte contre la pauvreté devant aussi être considérés comme des systèmes intervenant dans le système social caractérisé par les réalités socioéconomiques des bénéficiaires.

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Promoting Japan's National Interest in Africa: A Review of TICAD

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Abstract

The Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) was launched by Japan in October 1993. Five follow-up Conferences were held in 1998, 2003, 2008, 2013 and 2016 (TICAD II, III, IV, V, and VI). This article challenges the Japanese claim that the TICAD process is a mechanism for focusing global attention and mobilising international support for Africa. Rather, the TICAD process is seen as signifying a shift in Japan's policy towards Africa, hitherto defined within the context of the Washington Consensus. It is argued that, in the process, Japan is developing an African policy which is directed at serving its national interest.

Résumé

La Conférence internationale de Tokyo sur le développement de l'Afrique (TICAD) a été lancée par le Japon en octobre 1993. Cinq conférences de suivi ont eu lieu en 1998, 2003, 2008, 2013 et 2016 (TICAD II, III, IV, V, et VI). Cet article conteste l'affirmation japonaise selon laquelle le processus de la TICAD est un mécanisme permettant d'attirer l'attention du monde et de mobiliser le soutien international en faveur de l'Afrique. Le processus de la TICAD est plutôt perçu comme un changement dans la politique du Japon à l'égard de l'Afrique, définie jusqu'à présent dans le contexte du consensus de Washington. Ce faisant, le Japon élabore actuellement une politique africaine visant à servir ses intérêts nationaux.

Introduction

The Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) initiative was launched by the Japanese government in October 1993 as a forum for actualising a global partnership for African development in the

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post-Cold War period. It brings African countries and African development partners together in an atmosphere of mutual understanding to dialogue on promoting democracy, good governance and economic development in the continent. In planning TICAD, the Japanese government was aware of its limitation in dealing directly with issues affecting Africa and its peoples. It was also driven by a desire to organise a conference that is different in scope and emphasis from the usual donors' consultative conferences often organised by the OECD/DAC. This explains why the Japanese government sought the collaboration of the United Nations Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries (UN/OSCAL), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank and the Global Coalition for Africa (GCA) in organising the conference. In other words, Japan is seeking, through the TICAD process, to strengthen its bilateral relations with African countries using the instrumentality of a multilateral initiative aimed at promoting African development.

This article reviews the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) against the claim by the Japanese government that the process is an altruistic initiative based on African 'ownership and partnership' and aimed at demonstrating international commitment towards positive political reform and economic transformation in the continent (Koizumi in MFA 2003a). On the contrary, it is argued that Japan's engagement in Africa, through the instrumentality of TICAD, is aimed at promoting Japan's national interest in Africa in the post-Cold War period by seeking to serve its economic needs and the pursuit of international prestige.

TICAD and Japan's National Interest

In order to situate and understand Japan's motivation for launching the TICAD initiative, it is important to bear in mind that in their foreign policy pursuits, countries are first and foremost concerned with measures that will promote their national interest (Burchill 2007: 27–28). In the case of Japan, its major interest lies in securing its economic growth and prosperity. Therefore, in its relations with African states, Japanese efforts, through the TICAD process, are directed at seeking trade and investment opportunities and are focused on the search for procurement access to secure sources of supply for oil and other strategic mineral resources that are critical to its industrial production and economic survival. Japan's major instrument of international diplomacy in the pursuit and projection of its national interest in the global contest and competition for African raw materials and mineral resources is its overseas development assistance programme (Owoeye 1995:

39–49). Indeed, it is Tokyo's deliberate strategy to ensure substantial flow of its overseas development assistance especially towards resource rich African states (Ampiah 2005). This is in order to ensure guaranteed and secure supply access to these states' oil, gas and other natural resources.

Another national interest to which the TICAD initiative is directed at serving relates to Japan's long-term quest for international recognition and prestige. This is in fulfilment of a recommendation by the Maekewa Report[1] of April 1986 that Japan should use its economic superpower status and clout to gain global influence and prestige (Seeman 1986). Japan's drive towards achieving this objective is reflected in the quest for a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) (Burchill 2000). To be sure, Japan's desire to widen the scope of its activities within the UN by aspiring to become a permanent member of the UNSC with veto power was always an open secret (Ogata 1996: 231).[2] Since its first election onto the UNSC in 1958, two years after joining the UN in 1956 as the Asian regional representative, the country has served ten times[3] as a non-permanent member of the UNSC, conferring on it the status of the most permanent but non-permanent member of the Council.

However, in getting itself elected as a non-permanent member of the UNSC, Japan had always adopted a 'soft and laid-back diplomatic approach'; an approach that was sorely tested in October 1996 during the election of the UNSC non-permanent seat for the Asian region. In that election, Tokyo had to embark on an adroit diplomatic campaign, involving open and intense lobbying among the African states that constitute 25 per cent of the General Assembly, to defeat India by 142 votes to 40. Although Japan's victory was undoubtedly a diplomatic setback for India, which was last elected to the UNSC in 1990, this has not dampened Delhi's aspiration to be a non-permanent member of the UNSC in future (Mitra 1996). Subsequently, and in direct reaction to the Indian challenge, Japan was pushed towards raising its diplomatic profile in Africa in particular and the developing world in general as it began to project itself as a champion for the course of economic development in the developing world (Schraeder 2001: A143–49). The success of this strategy is aptly demonstrated in Japan's subsequent election onto the UNSC in 2004 and 2008. By and large, it is evident that the TICAD process is not an altruistic endeavour, but a diplomatic instrument consciously developed by Japan to serve its national interest. It confers certain influence and opportunities on Japan in its quest to protect itself against externally induced threats to its prosperity and wealth (Winter and Bremmer 2007: 6–7) by cultivating a positive image and diplomatic goodwill for itself in Africa.

The TICAD Conferences: An Overview

This first conference (TICAD I) was held in October 1993. The main objective of the conference, according to the Japanese government, was to demonstrate the solidarity and support of the international community for Africa. The conference was attended by more than 1,000 delegates from 48 African countries, 13 donor countries, ten international organisations, and about 45 observer countries and organisations. According to the then Foreign Minister, Tsutomu Hata, TICAD was convened with the aim of making positive contributions to Africa's political reform and democratisation process, as well as to provide assistance towards human resources development and economic reforms in the continent.[4]

The Tokyo Declaration on African Development was adopted at the end of the conference in which the African states pledged to strengthen the process of political and economic reform and affirmed their commitment towards democratisation, respect for human rights, good governance, with particular reference to transparency and accountability in public administration, human resources and social development, as well as economic diversification and liberalisation (MFA 1993). The African development partners at the conference, on the other hand, declared that sustainable economic growth can only be achieved in Africa through open, accountable and participatory political systems. They therefore tasked the African states to put in place the necessary reforms for the realisation of these objectives, promising to give priority support to countries that undertake effective and efficient political and economic reforms (*ibid.*).

The second conference (TICAD II) took place in October 1998 and was aimed at developing a blueprint for poverty reduction in Africa and for increased integration of the continent into the global economy. The conference was attended by official delegations from 49 African countries, including 13 Heads of State and Government, 11 Asian countries, 16 donor countries, as well as participants from the private sector, international and non-governmental organisations and civil society groups. At the end of the conference, the Tokyo Agenda was adopted which stressed the question of 'ownership and participation' by African countries in the continental development process (MFA 1998). It focused attention on policy co-ordination, regional integration, South–South (Asia–Africa) co-operation, and capacity building and identified areas of priority for enhancing African development in the twenty-first century. These are socio-economic and human capital development, the promotion of democracy and good governance, as well as the establishment of effective conflict prevention and conflict management mechanisms (*ibid.*).

The third conference (TICAD III), whose main objective was to mobilise international support for the newly inaugurated African initiative, the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD), was held from 29 September to 1 October 2003. TICAD III was the largest international gathering in the diplomatic history of Japan, attended by over 1,000 delegates from 89 countries, including 50 African countries and 47 regional and international governmental and non-governmental organisations (MFA 2004: 128–9). The conference reviewed the impact of the entire TICAD process on African development ten years after the adoption of the Tokyo Declaration on African Development in October 1993. The TICAD Tenth Anniversary Declaration adopted at the end of the Conference reaffirmed the role of the TICAD process in providing a coherent philosophy on African development, as well as in raising awareness among the international community towards African development and broadening international support leading up to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the G8 Africa Action Plan (MFA 2003b). It was also agreed at the end of the conference that, thenceforth, TICAD would stand on three pillars: consolidation of peace, human-centred development and poverty reduction through economic growth (*ibid.*).

Post-TICAD III Anxieties and Permutations

In the period after TICAD III, there developed some level of uncertainty about the future of the process, especially following the inauguration of NEPAD in October 2001. With the inauguration of NEPAD, which is aimed at promoting sustainable economic development, peace, stability and democracy in Africa, the expectation was that the African Union would progressively assume ownership and control of the continental developmental process (NEPAD 2001). Furthermore, the post-TICAD III period coincided with a time when Japan was facing economic stagnation which should have precluded the Japanese government from embarking on any 'diplomatic jamboree'. Conventional wisdom therefore suggests that Japan would allow the TICAD process to fizzle out so as not to provoke negative resentment towards Africa among its population which is often more insular in times of economic difficulty. But this was not to be as the top bureaucrats in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, convinced of the tangible diplomatic rewards that had accrued to Japan through the TICAD process, stepped in to persuade the government against jettisoning the process. The force of their argument convinced Prime Minister Koizumi to announce that Japan would organise TICAD IV in 2008 during the Africa-Asia Summit in Bandung, Indonesia in April 2005.

The interest and conviction of the Government of Japan in preserving the TICAD process is attributable to a number of factors. Perhaps the most crucial of these was the unflinching Japanese desire for a UNSC permanent seat and the continuing lack of consensus on the scope and nature of the UN reform process. It should be recalled that following the expansion of the Security Council from 11 members (five permanent and six non-permanent) to 15 members (five permanent and ten non-permanent) in 1965 to reflect increased membership of the UN and the new economic/regional power realities, there had always been talks of further expansion of the membership of the Security Council to 24 consisting of five permanent and 19 non-permanent members (Weiss *et al.* 1994: 93–4). However, all efforts at reorganising the UN and expanding the membership of the Security Council to reflect equitable and regional representation are yet to yield any tangible results. It was only in 1993 that the issue became a major agenda during the 48th Session of the General Assembly in the face of an urgent need to put in place a new international collective security system in the post-Cold War era. Since then, the issue of reforming the UN and expanding the Security Council has been bogged down and the General Assembly has been unable to reach definitive conclusion on the matter (Weiss *et al.* 2007: 95–129).

Closely related to this is the need for Japan to protect its pre-eminent diplomatic position of influence and economic interest in Africa in the face of the increasing and aggressive Chinese and Indian diplomatic offensive in the continent. Although not openly stated, Japan's announcement that TICAD IV would be held in 2008 must have been prompted, among other factors, by the Sino-African Summit in 2006 and the India-Africa Summit scheduled for 2008. Undoubtedly Japan correctly perceived the two proposed Summits as a strategic move by both China and India to enhance their diplomatic profile and promote their economic interest in Africa (Africa Confidential 2006; 2007). Acutely aware of the increasing global interest and competition for African resources and against the background reality that it can no longer continue to depend solely on the Asian region for the supply of critical mineral resources, Japan's preparedness to hold TICAD IV should be seen as a calculated diplomatic riposte, especially against China and India in Africa (Donnelly 2008a). It was Tokyo's calculation that hosting TICAD IV would not only present it with another opportunity to showcase its leadership position in promoting African development, but it would also provide it with an opportunity to develop new initiatives towards projecting its national interest in Africa through investment in infrastructural development.

TICAD IV with the theme 'Towards a Vibrant Africa: A Continent of Hope and Opportunity' was held in May 2008. It was attended by more that 3,000 participants with delegations from 51 African states, that included 41 Heads of State and Government, as well as by participants from 34 Asian, European and G8 countries, 74 international and regional organisations; representatives of the private sector, academic institutions and civil society groups from Africa and Asia. The hype and publicity of the conference gave Japan the opportunity to reinforce its position of influence in the continent with the announcement by Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda of the intention to double aid flows to Africa by 2012. This was aimed at boosting progress towards the attainment of the MDGs in the continent (MFA 2008c). Fukuda also announced that Japan Bank International Cooperation would establish a loan facility for the promotion of Japanese private investment in Africa. This is in addition to US$4 billion in 'yen loans' for infrastructural development in the continent. At the end of the conference, the 'Yokohama Declaration: towards a Vibrant Africa' was adopted. It spelled out specific efforts that Japan would undertake in Africa to boost economic growth, ensure human security and attain the MDGs' benchmarks, consolidation of peace and good governance, as well as addressing issues relating to the environment and climate change (MFA 2008c).

The Future of TICAD and Japan's Relations with Africa

As laudable as the TICAD process is, there are doubts as to the capability of Japan to sustain the process on a long-term basis and its ability to ensure the realisation of some of its goals. Perhaps the most difficult challenge confronting TICAD is maintaining, in real terms, the volume of Japan's net aid flow to Africa. Although Mochizuki *et al.* (2007) have argued that the volume of Japan's aid allocation to Africa increased by 370 per cent from 2002 to 2006, selected figures of Japan's aid allocation to the various regions of the world between 1990 and 2004 (Table 1) show that the overall average per cent of aid allocation to Africa between 1990 and 2004 remains fairly constant at 11.5 per cent. It was only in 2006 that Japan disbursed US$2.55 billion, or 34.2 per cent of its total aid budget of US$7.48 billion to Africa; superseding the aid allocation to Asia (26.8 %) for the first in the history of Japan's aid programme.5 However, hopes that the 2006 aid allocation level could be maintained were dashed because by 2007 Japan's total aid budget went down to US$5.77 billion, with a corresponding decrease in the volume of aid allocation to Africa which shrank to US$1.70 billion, amounting to 29.4 per cent of total aid budget.

Table 1: Geographical distribution of Japan's bilateral ODA (net disbursement) in million US$

Region/year	1990	% of ODA	1993	% of ODA	1995	% of ODA	1998	% of ODA	2001	% of ODA	2004	% of ODA	2006	% of ODA	2007	% of ODA
Asia	4117	59.3	4861	59.5	5745	54.4	5372	62.4	4220	56.6	2544	42.7	2002	26.8	1634	28.3
Middle East	705	10.2	522	6.4	721	6.8	392	4.6	287	3.9	1030	17.3	1049	14.0	948	16.4
Africa	792	11.4	966	11.8	1333	12.6	950	11.0	851	11.4	646	10.9	2558	34.2	1700	29.4
Latin America	561	8.1	737	9.0	1142	10.8	552	6.4	738	9.9	309	5.2	431	5.8	226	3.9
Oceania	114	1.6	138	1.7	160	1.5	147	1.7	101	1.4	42	0.7	76	1.0	70	1.2
Europe	158	2.3	124	1.5	153	1.5	143	1.7	116	1.6	140	2.4	220	2.9	48	0.8
Unclassified	494	7.1	816	10.0	1303	12.3	1048	12.2	1137	15.3	1239	20.8	1146	15.3	1152	20.0
Total	6940	100	8164	100	10557	100	8604	100	7452	100	5954	100	7482	100	5778	100

Source: Japan's Official Development Assistance Annual Reports 1990–2007 (Tokyo, APIC)

In spite of the promise made by Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda in his opening speech at TICAD IV that Japan would double its aid flow to Africa by 2012 (MFA 2008b), the volume of Japan's aid to Africa may actually not see any upward movement in the coming years. The worsening Japanese economic situation had thrown the country into its worst economic crisis in decades[5] leading to further reductions in the aid budgets for 2008 and 2009.[6] The signs of increased aid flow to Africa is therefore not encouraging, especially when it is considered that economic downturn often makes increased expenditure on development assistance very unpopular amongst the Japanese. Although the Japanese government was able to somewhat raise the volume of aid flow to Africa in the 1990s, the Japanese population would have certainly opposed such increases if they were aware of the amount involved. With a shrinking current account surplus, rising level of unemployment, declining trade and investment opportunities and an aging population, it is sheer *Senden gaiko*, or public relations diplomacy, for the Japanese government to promise any increase in the level of aid flow to Africa in the near future.

Another challenge confronting TICAD, as noted by President John Kufour of Ghana in October 2003, is the lack of a concrete institutional structure and machinery for managing the process. In spite of the promise made by Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi that Japan will institutionalise TICAD as a means of strengthening its follow-up mechanisms and making it more dynamic (MFA 2003a), it is intriguing to note that this issue was not addressed in the ODA Implementation Reform of August 2006 that was designed to strengthen MFA's ability in planning and implementation of the ODA policy (MFA 2007: 5). While the reform made some structural reorganisation in MFA with the establishment of the International Cooperation Bureau to take charge of bilateral and multilateral economic cooperation activities, no institution or agency was directly saddled with the responsibility of managing the TICAD process or for monitoring progress towards the attainment of the set developmental targets in the various action plans. This means that the management of the TICAD process will continue to reside with the Directorate General for Sub–Sahara African Affairs in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which is grossly understaffed and has no expert on African affairs among its senior staff.[7] Several African Heads of State observed this development, prompting them to call for the establishment of concrete monitoring mechanisms for the TICAD process during TICAD IV in May 2008 (MFA 2008d).

Another question mark on the future of TICAD is Japan's lack of adequate personnel with administrative capability and knowledge of Africa's political and socio-economic conditions. In spite of the best efforts of the Japanese government to develop a domestic interest in African affairs, ordinary Japanese people, who are inherently isolationist in disposition, are even more so with regard to Africa. In fact, less than 10 per cent of the population seems to understand issues relating to the continent (Sato 1994: 105; Morikawa 1997: 206). They not only consider the continent to be far away and for there to be no compelling reason to study and understand the continent, they are very reluctant to engage in cooperative activities with African people (Eyinla 1999a: 42; 2005). This means that there are very few Japanese with adequate knowledge and direct experience in Africa; a requirement for the effective implementation and evaluation of aid projects. This explains why Japan often relies and continues to rely mostly on the Specialized Agencies of the UN to execute its development aid projects in many African states (Yamaza and Hirata 1992). It is commendable that the country's aid implementation agency, the Japan International Co-operation Agency (JICA), has progressively improved its presence and capacity in Africa by increasing its staff strength from a total of 330 in 1990 to 628 in 2007 (JICA 2007). These staff have also been able to acquire some capability in project cycle management, especially in areas of providing basic education, health and medical care delivery, water resources management, agricultural and infrastructural development and environmental protection.

However, when JICA is compared with the aid implementing agencies of Britain (DfID), France (CFD), Canada (CIDA) the United States (USAID) and those of the Scandinavian countries (NORAD, SIDA and DANIDA) it is evident that its reach and scope of activities remain limited indeed. In spite of the increasing numbers of university students that are now showing interest in African Studies and the growing number of Japanese Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) present in the continent, there is still a dearth of young and energetic Japanese experts to meet the challenges of JICA's operations in Africa. The scenario painted by Tokyo within the context of TICAD is that it seems contented with providing the money for project implementation without adequate Japanese manpower to drive and oversee the process. This contrasts sharply with the level of personnel, latitude and efficiency that the US, Canada and the Scandinavian countries have attained in the implementation and monitoring of their aid programme in Africa. In short then, Japan is ready to drop the moneybag and run away, as if to say, 'well, Africa needs money for development, here is our own share of the money, but look elsewhere for the personnel to spend the money' (Sesay 2000: 41).

This issue of suitable personnel becomes even more critical when it is considered that apart from its traditional responsibility for implementing all tasks relating to technical cooperation, the August 2006 ODA implementation reform further saddled JICA with the administration of grant aid and yen loans (MFA 2007: 5). JICA's continued lack of human resources and expertise on Africa will definitely hinder its capability to discharge these responsibilities in a timely and efficient manner. This means that Japan will, in the foreseeable future, continue to rely on the instrumentality of UN Specialized Agencies such as UNDP, UNIDO and WHO, the know-how of Britain and France, as well as on the dispatch of third country experts from other Asian countries to execute many of the proposed assistance programmes in the TICAD initiative. Such practice provides loopholes for mismanagement and misapplication of funds through unethical practices, corruption and waste and drives up the cost of project appraisal and implementation. The continuous availability of funds from Tokyo and the sustainability of such project are then circumscribed by the extent to which the implementing agency is effective and accountable in utilising allocated resources.

Another issue confronting the TICAD process is its emphasis on the assumed capacity of African states to rise above the limits and constraints of their development capacity, as well as the ability of donors to overcome the problem of cooperation and coordination to meet set targets. Apart from the wide differences in the level of political stability and socio-economic development among African states, their ability to mobilise enough internal financial and human resources to meet the fundamental demand of the TICAD process is rather doubtful. The lack of adequate infrastructural facilities and low aid absorptive capacity in many African states therefore poses a serious challenge to the attainment of set targets.

On the issue of donors' cooperation and coordination, Olsen (2005: 134–6) has demonstrated how difficult and problematic this can be in Africa within the context of the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). Although, there is an increasing level of collaboration between Japan, and other donor countries and international organisations in executing certain projects in specific African states, this has not resulted in an increased level of aid policy coordination among donors. Thus, in spite of the pledges by Africa's development partners to fulfil their side of the bargain set out in the TICAD action plans, mobilising necessary resources to pursue some of the institutional and capacity building initiatives in the TICAD process may not be forthcoming from African development partners in the near future. Apart from this, there is also the question of the

trend towards the emergent triple core/multi-polar global system conferring spheres of influence on regional hegemons. The evolution of this trajectory will restrict Japan's sphere of influence to the Asian region, while Africa will come under the sphere of influence of Western Europe and the influence of the US will be limited to Latin America. The notion of mutual exclusivity in each other's sphere of influence will mean that Japan could be cut off from Africa and denied access to its huge resources. Perhaps it is to preclude such developments and to consolidate its influence and position in Africa that Japan has been trying, albeit in a subtle and low-profile manner, to encourage African states to adopt the Asian model of development strategy of poverty reduction through economic production, among other measures.

In assessing the future of the TICAD process it is very important to point out that Africa is not short of bold and strategic socio-economic conjectures that are based on optimistic assumptions for promoting continental development (UNECA 2008). Such documents include the Lagos Plan of Action of 1982, the African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programme for Socio-Economic Recovery and Transformation of 1989, the Protocol for the Establishment of Africa Economic Community of 1991 and NEPAD of 2001. Several attempts are being made to organise the continent into viable regional economic groupings and free trade zones as a way of optimising the continent's economic potential. What is particularly sad is that none of the documents on Africa's economic integration ever went beyond the realm of theoretical abstraction after the signature ceremony. It remains to be seen if the optimistic assumptions of the TICAD process will become a reality or fizzle out to become another failed project, bogged down in theory and politics and another missed opportunity for real socio-economic development in Africa. By and large, in spite of its seeming altruistic intentions, it is a fact that the TICAD process is Japan's main instrument for cultivating the goodwill that is necessary to ensure the support of African states in its bid to secure access to raw materials, expand its overseas market and investment opportunities and to actualise its global political/diplomatic objectives.

Conclusion

As a new initiative on African development that is strategic and action oriented, the TICAD process has become the centre-piece of Afro-Japanese relations in the last 26 years. Over this period, the Japanese government has convened four TICAD Conferences (1993, 1998, 2003 and 2008), and disbursed close to US$15 billion in development assistance to Africa which is an indication of its commitment to the process and the demonstration of its place and

position as an important development partner and donor of consequence to Africa. It is also an affirmation of Tokyo's continued preparedness to assert its agenda-setting position in leading the international community to meet the developmental challenges of Africa in the twenty-first century. An indication to this effect was given by Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori during his visit to Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa in January 2001. According to Mori, there can be no stability and prosperity in the world unless the problems of Africa are addressed and resolved. He also acknowledged that the challenge of attaining some of the laudable objectives in the TICAD process will test the merits of Japan's foreign policy (Mori 2001).[8]

Nevertheless, a review of the TICAD process shows that it is an important instrument for the pursuit of Japan's national interest in Africa. It is being used to promote Japan's long-term national economic interest and in its quest for an international role and prestige. Even in the face of economic stagnation and decline, Japan has found it useful to continue promoting the process in order to meet the challenge and increasing competition with the US, the European Union, China and India for a share in Africa's market potential and access to raw material resources (Donnelly 2008b). This was aptly demonstrated at the end of TICAD IV when Japan announced that it would embark on the implementation of measures that are directed at promoting the activities of Japanese private companies in Africa. Such measures, which are aimed at doubling Japanese private investment in Africa through a public-private collaborative activity, include the reinforcement of trade insurance and guaranteed financing of US$2.5 million to private investors in Africa over a period of five years (MFA 2008d).

While it is arguable whether the TICAD process as a whole can spur other development partners to come together and make genuine efforts at building global support for Africa's development, there is no doubt that through the TICAD process, Japan has been able to establish for itself a leadership and an agenda-setting position in assisting Africa to overcome some of its developmental challenges. It has achieved this by projecting the TICAD process as an important forum for promoting a collaborative and integrative global approach for the evolution of a multilateral framework for resolving some of these developmental problems. In pursuing this objective, it is important for Japan to put in place adequate measures to ensure that the TICAD initiative is well established and imbued with adequate institutional structures and carrying capacity. To be sure, one of the greatest issues that will continue to challenge the TICAD process is the ability of Japan, as well as African states and other African development partners, to muster sufficient political will and economic resources to attain some of TICAD's

modest goals. The failure of Japan to meet this challenge will bring into question the whole essence and credibility of the TICAD process. Then it will amount to no more than a crude public relations gimmick by Japan to advance its national interest within an international political economy characterised by dramatic changes unleashed by the forces of globalisation.

Notes

1. The report, named after the Chairman and former Governor of the Bank of Japan, was to respond to Japan's ballooning trade and current account surpluses and resulting economic friction with the United States.
2. The quest by Germany and Japan for a permanent UNSC seat is underlined by their status as economic superpowers in comparison to Britain and France whose global political and economic influence has diminished, but continues to be permanent members of Security Council with veto power.
3. These are 1958–59, 1966–67, 1971–72, 1975–76, 1981–82, 1987–88, 1992–93, 1997–98, 2005–06 and 2009–10.
4. *The Japan Times* (Tokyo), 4 October 1993.
5. In 1994 Japan's GDP accounted for 17 per cent of the world's total. By 2007, this share had fallen to 8.1 per cent.
6. Japan's ODA General Account Budget, http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/budget/2008-3.pdf.
7. Interview with Professor Eisei Kurimoto (Director, Global Collaboration Centre of the University of Osaka), Johannesburg, October 2008.
8. It is noteworthy that Japan has committed huge resources in grant aid, technical assistance and debt forgiveness in the post-TICAD period as part of its contribution to the attainment of these objectives.

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The Airport Geography of Power as Site and Limit of NEPAD's Transnational African Assemblage

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Abstract

This article mobilises the Deleuzian analytical category of 'assemblage' to distinctly bring to view how racial profiling in South African airport spaces operationalises a paradoxical discourse of invidious visibility and invisibility that flies in the face of the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) as articulated in the vision embraced by the member states of the African Union, of which South Africa is part. The said discourse, this article argues, runs counter to the spirit of NEPAD as it becomes an inscribing socius in a territorial machine that is geared towards not only processing entries and exits of African migrants into the airport. It recolonises the African airport into a zone of exception, reterritorialising the African assemblage into a space definable by the particularities of race and nation. The airport becomes a veritable zone of exception: no recognition of movement rights for African migrants despite proclamations of priorities of regional integration in Africa. Over South African airports now hover signature meta-narratives that are at variance with NEPAD. Nothing exemplified this more than the unfair detention of Wole Soyinka in a South African airport, especially because the Nobel Laureate was officially invited to give an address in honour of Nelson Mandela.

Keywords: Assemblage, NEPAD, Airport, migrants, South Africa, terrorist,tourists

Résumé

Cet article mobilise la catégorie analytique deleuzienne de l'« assemblage » pour clairement illustrer comment le profilage racial dans les espaces aéroportuaires sud-africains opérationnalise un discours paradoxal de visibilité et d'invisibilité injustes qui va à l'encontre du Nouveau partenariat pour le développement de

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l'Afrique (NEPAD) dans sa vision adoptée par les États membres de l'Union africaine, dont l'Afrique du Sud. Ce discours, selon le présent article, va à l'encontre de l'esprit du NEPAD, qui devient un socius inscriptible dans une machine territoriale qui n'est pas axée uniquement sur le traitement des entrées et des sorties des migrants africains dans l'aéroport. Il recolonise l'aéroport africain en une zone d'exception et re-territorialise l'assemblage africain dans un espace définissable à travers les particularités de la race et de la nation. L'aéroport devient alors une véritable zone d'exception: non reconnaissance des droits de circulation des migrants africains en dépit des proclamations de priorités d'intégration régionale en Afrique. Dans les points d'entrée sud-africains, il existe des méta récits distinctifs, en contradiction avec le NEPAD. Rien n'illustre mieux cela que la détention injuste de Wole Soyinka dans un aéroport sud-africain, surtout que le prix Nobel avait officiellement été invité à prononcer un discours en l'honneur de Nelson Mandela.

Mots-clés : Assemblage, NEPAD, Aéroport, migrants, Afrique du Sud, terroriste, touristes

Whereas Africa is generally deemed 'a major theatre of migration activity' with the greatest prospect to disrupt and destabilise this continent (Cross and Omoluabi 2006: 1), South Africa in particular has become the vortex of profiling African and Asian migrants who enter ports of entry unduly cast under the cloud of suspicion in advance.[1] Based on the Masemola and Chaka (2011: 190) research pointing to the relationship between the steady removal of socio-economic vectors of exclusion and misplaced belonging, coupled with closer monitoring of access and use of technologies' at the South African airports, this article argues that South Africa's profiling discourse has not yet leveraged the developmental thrust envisaged in its espousal of the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD). This shortcoming is exemplified by the Soyinka fiasco of 2005. According to Ibrahim Assane Mayaki, 'the role of NEPAD is to facilitate, with its new mandate, the implementation of regional programmes and projects in transport, in power, in energy, in agriculture and so on, and make policymakers understand the necessity to have regional programmes on these issues' (2011: 4). The transnational African assemblage, shaped on the anvil of the *nomos* of migration, is challenged and arrested in the abstract machine of the airport as a 'zone of exception' and not a Fanonist 'zone of occult instability' (1963: 183) where African people are in fluctuating movement towards the assemblage of regional integration and participation. In the difficult, if paradoxical, conflation of the two zones enabling the motors of surveillance and profiling, there is not only the disabling of the vectors of the transnational African assemblage but also an undermining of

the integrity of NEPAD, the African Renaissance and the spirit of diasporic homecoming and passage. Entry into the airport space is an exit, even an exception, from the positive edicts of an inchoate geopolitical African unity in whatever official, nascent and nondescript forms.

Drawing observations from the airport traffic regulation processes 201o World Cup hosted by South Africa, Masemola and Chaka (2011:178) have demonstrated the South African airport's surveillant assemblage and the abstract machine it operationalizes on the African body that arrives at the pint of entry. In light of this, and extending the latter findings here, the infamous Soyinka airport incident shows the airport site and its profiling protocols of surveillance as culturally disavowing the transnational archive from which South Africa drew figures of political memory: from Kwame Nkrumah to Mahatma Gandhi, from Julius Nyerere to Jawaharlal Nehru (Hofmeyr 2007: 14–15). Also, through NEPAD, South Africa and Africa of which it is part are but one assemblage, something not yet manifest in the protocols and procedures of entry and exit into South African ports of entry. Interestingly, Deleuze asks: 'What is an assemblage? It is a multiplicity made up of many heterogeneous terms and which establishes liaisons, relations between them, across ages, sexes and reigns – different natures. Thus, the assemblage's only unity is that of co-functioning: it is a symbiosis, a "sympathy"' (Deleuze and Parnet 1987: 69). To be African in the presence of the abstract machine of the airport's screening dataveillance is to experience fully the absence of co-functioning, symbiosis and sympathy.

Strangely, the resultant profile picture of surveillance is in monochrome: black criminals/traffickers and white tourists. The notion of assemblage whose provenance is Deleuze and Guattari's theoretical work on deterritorialisation – based on the destabilisation of traditional concepts of territory – is extended to critique aviation ports of entry, particularly how transnational African assemblages encounter airports that discursively transmogrify into points of entry into the public discourse of the Islamic/Arab/African militant terrorist-cum-trafficker with the aid of profiling, biometrics and even nanotechnology. Accordingly, this article takes its cues from Hempel and Töpfer (2009) as it grounds the question of airport regulation on the notion of the 'surveillant assemblage' to explain regulation as part of a surveillance consensus that creates 'the illusion of total inclusion' by means of technologies that increase visibility as they work invisibly. In this context, airport regulation of exits and entries into airport terminals arguably renders that space as what Bigo (2006) calls the 'ban-opticon' (which is distinct from Foucault's 'panopticon' with regard to emphasis on mobility instead of the fixed gaze), in that 'only the few profiled as "unwelcome" are monitored by a few' (Hempel and Töpfer 2009: 160).

To arrive in an airport which still has a separate check-in stall for Africans vis-à-vis South Africans and Europeans is symptomatic of a baseline premise of difference that not only contradicts geopolitical realities of interconnectedness but also diminishes the scope of intergovernmental interventions. Interestingly, survey results from a study by Viscusi and Zeckhauser (2003) clearly demonstrate that targeted screening of airline passengers raises conflicting concerns of efficiency and equity, owing to hindsight biases and embeddedness effects in terrorism risk beliefs.

Figure 1: South African airport signpost

As per Deleuze and Guattari's critique of representation, this article takes its cues from Hempel and Töpfer (2009) as it grounds the question of airport regulation on the notion of the 'surveillant assemblage' such as it is applied by Haggerty and Ericson (2000) to explain regulation as part of a surveillance consensus that creates 'the illusion of total inclusion' by means of technologies that increase visibility as they work invisibly. Surely this exclusive visibility does not redeem what the socially *invisible* and unnamed Afro-American protagonist in Ralph Ellison's Invisible Man (1952) decried. Drawing from the Nigerian philosopher Ifeanyi Menkiti, this article endorses the view, that the community (even in the inclusive and broader conception of NEPAD) is acknowledged as the source of one's humanity (1984: 180) – especially at the African airport. This would readily counter the abstract territorial machine that is made concrete the moment it invisibly territorialises and racially objectivises the body as visible in the space configured by the Airports Company of South Africa (ACSA). No matter what negative images the mainstream media popularizes about Chibok abductions in West Africa and the memory of terror in East Africa, it must be borne in mind that – the anti-terror agenda profiling notwithstanding – 'in the African view

it is the community which defines the person as a person, not some isolated static quality of rationality, will or memory' (Menkiti 1984: 172). In the same vein, Fredric Jameson sees this as 'a problem with the body as a positive slogan', particularly when it is conceived of as a unified entity:

> We experience the body through our experience of the world and of other people, so that it is perhaps a misnomer to speak of the body at all as a substantive with a definite article, unless we have in mind the bodies of others, rather than our own phenomenological referent. (Jameson 2003: 713)

To work invisibly on the 'other' body, the body of an African, that unified entity of terror-cum-trafficker 'suspecthood' in South African airports, is for profiling and CCTV cameras qua abstract territorial machine to be hidden. Ironically, it is also to latch on to the surveillant assemblage that mobilises media reinforcements and an inscribing *socius* of 'sameness' and 'otherness': the abstract machine, of which invisible surveillance technologies are both metaphor and limit, inaugurates exclusion of deviant behaviour profiles of terror and media arrangements of coverage of white/European terrorism through heightened visibility. Such was the visibility of Wole Soyinka, based on exclusion. Exclusion on the basis of profiling is here understood to be exceptional in 'the way it excludes certain groups in the name of their future potential behavior' (Hempel and Töpfer 2009: 161).

The Invidious Visibility of the African Assemblage

However, exclusion does not only advance the 'otherness' of terrorism: it also naturalises 'sameness' through the illusion of total inclusion of everyone occupying spaces such as throughout South Africa. From the moment of entry into the abstract territorial machine, i.e., the racialised discourses of profiling, the illusion of total inclusion represents more a totalising discourse than a function of security. Even on the airport on African soil, the African and Asian body are caught up in the problematic of being credibly conceptualised, in the fashion of Jameson (2003: 713), except only as a positive slogan – positive in terms of invidious visibility. Belonging to the racial profile and its associated edicts, the suspect's body only becomes real in relation to the body politic attending security protocols: it becomes an essentialised body-without-organs, an object of the invisible inscribing *socius* of the abstract territorial machine.

The visible body without organs is therefore non-white and, in the wake of the anti-terrorist agenda, is positioned as an object whose visibility resonates with the north London riots of August 2011, such as they hark back to the racial sentiments in the London of 1958:

> There were anti-black riots in London in 1958, and the first Commonwealth Immigrants Bill became law in 1962... This was a period of instability and

> realignment, when the newly independent African colonies and the increasing Caribbean presence played their part in bringing about a shift of ideas on the transference of culture, and when debates on ideas of cultural mutuality rather than one-way dominance were on the agenda. (Gunner 2010: 261)

Cultural mutuality, if not NEPAD's regional integration objectives, at any rate should facilitate the transference of culture right through the South African ports of entry. Whereas transference is a function of a fundamentally transnational travelling culture, it has since been chaperoned on its routes by the anti-terrorist off-spin of globalisation that (as an intended or unintended consequences) guaranteed free movement of capital flows and not visible bodies without organs. Failure to regulate stereotype-linked profile biases can prove disastrous. With a history of anti-racist struggle, the South African airport as a zone of exception abdicated a role in enabling, through interaction with Soyinka in the public sphere, what Paul Gilroy deems a transnational black culture that qualifies itself as a counterculture of modernity on the basis of a philosophical discourse that unites 'ethics and aesthetics, culture and politics' (Gilroy 1993: 38–9). The arrival of Soyinka, given the scale of his ethical stance through the public effect of his literary aesthetics, gives content to a counterculture of modernity in the same way that Nelson Mandela's inspiration by S.E.K. Mqhayi's assegai to mount the beginnings of the 'Assegai of the Nation/Umkhonto we Sizwe' with the material support he marshalls all over Africa. In his autobiography, *The Long Walk to Freedom* (1994), Nelson Mandela remembers that the underground movement took him abroad, literally all over Africa, where he spoke face to face with Julius Nyerere (Mandela 1994*:* 279), had private discussions with Kenneth Kaunda (*ibid.*: 284), met Tunisian President Habib Bourgiba who enthusiastically offered training for MK as well as offered 5,000 pounds (sterling) for weapons (*ibid.*: 286) as did President Tubman in Liberia, who offered US$5000 for weapons and training, right after Mandela had received 'generous material assistance' from prime minister Sir Milton Margai of Sierra Leone (*ibid.*: 288) and before he would receive an audience and a suitcase full of bank notes from Guinean Sékou Touré (*ibid.*: 289) and then have his diplomatic passport and plane fares to England arranged and paid for by President Leopold Senghor subsequent to a personal meeting in his hotel in Senegal (*ibid.*: 290).

A month before the Soyinka fiasco in South Africa's O.R. Tambo International Airport in August 2005, the fatal shooting in the head of Brazilian national Jean Charles de Menezes at Stockwell tube station on the London Underground by unnamed Metropolitan Police after being mistaken for a suicide bomber was a culmination of profiling-aided anti-terrorist surveillance. Since that fateful day of 22 July 2005 CCTV footage profiles have had to be queried. To question whether there is a symmetrical relationship between profiling and combating

criminal(ised) terrorist resistance is to test the hypothesis that advances in aviation security are directly proportional to the efficacy of preventative surveillance methods but inversely proportional to the rate of criminal incidents. This is to be tested against the historical background of the 1972 bloodbath in Munich's Furstenfeldbruck airport in the aftermath of the hostage-taking of 11 Israeli athletes by a small band of Arab terrorists.

Whereas the stench of xenophobia-cum-racism hardly peters out, in South Africa today, 'whiteness is invisible to most white people' (Steyn 2001 quoted in Seekings 2008: 6). The South African airport then becomes a point of confluence of social and cultural dimensions of 'race'; a place where stereotypically banned individuals (Arab/African/Asian Muslim), instead of entire populations, are made visible *beyond* the available means of dataveillance but paradoxically *within* the configuration of the surveillant assemblage. In this (dis-)order of things, the lot of black African and Arabic sports tourists is far greater than imagined anywhere else, because, the deracialisation of citizenship and public policy in post-apartheid South Africa society notwithstanding, race still has a salience, 'remaining distinctive in terms of the social, political or economic roles played by "race"' (Seekings, 2008: 2). I am not certain if the same can be said of English fans of Asian and African descent – lest we overly glean cultural racism against British blacks vividly captured by the titular significance of Paul Gilroy's *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack* (1987). Racialisation *qua* profiling remains pervasive. However:

> Because Racialization implies a set of differentially racialized cultural contexts it also constitutes *a move away from the common assumption that such a context is formed by a single, coherent racist ideology.* Instead, it allows for an understanding of the contradictions and incoherencies within and between the expressions of racism in different domains of soccer culture. (Müller, van Zoonen and de Roode 2007: 338, emphasis added)

In the current political climate, where media profiling as a function of agenda setting projects militancy as the hallmark of right-wingers versus the radical President of the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL), Julius Malema, racialisation has taken over to a point where it is convenient for tourists to play 'victim' to South African blacks in advance. The much-publicised Dewali murder case, though an exception, has shifted the binaries of the African/Asian versus the European in no small measure – except to the extent that African and Asian of European naturalisation seemingly entrenches their 'suspecthood' in a manner that unwittingly foregrounds white/European victimhood. Consider then the invisible right-wing terror threat that, despite reports of its thefts of arms caches from military bases being reported (*Cape Times* 2010), is discounted on the basis of a de-emphasis, a silence, an invisibility of whiteness.

White Tourists-cum-investors vis-à-vis African Terrorists-cum-Traffickers

We must also consider the discursive interaction between white South African expatriates abroad and potential tourists. In fact, this influential discourse is symptomatic of what Melissa Steyn terms 'white talk', whose 'main function is to manipulate the contradictions of diasporic whiteness, in order to maximise the advantages of whites in South Africa' (2005: 127). As Figure 2 attests, the airport renders the spectre flagrant as tourists catch on the prevalent dynamic of protecting the invisible yet endangered white (and especially Afrikaner) species against '*die swart gevaar*' (or black peril). This is symptomatic of what Jeremy Seekings terms the salience of race in social and political life of a multi-cultural and constitutionally non-racial South Africa (2008: 6).

Figure 2: Foreign tourists in a South African airport.
Picture courtesy of P.M. Lubisi

The wearing of the t-shirts (as shown in Figure 2) give South Africa unwanted attention to things other than its intended attractions. In its capacity as a World Cup host country South Africa aimed for 'visibility and advantage in the context of competitive market liberalisation' (Black and Van der Westhuisen 2004: 1196). Has this concern superseded South Africa's commitments to NEPAD and the Millennium Development Goals? Public spectacles of the 'other' visibility are the unintended consequences of the larger liberalisation project. Airport traffic security protocols, however, are not as liberal as market forces; nor are the attitudes and profiles that interact in the airport territory.

The South African airport becomes what Bigo (2006) calls the 'ban-opticon' (which is distinct from Foucault's 'panopticon' with regard to emphasis on mobility instead of the fixed gaze), in that 'only the few profiled as "unwelcome" are monitored by a few' (Hempel and Töpfer, 2009: 160). If precedent is anything to go by, since the London bombing of July 2005 public discourse about CCTV in the UK 'now places less emphasis on crime prevention and more on the ability to prosecute offenders on the basis of CCTV footage' (Hempel and Töpfer 2009: 158). Will the ACSA abstract machine behind the airport security apparatus acknowledge a *mea culpa* moment?

Like the United States, South Africa runs the risk of imposing amnesia about historical racial imbalances when it promulgates laws that do not synergise with the NEPAD policy landscape and its vision, fast becoming 'society that has intensified its racism behind the cloak of colorblindness and other post-racial myths while at the same time exercising with more diligence its policing and punishing functions' (Masemola 2014: 54). This, however, raises questions as to how terrorists slipped the net at secure airports on 19 January 2010, when Mossad secret service agents entered the Dubai airport using forged Australian passports and proceeded to assassinate Mahmoud al-Mabhouh, who was considered by them to be a senior commander of a radical Palestinian group, thus raising profound questions about the responsibilities of states (Abeyratne 2010). The jury is out as to whether in the aftermath of the passport falsification diplomatic scandal an attendant alteration of profiles took place. Passport falsification, however, officially remains the profiled mark of African visibility at South African and international ports of entry.

Figure 3: Profile-based searches of Africans

Today, however, as the profile of the terrorist clearly mutates, ACSA's answer comes in three parts: CCTV public area surveillance, in biometric data sets that, through Interpol's dataveillance, are readily accessible to airport security and, if

not, in profiling. Used in tandem, with the right balance (depending on each situation), biometric data and profiling could arguably prove a redoubtable combination for combating both human trafficking and terrorism. In an advent where 'deviant behaviour has been correlated with crime, crime with terrorism and terrorism with war' (Hempel and Töpfer 2009: 156), traffickers and terrorists on 'most wanted' lists can be reliably and scientifically vetted thorough the data of their scanned iris and fingerprints yet, critically, profiling can be a matter of para-scientific conjecture, the scientific criminological scholarship feeding it notwithstanding. While profiling decidedly criminalises both human traffickers and terrorists by its very methodology (Hempel and Töpfer 2009: 165), it fails to recognise movements and changing patterns of profiles in an uncertain geopolitical landscape across the North–South axis. With economic instability and high unemployment in the European Union rising in proportion to xenophobia and racism, calls for anti-terrorist security have bolstered the violent backlash against immigrants, particularly if they look Arabic or African in Islamic dress code. A study by Miller *et al.* (2008) has shown evidence of disproportionality of police stops, especially in a fashion that singles out particular racial groups for unwanted attention. This phenomenon of racial profiling underscores that 'police use of racial or ethnic characteristics to decide whom to investigate for, as yet, unknown criminal offences' (Miller *et al.* 2008: 162–3). As a synecdoche of the profiling discourses that shape the South African airport 'ban-opticon', the Soyinka debacle shows the tendency criminalises African migrants.

African Assemblage vis-à-vis the Rainbow Nation?

In the spirit of NEPAD, there has to be a disavowal of racial profiling, for the terrorist is not Arabic as a rule, nor is it true that every Nigerian is a criminal, nor every Jew entering a South African airport an Israeli agent on a fake Australian passport (Abeyratne 2010). The 'Islamicised' terrorist could be an intolerant African in West or Central Africa forcibly appropriating commercially viable land in the name of religious righteousness from conveniently labelled 'Christian' owners; or, the terrorist could be a breakaway Orthodox Muslim Caucasian from Eastern Europe acting on the heat of a backlash against sanctimonious graffiti on their relatives' graves; the terrorist could be merely a self-styled patriotic racist in former East Germany incapable of handling the trade-offs of social features in EU citizenry; an armed right-winger in the US or South Africa, a secessionist in the former Eastern bloc or, indeed, in West Africa. Clearly there is no such thing as 'the usual suspects', only the visibly excluded and isolated targets of the surveillant assemblage's invisibility. Whilst all of the foregoing racially 'non-profiled' types could land in any South African airport, the mere mention of secessionists in Africa gives occasion to pay attention to the recent shooting of

Togo national soccer team players by a separatist group called the Front for the Liberation of Enclave of Cabinda during the African Cup of Nations held in Angola, plus the suspected presence of al-Shabaab militants in South Africa, over and above the South African and Kenyan protests against excessive Israeli military raids in Gaza – there is a chance that the lens of aviation biometric data might be inevitably eclipsed by binary demarcations of the Arabesque/African trafficker-terrorist and the European/white investor-tourist.

It is here instructive to depart from binarism and instead takes cues from survey results (Viscusi and Zeckhauser 2003) which clearly demonstrate that targeted screening of airline passengers raises conflicting concerns of efficiency and equity, owing to 'hindsight biases and embeddedness effects' in terrorism risk beliefs. Such terrorism risk beliefs are buttressed by distrust born of what Jeremy Seekings identifies as an 'official multiculturalism [that] serves, however, to reproduce the culturally-based racial identities of the past' (2008: 6) in South Africa's racially-defined redress strategies. The surveillant assemblage, then, has a different nature to the sympathetic relations arising out of the assemblage of a non-racial, multicultural 'Rainbow Nation' (to borrow a term from the Nobel Laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu) that thrives on difference, diversity and tolerance. According to Deleuze: 'What is an assemblage? It is a multiplicity made up of many heterogeneous terms and which establishes liaisons, relations between them, across ages, sexes and reigns – different natures. Thus, the assemblage's only unity is that of co-functioning: it is a symbiosis, a "sympathy"' (Deleuze and Parnet 1987: 69). In the current context, however, the liaisons between the heterogeneous racial terms of the Rainbow Nation evince no unity of co-functioning but 'the illusion of total inclusion' so aptly described by Haggerty and Ericson (2000) and applied by Hempel and Töpfer (2009). The Rainbow Nation is an assemblage that, in the case of sub-Saharan Africans, is even in denial of its heterogeneous terms inspired by the African Renaissance.

Proceeding from the observation that major events like the world conference on racism, and even on sustainable development are unlike the World Cup in that the latter gives licence to patriotism and powerfully emotional shared experiences, Black and Van der Westhuizen argue that such sporting events have 'the capacity to shape and project images of the host, both domestically and globally' (2004: 1195). The emerging Pan-African narrative of NEPAD is oftentimes halted at the airport, where Africans are profiled as the unlikely host, as drifters from 'other' African countries with unstable politics and ethno-religious conflicts. All that profiling renders visible – and overgeneralises – what has already been observed as 'labour migration from eastern and southern African countries to South Africa' (Adepoju 2006: 25).

At the same time, Blain and Boyle caution us about the role of the media as and when it project images of the host country: even the manner in which sport is written about or broadcast in South Africa 'constitutes a source of information about our beliefs and attitudes, in other words a sense of who we are and what other people are like' (1998: 370). This became axiomatic in the run up to the 'African' World Cup, for example: local and international media deliberately emphasised and de-emphasises successes and failures resulting from South Africa's political beliefs and cultural attitudes. Even then, '[d]ominant Western definitions of issues are preferred, even if these have imperial overtones, and this is regarded as "greater objectivity" and the avoidance of vested interests' (Steyn 2005: 12). To shape and project images of the South African destination country for Africans and Asians, in or out of the broader African continental context, is to provide a supplementary country profile rather than the socio-economic demographic profile in which, say, the protocols of NEPAD and free movement take priority. Embedded stereotypes provide the cues.

Like crime in general, terrorism and human trafficking through South African airports attenuate what Black and Van der Westhuizen (2004) conceptualise as the 'marketing power' of 'semi-peripheral' polities and spaces such as South Africa that seek to celebrate human rights and national identity. Such 'marketing power', by extension, marshalls the apparent allure of global games to serve the NEPAD-inspired political imperative of showcasing the balance between socio-economic development, political liberalisation and human rights to tourists. The problem with this perspective, on balance, is that development is more closely allied to market liberalisation: the organisers – not the country, not the continent nor NEPAD – stand to benefit, at the expense of scoring high on human rights values that deracialise profiling. Failure to achieve this balance, according to Dunning (2000), is symptomatic of major 'fault-lines' of particular hosting countries: effective policies are urgently needed if South Africa is to be protected from the serious threat posed by a combination of misdirected profiling and politically-loaded anti-African agenda-setting in the media. In the South African airport 'ban-opticon', the Peace Laureate Desmond Tutu's vision is attenuated by the invidious visibility of Wole Soyinka, the Literature Laureate.

Conversely, are possibly efficacious security measures in and beyond airports being overshadowed by a steadily ossifying ideology of anti-terrorism in the name of democracy? This discussion runs the risk of being bogged down in the axiomatic inference that 'one man's freedom fighter is another's terrorist, an innocent bystander an agent of imperialist oppression' (Dingley 2001: 24). Yet there is no glory in the gore of these resistance activities. For one thing, White (1991) and Nettler (1982, discussed in Vito and Holmes 1994) are agreed that crimes assume greater importance the moment they are labelled as terrorist,

and terror groups by the very nature of their operations thrive on (and exploit) the publicity they receive from the media to advertise their causes. What of assumed crimes and perpetrators? What of Wole Soyinka? The Abuja bombings in Nigeria filtered into the public consciousness through the images on SABC, CNN television and other news networks internationally. This brutality often wins no sympathy to the causes they advocate but rather entrenches the political and social degrading of their causes such that, purely from an abhorrence of such brutality, terrorist resistance becomes firmly understood (1) from a moral viewpoint (Jenkins 1980) for the lack of a superior or humane morality relative to society as well as the governments it is used against, and (2) becomes a fittingly 'pejorative term' (Wilkinson 1994; Dingley 2001). In South Africa, that nation that owes the Nigerian Laureate Wole Soyinka more than a million apologies, agenda setting in the media prefers to latch on to the Abuja bombings and focuses more on the discourse of terror and anti-terror.

But then again, whilst the terrorist holds a different view of the moral content of the actions, it is imperative that criminal theory delves into the ethno-theories that inform identity-making, how terrorists belong to a cause they fully identify with. Islamicisation of political causes, for example, is not consistent with an 'isolation process' in which 'the norms of society are rejected and new ones created by which they judge and justify their actions' (White 1991: 11o). It is foolhardy, then, to Islamicise the cause of, say, MEND[2] in the name of waging a war against terrorism. There is a thin and fine moral dividing line between terrorism and anti-terrorism:

> What terrorists are doing is in itself no different from what governments do; and just as governments resort to war as a 'mere continuation of policy' by other means' so terrorists use the same arguments, e.g. 'only after just demands have been ignored ... Of course it is the terrorist who arrogates to himself the right to define what is right. *Here lies an important moral distinction between the use of terror and by governments: governments normally have to answer to a larger constituency* (Dingley 2001: 25, emphasis added).

This may hold as true for terror-sponsoring states as it does for countries that allow Al-Qaeda free reign in the Middle East as well as right-wing militia in the West. The same should be said of countries in the West, such as the US, that denounce terror yet take a soft approach to right-wingers who peddle xenophobic, supremacist agendas to further their political ambitions. In fact, internal terrorist threats have been known to be tolerated, if only to supplement the governments' terror/anti-terror projects abroad. Such public domain knowledge, filtering into the public conscience as back-up rather than vigilante in protecting a nation's 'way of life', has ironically stimulated real economic value in the definition of risk and risk prevention. A sizeable security industry has burgeoned, prioritising the

anti-terror agenda over NEPAD and the African Renaissance. In terms of the African Renaissance and NEPAD, as well as its own diversity, South Africa has no such exclusive claim to a national way of life, especially given its history of the liberation struggle and its geopolitical space in Africa.

Conclusion

Whereas Mandela's travails made him iconic beyond South African borders, Wole Soyinka's difficult passage through a South African port of entry became a scandalous synecdoche of the South African airport's geography of power. The 'ban-opticon' first rendered Soyinka visible, then proceeded to exclude him. If the schematic motors of dataveillance reify the post-9/11 agenda, the conditions that regulate entries and exits are transmuted in the surveillance discourses of airport (in-)security. In this self-styled zone of exception, the hue of profiles remains in the monochrome of black and white in a 'Rainbow Nation'. Owing to 'a conservative turn that has taken place in (especially American) Western politics' (Steyn 2005: 129), relative tolerance of white extremist anti-terror/terror groupings simply stimulates a market for media and/or military products such that what is known as a 'national way of life' is ultimately worthy of economic investment, by the state, in technologies of war advancing national interests.

More significant in currency than NEPAD's regional integration plans, which in themselves value trade and infrastructure over persons, the value of military hardware and surveillance technologies in this context is stimulated by threats ranged against interests in projected actuarial values. That explains why this article finds extant South African airport security lagging behind, overtaken and overwhelmed by events that attend to the economic fulcrum on which terrorism and anti-terrorism rest. Perhaps it is time the praxis of South African airport regulation took stock of NEPAD's priorities as well as diversity within continental African societies, reimagining South Africa as part of the African assemblage, instead of rendering African and Asian groups visible and invisible under the illusion of total inclusion. Profiling has to call time on zoning 'the usual suspects' within the ban-opticon of the South African airport's surveillant assemblage.

Notes

1. Ordinary employees of the South African Home Affairs at the point of entry either have carte blanche to be stricter with African migrants or are simply ignorant of the Pan-African agenda and unitary drive of NEPAD and its policy concessions at the level of prioritization of regional integration and mobility.
2. UK NGO established in 2014 to tackle Islamophobia and encourage political, civic and social engagement within British Muslim communities.

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« Je t'aime, moi non plus » : l'Afrique du Sud et le Nigeria en Afrique

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Résumé

L'Afrique du Sud et le Nigeria demeurent les deux plus grandes puissances économiques en Afrique. Tout comme les autres puissances, toutes catégories confondues, elles cherchent à asseoir leur présence économique sur le continent. Dans une perspective comparative, cet article apporte un éclairage sur la place qu'occupent ces deux puissances dans le marché d'Afrique subsaharienne. L'étude conclut qu'en termes de commerce et d'investissements sur le continent africain, l'Afrique du Sud, du fait de la force de ses acteurs économiques et financiers, a une longueur d'avance sur le Nigeria.

Mots-clés : Afrique du Sud, Nigeria, Afrique subsaharienne, compétition économique

Abstract

South Africa and Nigeria remain the two largest economic powers in Africa. And just like all the other powers, they seek to establish their economic presence on the continent. Using a comparative framework, this article sheds light on the place occupied by these two powers in the sub-Saharan African market. The study concludes that in terms of trade and investment in Africa, South Africa, because of its economic and financial actors' strength, has a head start over Nigeria.

Keywords: Nigeria, South Africa, sub-Saharan Africa, economic competition

Introduction

L'Afrique du Sud et le Nigeria sont les deux plus grandes puissances en Afrique subsaharienne dont ils représentent la moitié de l'économie et 80 pour cent du PIB de l'Afrique australe et de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (Ernest

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et Young 2014:57). Ces deux pays ont donc des capacités économiques qui leur permettent de se projeter au-delà de leurs voisins immédiats. Dans leur rapport avec le reste du continent, l'un et l'autre ont développé une politique extérieure qui présente des traits communs. L'Afrique du Sud et le Nigeria s'appuient sur une approche afrocentrique, qui accorde une grande importance à leur continent d'appartenance. Dans les relations interafricaines, ceux deux pays font aussi valoir un leadership constructif, ce qui explique leur implication dans les processus d'intégration, tout comme dans les processus de résolution des conflits (Odubajo & Akinboye 2017 ; Agbu 2010 ; Adebajo 2008 ; Adebajo & Landsberg 2003). L'Afrique du Sud et le Nigeria sont porteurs de l'idéologie du panafricanisme et encouragent la marginalisation des anciennes puissances coloniales, l'indépendance définitive de l'Afrique et la gestion des problèmes africains par des Africains. Enfin, ces deux puissances africaines manifestent aussi une aspiration à se positionner comme pont entre le continent et le reste du monde (Tjønneland 2013).

Tout comme les autres puissances, l'Afrique du Sud et le Nigeria cherchent à asseoir leur présence économique en Afrique. Dans une perspective comparative, cet article apporte un éclairage sur la place qu'ils occupent dans le marché de l'Afrique subsaharienne. Analyser leur présence économique en Afrique est intéressant dans un contexte où ce continent, du fait de ses nombreuses ressources naturelles et de son marché de consommation en augmentation rapide, suscite un regain d'intérêt de la part des puissances, toutes catégories confondues. L'Afrique du Sud et le Nigeria sont conscients des enjeux que représente l'Afrique.

L'aspiration de ces deux pays à étendre leur présence économique sur le continent fait partie intégrante de la compétition qu'ils mènent pour le leadership continental. La course au leadership continental ou régional est devenue un phénomène banal, et se manifeste dans plusieurs parties du monde : Chine et Japon en Asie, Argentine et Brésil en Amérique latine, Allemagne et France en Europe (Adebajo 2013). L'Afrique n'est pas à l'abri de ce phénomène, devenu perceptible à travers la compétition entre l'Afrique du Sud et le Nigeria. Alors que le Nigeria avait commencé à recalculer son PIB, Fioramonti (2013) écrivait en 2012 dans le *Mail & Guardian* que les résultats allaient froisser les décideurs sud-africains qui pourraient voir la couronne de leader africain se déplacer vers le Nigeria. En 2014, le Nigeria ravit effectivement à l'Afrique du Sud la place de première puissance économique du continent en termes de PIB (568,4 milliards de dollars à l'époque[1]). Cette perte de leadership a été « très mal vécue par nombre de Sud-Africains qui regardent toujours le Nigeria avec une

certaine condescendance » (Parsi 2017). Le Nigeria n'aime pas non plus le fait que l'Afrique du Sud soit le seul pays africain du BRICS (Brésil, Russie, Inde, Chine et South Africa) et du G20, et domine différents secteurs de l'économie nigériane (Molele 2012). Ce n'est donc pas un secret que ces deux puissances ne s'apprécient pas (Allison 2015a).

La première partie de l'article étudie les relations bilatérales entre l'Afrique du Sud et le Nigeria. Cela permet de voir que les enjeux de partenariat entre ces deux puissances, bien qu'importants, n'ont pas été assez suffisants pour dissiper les tensions qui surgissent de temps à autre. Dans la deuxième partie, il est question de la place de ces deux puissances en matière de projection économique, notamment dans le marché africain.

Un bilatéralisme récent, mais soumis à rude épreuve

Fin de l'apartheid en Afrique du Sud et nouveau départ entre Abuja et Pretoria

Jusqu'au début des années 1990, l'Afrique du Sud et le Nigeria n'ont pas développé de relations de coopération à cause de la politique d'apartheid en Afrique du Sud. Rappelons que le Nigeria était parmi les pays africains les plus mobilisés contre l'apartheid et avait investi d'importantes ressources financières et diplomatiques dans la lutte contre ce système ; ce qui avait pour effet d'hypothéquer les relations économiques avec l'Afrique du Sud. L'Afrique du Sud et le Nigeria ont établi des relations diplomatiques officielles le 21 février 1994. Il y a un constat unanime au sujet du nouveau départ que ces deux pays ont pris à la fin de l'apartheid en Afrique du Sud (Odubajo & Akinboye 2017 ; Akindele 2007 ; Adebajo & Landsberg 2003). À rappeler toutefois que malgré l'avènement d'un régime démocratique en Afrique du Sud, Abuja et Pretoria n'ont pas démarré leurs relations du bon pied. Certes, le Nigeria a été l'un des premiers pays visités par le président Nelson Mandela, en signe de reconnaissance de l'appui d'Abuja dans la lutte contre l'apartheid, mais cela n'a pas véritablement fonctionné en raison de la crise de légitimité de la dictature militaire de Sani Abacha (1993-1998). L'absence de gouvernance démocratique au Nigeria se posait donc en obstacle à l'établissement de relations harmonieuses entre les deux pays.

Les enjeux de la coopération entre l'Afrique du Sud et le Nigeria ont largement été soulignés dans la littérature (Amusan et van Wyk 2011 ; Agbu 2010 ; Akindele 2007 ; Adebajo et Landsberg 2003). Le continent africain se trouve au cœur des enjeux mis en exergue dans la documentation. L'on souligne le fait que le changement de régime en Afrique du Sud soit intervenu dans un contexte africain marqué par des conflits, la pauvreté et

la marginalisation du continent. Pour faire face à ces défis et remédier à la nature déséquilibrée des relations entre l'Afrique et le reste du monde, l'Afrique du Sud et le Nigeria, les deux puissances de la région, ont pensé à collaborer (Akindele 2007 ; Adebajo & Landsberg 2003). Un autre motif de coopération serait lié à la prise de conscience, de part et d'autre, de la nécessité de maintenir un haut degré de dialogue, pour éviter la confrontation susceptible de porter préjudice à l'intérêt mutuel et au continent africain dans son ensemble (Amusan & van Wyk 2011). Mais la confrontation a-t-elle été évitée ? Ce qui est sûr, c'est que, sur bien des sujets, l'Afrique du Sud et le Nigeria ont dû travailler ensemble, espérant remorquer le reste de l'Afrique grâce à leurs capacités économiques (Agbu 2010). L'Afrique du Sud et le Nigeria ont donc des intérêts communs en Afrique et ont dû coopérer.

Cependant, sur beaucoup d'autres enjeux tels que la définition de l'agenda des organisations internationales africaines, le règlement des conflits, la représentation de l'Afrique au niveau mondial, ou encore au Conseil de sécurité des Nations unies, Abuja et Pretoria ont exprimé des désaccords, et même des rivalités (Odubajo & Akinboye 2017 ; Darracq 2011 ; Verront 2006). Les relations entre l'Afrique du Sud et le Nigeria ont connu des hauts et des bas en fonction des présidents au pouvoir. La phase de coopération la plus importante a été mise sur le compte de deux personnalités, à savoir Obasanjo et Mbeki (Landsberg 2008 ; Bach 2007). La présence simultanée de ces deux hommes au pouvoir a été favorable au dialogue, du fait de leurs relations d'amitié qui remontent aux années 1970[2]. Cela s'est traduit, au début des années 2000, par une coopération économique et diplomatique soutenue entre l'Afrique du Sud et le Nigeria.

Les enjeux de la coopération bilatérale

Comme mentionné précédemment, l'Afrique du Sud et le Nigeria ont pris un nouveau départ dans leur interaction à la fin de l'apartheid en Afrique du Sud. La phase de coopération la plus aboutie a eu lieu entre 1999 et 2008, et a été l'œuvre d'Obasanjo dans le cas du Nigeria et de Mbeki pour l'Afrique du Sud. Au niveau multilatéral, les deux pays ont coopéré sur différents points, y compris pour la mise en place du NEPAD (New Partnership for Africa's Development – Nouveau partenariat pour le développement de l'Afrique) en 2001, la transformation de l'Organisation de l'unité africaine (OUA) en Union africaine (UA), l'établissement du Conseil de paix et de sécurité de celle-ci, ou encore la création du Mécanisme africain d'évaluation par les pairs. La collaboration a aussi permis d'élever la voix et la stature de l'Afrique dans les forums mondiaux (Landsberg 2008).

Au niveau bilatéral, la coopération économique s'est opérationnalisée en octobre 1999 à travers la création de la Commission binationale Afrique du Sud-Nigeria (*Bi-National Commission*, BNC), un partenariat permettant aux gouvernements et aux secteurs privés des deux pays d'interagir et d'améliorer le climat des investissements. Rappelons que l'année 1999 a été marquée par le retour de la démocratie au Nigeria (Bach 2007). Cela correspondait, sur le plan économique, à la deuxième phase de privatisation durant laquelle pas moins de 116 entreprises ont été privatisées (MGI 2010). Dans le même temps, l'Afrique du Sud sous Mbeki misait sur le secteur privé, en remplaçant, dès 1996, le Programme de reconstruction et de développement (Reconstruction and Development Programme – RDP) par la Stratégie de croissance, d'emploi et de redistribution (Growth Employment and Redistribution Strategy). Le partenariat stratégique réalisé dans ce contexte de libéralisation autant du côté d'Abuja que de Pretoria a sans doute impulsé les relations économiques entre l'Afrique du Sud et le Nigeria. Cela a mené à la création, en 2005, de la Chambre de commerce Afrique du Sud-Nigeria (*South Africa-Nigeria Chamber of Commerce* – SA-NCC), chargée de promouvoir le commerce bilatéral entre les deux pays.

Comme nous venons de le voir, l'Afrique du Sud et le Nigeria ont renforcé leurs relations économiques. La valeur du commerce bilatéral a été multipliée par dix en dix ans, de 3,2 milliards de dollars en 2001 à 36,6 milliards de dollars en 2013 (Nigeria–South Africa Chamber of Commerce 2014). Alors qu'il n'y avait que quatre entreprises sud-africaines au Nigeria en 1999, il y en a au moins 120 en 2018. Les grandes entreprises sud-africaines qui cherchent un ancrage africain veulent bien se positionner au Nigeria, le plus grand marché du continent (190 millions d'habitants en 2017). Le succès financier de l'opérateur sud-africain de téléphonie mobile, MTN (Mobile Telephone Networks), illustre tout l'enjeu que représente le Nigeria. Arrivé au Nigeria en 2001, MTN finit par y avoir son plus grand marché, soit 60,5 millions d'abonnés en 2017, contre 30,2 millions en Afrique du Sud (Games 2017: 12).

Le Nigeria est le troisième partenaire commercial de l'Afrique du Sud en Afrique, derrière le Zimbabwe et le Mozambique. Pour Pretoria, ce pays représente aussi une importante porte d'entrée en Afrique de l'Ouest, son premier partenaire dans la région. L'Afrique du Sud a donc besoin du Nigeria pour son grand marché, mais aussi pour son pétrole. Celui-ci représente en effet 98 pour cent des importations de Pretoria en provenance d'Abuja ; ce qui fait du Nigeria l'un des rares pays d'Afrique qui bénéficie d'un excédent commercial avec l'Afrique du Sud. Cependant, cette part d'importation,

aussi importante soit-elle, ne traduit pas un rapport de dépendance, puisque l'Afrique du Sud importe 45 pour cent du pétrole qu'elle consomme de l'Arabie Saoudite et 18 pour cent de l'Angola (*Fin24* 2014).

Le Nigeria, de son côté, a aussi besoin de l'Afrique du Sud pour ses exportations, ses investissements et sa technologie (Amusan & van Wyk 2011). Certes, très peu de grandes compagnies nigérianes sont présentes en Afrique du Sud. Le groupe Dangote qui opère dans une vingtaine de pays africains a investi 378 millions de dollars dans l'industrie du ciment en Afrique du Sud (Okusaga 2015). Les banques nigérianes, parmi les plus dynamiques du continent, sont peu présentes en Afrique du Sud. Certaines banques comme Arik Air, First Bank, Union Bank n'y ont que de simples bureaux de représentation. À noter toutefois qu'un grand nombre de petites entreprises nigérianes opèrent en Afrique du Sud. Entre l'Afrique du Sud et le Nigeria, les enjeux de partenariat économique sont donc multiples et importants. Orderson et Smith (2015) font remarquer toutefois que les relations commerciales entre les deux pays, bien qu'améliorées ces dernières années, n'ont pas atteint le niveau qu'elles devraient avoir en raison des tensions et d'un manque de volonté du côté des gouvernements. C'est dire à quel point la coopération bilatérale s'opère laborieusement.

La coopération bilatérale n'exclut pas la compétition

En dépit d'une dynamique de coopération croissante, l'Afrique du Sud et le Nigeria ont dû faire face à une série de querelles dans leurs relations bilatérales. Par exemple, côté nigérian, on se plaint du durcissement des règles d'obtention du visa pour l'Afrique du Sud, une plainte aggravée en mars 2012 lorsque 125 passagers nigérians ont été refoulés à leur arrivée à Johannesburg, faute d'avoir des carnets de vaccination contre la fièvre jaune. Cela a été très mal accueilli par Abuja, qui a riposté, en reconduisant aux frontières des dizaines de Sud-Africains pourtant en règle au Nigeria. Selon feu Olugbenga Ashiru, à l'époque ministre nigérian des Affaires étrangères, « aucune nation ne devrait considérer comme acquis le contexte économique amical du Nigeria, où les entreprises sud-africaines font plus de bénéfices au Nigeria qu'en Afrique du Sud » (*Panapress* 2012). Pretoria a dû présenter ses excuses. En avril 2015, un autre épisode de querelle est survenu, à la suite d'une autre série d'attaques xénophobes exercées en Afrique du Sud à l'encontre des immigrés. En signe de protestation contre les Nigérians touchés, Abuja a rappelé son chargé des affaires à Pretoria, Martin Cobham, et son consul général à Johannesburg, Uche Ajulu-Okeke. Ce fut une décision diplomatique sans précédent entre les deux pays depuis la chute de l'apartheid en Afrique du Sud. Les médias et la classe politique nigérians ont

sévèrement critiqué l'Afrique du Sud pour les violences xénophobes[3] et ont réclamé des relations équilibrées entre les deux pays, puis appelé au boycott des entreprises sud-africaines. Dans sa réaction, Pretoria a rappelé la mort de Sud-Africains dans l'effondrement d'un bâtiment intervenu à Lagos un an plutôt, en septembre 2014 :

> L'Afrique du Sud demeure attachée à un fort lien d'amitié avec le Nigeria. C'est pour cette raison que lorsque 84 de nos citoyens ont péri à Lagos, nous n'avons pas blâmé le gouvernement nigérian pour ces morts, même s'il a accusé plus de neuf mois de retard dans le rapatriement des corps qui sont arrivés dans un état tel qu'on ne pouvait les toucher ou les consulter conformément à nos pratiques d'enterrement (DIRCO 2015).

Pour dissiper les divergences, des visites de haut niveau ont été effectuées. Jacob Zuma s'est rendu au Nigeria lors de l'inauguration de la présidence de Muhammadu Buhari le 29 mai 2015, un rapprochement visant à démarrer du bon pied les relations avec Abuja et Pretoria. En juin de la même année, Buhari a été en Afrique du Sud dans le cadre du Sommet de l'UA. En dépit de ces déplacements, il n'y a pas eu de signe de détente. En octobre 2015, MTN, le plus grand opérateur sud-africain de téléphonie mobile en Afrique, est condamné par la Commission des communications du Nigeria à payer une amende de 5,2 milliards de dollars pour n'avoir pas déconnecté de son réseau près de 5,1 millions d'utilisateurs non enregistrés[4]. L'État nigérian se dit convaincu que des cartes SIM non enregistrées ont été utilisées par des groupes armés, dont Boko Haram. L'amende a été présentée dans la presse sud-africaine comme quelque chose de « totalement déraisonnable » et politiquement motivée (Allison 2015b ; Strydom & Motsoeneng 2015 ; Fabricius 2015). Soko (2015) va plus loin et considère que l'Afrique du Sud se laisse prendre au chantage du Nigeria qui utilise son grand marché comme moyen de pression.

Le 8 mars 2016, Zuma s'est rendu au Nigeria, où il a tenu un discours à l'Assemblée nationale. Depuis le retour de la démocratie dans ce pays en 1999, c'était la première fois qu'un leader d'un autre pays africain tenait un discours devant le Parlement nigérian. En février 2017, environ un an après cette visite, d'autres attaques ont encore visé des étrangers – y compris des Nigérians – en Afrique du Sud. Dans le même temps, 97 Nigérians sont expulsés par Pretoria. Le Nigeria a ensuite protesté, allant jusqu'à demander à l'Union africaine de faire quelque chose, pendant que de jeunes Nigérians s'attaquent au siège de MTN.

Certes, il s'avère difficile de dire exactement à quel point les divergences entre l'Afrique du Sud et le Nigeria affectent leur coopération économique. Ce qui est sûr, c'est que les acteurs économiques ont souvent été visés ou critiqués. Plus globalement, les investisseurs sud-africains se sont souvent plaints du harcèlement exercé par les autorités nigérianes. Ce qui est intéressant à noter

sur ce point, c'est que parmi la centaine de compagnies sud-africaines présentes au Nigeria, seules quatre d'entre elles (Woolworths, Truworths, Vodacom et Telkon) ont mis fin à leurs activités dans ce pays, sous prétexte qu'il est difficile d'y faire des affaires en raison de sévères réglementations et de problèmes de distribution. La ruée de compagnies sud-africaines vers le Nigeria ne s'est pas encore traduite par un départ massif ; cela laisse supposer que ce pays demeure un marché lucratif. La même chose peut être dite de l'Afrique du Sud qui, malgré de nombreuses attaques épisodiques xénophobes, se pose comme une destination attractive pour beaucoup de Nigérians à la recherche d'opportunités économiques ou de lieu de séjours touristiques. Lors d'une conférence de presse conjointe avec Goodluck Jonathan, le 7 mai 2013 à Pretoria, Jacob Zuma a laissé savoir aux médias que 70 000 touristes nigérians avaient visité l'Afrique du Sud en 2012 (Davis 2013).

L'accès au marché africain

Un accès disproportionné ?

L'Afrique fait partie des régions ayant les économies les plus dynamiques, un fait favorisé par plusieurs facteurs, dont une croissance élevée – une moyenne de 4,7 pour cent entre 2000 et 2017 (CUA/OCDE 2018:17) –, une augmentation du marché de la consommation (1,2 milliard d'habitants), une diversification des domaines d'investissements. Pour les acteurs économiques et financiers des pays développés et émergents, le continent est devenu une importante destination, à tel point qu'on la présente comme la prochaine frontière pour l'investissement (Randall 2014). En 2015, près de 60,4 milliards de dollars d'Investissements directs étrangers (IDE) y ont été réalisés, soit cinq fois plus qu'en 2000 (Diop *et al.* 2015).

Du fait de l'héritage colonial et du déséquilibre entre le Nord et le Sud, l'économie africaine a longtemps été dominée par les grandes puissances occidentales. Toutefois, ce rapport de dépendance à l'Occident tend à s'effilocher avec la présence accrue des pays émergents sur le continent. Dans ses relations commerciales, l'Afrique se rapproche de plus en plus des pays émergents. En 2016, les échanges avec les économies émergentes représentaient 51 pour cent des exportations du continent et 46 pour cent de ses importations (CUA/OCDE 2018:38). L'Afrique se présente aujourd'hui comme la principale source des importations de la Chine et son deuxième plus grand marché, derrière l'Europe. Les changements intervenus du fait des pays émergents sont aussi perceptibles à travers les relations commerciales des pays en question ici, à savoir l'Afrique du Sud et le Nigeria. L'Inde est devenue le premier pays d'exportation du Nigeria, une position qui ravale au second plan les États-Unis qui occupaient la

première place depuis 1964 (*The Economic Times* 2012). Depuis 2009, l'Afrique du Sud a comme premier partenaire commercial la Chine, et non les États-Unis.

Quoi qu'il en soit, de manière globale, l'on constate que les États africains entretiennent beaucoup plus de relations économiques avec les puissances occidentales et émergentes, qu'ils ne le font entre eux. Le commerce intra-africain demeure, en effet, faible comparativement aux échanges qui se réalisent au sein des autres régions du monde. Par exemple, en termes d'exportations, le commerce intra-africain était de 11 pour cent entre 2007-2011, alors que, dans la même période, la part moyenne du commerce régional se trouvait à 21 pour cent en Amérique latine et Caraïbes, 50 pour cent en Asie et 70 pour cent en Europe (CNUCED 2013:5). Toutefois, il est à remarquer que, de manière isolée, la valeur réelle du commerce au sein de l'Afrique ne cesse d'augmenter, étant passée de 32 milliards de dollars en 2000 à 54 milliards en 2011 (CNUCED 2013:4). L'amélioration est due à plusieurs facteurs, dont le renforcement du marché africain de la consommation, la croissance économique, les efforts en matière d'intégration régionale – formation de marchés communs, zones de libre-échange et d'unions douanières[5].

Conscients des enjeux économiques que représente le continent, l'Afrique du Sud et le Nigeria ont développé une politique étrangère qui donne la priorité à l'Afrique et cherchent à renforcer leur présence dans la région. À préciser toutefois que l'afro-centrisme nigérian, conceptualisé à travers la présentation de « l'Afrique comme pièce maîtresse » (Adedeji 1976), est bien antérieur à celui de l'Afrique du Sud. D'ailleurs, cette approche a permis de justifier la longue mobilisation du Nigeria dans la décolonisation, la lutte contre l'apartheid et l'impérialisme en Afrique (Frhd & Iwuoha 2012 ; Al-Hassane 2008). Du côté de l'Afrique du Sud, c'est seulement à la fin de l'apartheid en 1994 que le pays a commencé à considérer l'Afrique comme une priorité. Cela est consacré par l'« Agenda africain » (Dube 2013), une approche qui permet à l'Afrique du Sud d'intensifier ses relations avec le reste de l'Afrique.

Tableau 1 : Comparaison entre l'Afrique du Sud et le Nigeria (2017)

	Afrique du Sud	**Nigeria**
Superficie (en km^2)	1 219 090	923 770
Population totale (en millions)	56,72	190,89
Croissance de la population (annuel)	1,2	2,6
PIB (en milliards de $)	375,3	375,77
Croissance économique (du PIB)	1,3	0,8

Source : Compilation de données de la Banque mondiale

Certes, l'Afrique du Sud et le Nigeria ont des relations économiques plus étroites avec les pays de leur sous-région respective qu'avec le reste de l'Afrique. Par exemple, 86 pour cent des exportations sud-africaines en Afrique vont vers les autres pays de la SADC (Southern African Development Community) (Tétényi 2014:12). L'économie de l'Afrique du Sud domine dans la sous-région. Ce pays représente 71 pour cent des exportations sous-régionales de produits semi-transformés (or, platine, diamants bruts) et 90 pour cent des exportations de produits transformés – véhicules automobiles, équipements et machines, vin (CUA/OCDE 2018:103). Le Nigeria a également des liens économiques très étroits avec les quatorze autres pays membres de la Communauté économique des États de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (CEDEAO). Cependant, seulement 3 pour cent de ses exportations vont vers ces pays (OCDE 2015:25), ce qui est très loin des performances de l'Afrique du Sud en Afrique australe. C'est l'Union européenne, et non le Nigeria, qui se présente comme le premier partenaire commercial de l'Afrique de l'Ouest. Sur le plan économique, la présence nigériane dans la sous-région demeure donc moindre que celle de l'Afrique du Sud en Afrique australe. Cette faiblesse est un indicateur, parmi d'autres, de l'échec de la diplomatie économique du Nigeria en Afrique de l'Ouest (Scholvin 2017:30), qu'il considère pourtant comme sa sphère d'influence (Mohammed 2015). Pourtant, l'Afrique de l'Ouest abrite énormément d'opportunités. Elle demeure la sous-région la plus peuplée d'Afrique (360 millions d'habitants en 2017) et comptera 809 millions d'habitants en 2050, ce qui représentera 31,7 pour cent de la population du continent (UNDESA 2017). Avec 24 pour cent du PIB de l'Afrique, l'Afrique de l'Ouest se positionne comme la seconde économie du continent, derrière l'Afrique du Nord (38 %) et devant l'Afrique australe (17 %) (CUA/OCDE 2018:193). La faible présence économique du Nigeria dans sa sous-région d'appartenance contraste avec les opportunités d'investissements considérables en Afrique de l'Ouest, et au Nigeria même, notamment pour les banques, les détaillants et les sociétés de télécommunications sud-africains (Scholvin 2017 ; Draper et Scholvin 2012).

L'Afrique du Sud a fait une entrée remarquable en Afrique à la fin de l'apartheid. Pour réduire les problèmes hérités de l'apartheid – faible croissance économique, pauvreté, inégalités –, le pays s'est en effet engagé dans un ambitieux programme de promotion des exportations et d'élargissement du marché des investisseurs sud-africains sur le continent. L'Afrique du Sud est devenue le pays africain qui exporte le plus sur le continent. Ses exportations y ont augmenté de manière considérable, de 646 millions de dollars en 1994 à 22 milliards de dollars en 2015, soit une augmentation de 3309 pour cent en vingt ans (Menell 2015).

Toutefois, en termes d'exportations, la compétition entre l'Afrique du Sud et le Nigeria ne se pose pas de manière aussi affirmée que celle entre Pretoria et Beijing. L'Afrique du Sud a vu, en effet, ses exportations en Afrique se réduire de manière significative du fait de la Chine et des relations étroites de cette dernière avec le reste de l'Afrique (Dieng 2015:766). Le fait que les exportations sud-africaines vers le reste de l'Afrique soient mises à mal par celles de la Chine montre tout le poids économique de l'Afrique du Sud sur le continent, comparativement aux autres pays comme le Nigeria. L'Afrique du Sud se présente également comme un leader en matière d'investissements. Ses investissements en Afrique sont passés de 48 millions de dollars en 1994 à 2,6 milliards de dollars en 2013. L'Afrique du Sud demeure ainsi le deuxième État en développement qui investit le plus en Afrique subsaharienne, derrière la Chine (Grobbelaar & Besada 2008).

La plupart des compagnies sud-africaines et nigérianes opèrent dans le domaine commercial, notamment dans les offres de biens et services aux consommateurs, secteurs qui présentent les meilleures perspectives de retour sur investissement. Elles ont une caractéristique commune, qui est de vouloir élargir leurs activités et pénétrer un peu plus le marché africain de la consommation en progression constante. C'est le cas notamment dans le secteur bancaire, domaine dans lequel l'Afrique du Sud et le Nigeria sont en tête de peloton en Afrique subsaharienne. En 2013, le secteur bancaire nigérian était composé de 20 banques nationales et quatre banques étrangères (Isukul & Chizea 2016:5). Les banques nigérianes comptent 75 filiales dans 32 pays africains, contre trois seulement en 2002 (FMI 2012:40). Par exemple, Ecobank a une importante base panafricaine, en étant présente dans 36 pays du continent (MGI 2016:98). L'Afrique du Sud a le secteur financier le plus développé et le plus sophistiqué en Afrique. Ce pays abrite 31 banques enregistrées, dont 17 sont sud-africaines (Isukul & Chizea 2016:5). Trois de ses grandes banques sont bien implantées sur le continent : Nedbank opère dans 35 pays, Standard Bank dans 17 pays et Absa Bank dans douze pays.

En dehors du secteur bancaire, le Nigeria dispose de très peu de compagnies, dont la plus importante demeure le groupe Dangote, qui a réussi à diversifier ses activités et possède 18 filiales en activités dans six pays africains (MGI 2016:99). À la différence du Nigeria, l'Afrique du Sud a plusieurs grands groupes dans beaucoup de domaines : télécommunications, tourisme, énergie, infrastructures, etc. D'ailleurs, MTN, Shoprite et Woolworths sont considérés comme les marques sud-africaines les plus précieuses sur le continent (Taylor 2015). Sophrite, qui œuvre dans le secteur du commerce de détail, dispose de plus de 200 magasins sur le

continent. Mais le plus grand succès a été réalisé par MTN dans le domaine des télécommunications. En dix ans, entre 2005 et 2015, MTN a multiplié par dix le nombre de ses abonnés en Afrique, et 90 pour cent de cette augmentation a eu lieu en dehors de l'Afrique du Sud (MGI 2016:98). Ce pays a aussi d'autres compagnies en activité dans l'exploitation des ressources naturelles, domaine traditionnellement dominé par les multinationales occidentales et asiatiques. Les sociétés minières sud-africaines sont actives dans le secteur minier, même si elles demeurent présentes dans un nombre limité de pays : Ghana, République démocratique du Congo (RDC), Zambie, ou Zimbabwe.

Engagement diplomatique pour la paix et gains économiques

Les États ont le rôle de créer un environnement national et régional favorable à la croissance de leurs acteurs économiques et financiers. L'Afrique du Sud et le Nigeria ont activement contribué aux initiatives ayant donné naissance à l'UA, au NEPAD ainsi qu'aux évolutions institutionnelles respectives de la SADC et de la CEDEAO. Ces organisations ont ensuite fait des progrès significatifs dans la gestion et la résolution des conflits. L'accès au marché africain justifie en grande partie l'implication de l'Afrique du Sud et du Nigeria dans le règlement des conflits, tout comme dans les évolutions des organisations internationales africaines dont ils sont membres. Mais les gains économiques sont-ils à la hauteur de leur engagement diplomatique pour la paix et la sécurité en Afrique ?

La contribution du Nigeria aux opérations de soutien à la paix en Afrique a été déterminante (Eke 2015). Le désir de faire progresser sa force économique a sans doute influencé la forte implication du Nigeria dans la gestion des conflits en Afrique de l'Ouest, notamment en Sierra Leone et au Liberia (Mohammed 2015). En contribuant activement au maintien de la paix en Sierra Leone, Abuja a pu renforcer ses relations avec Freetown, notamment en matière de commerce. La plupart des investisseurs africains en Sierra Leone sont Nigérians et une dizaine de banques nigérianes sont présentes dans ce pays, sans compter les petites et moyennes entreprises dans les secteurs du pétrole et de l'informel (Mohammed 2015).

L'engagement constructif de l'Afrique du Sud dans la résolution des conflits en Afrique a commencé seulement à la fin de l'apartheid. À la différence du Nigeria, nous l'avons vu précédemment, ce pays abrite de grandes compagnies. D'ailleurs, la moitié des grandes compagnies africaines sont sud-africaines (MGI 2016). La plupart d'entre elles sont donc capables de se déployer dans des pays lointains. C'est sûrement la raison pour laquelle

l'Afrique du Sud demeure le pays africain qui investit le plus sur le continent (Besada, Toc & Winters 2013). En tout cas, elle veille à maximiser ses intérêts économiques, notamment dans les pays ayant accueilli ses efforts de paix, comme la RDC, le Soudan, ou encore la Côte d'Ivoire (Dieng 2014). Par exemple, l'Afrique du Sud considère la RDC comme un pays d'Afrique australe dont elle a encouragé l'adhésion à la SADC en 1997. Les intérêts économiques qu'elle y défend demeurent importants. C'est dans cette perspective qu'il convient d'inscrire son engagement pour la paix dans ce pays, lequel engagement s'est poursuivi lors de la création et de l'opérationnalisation de la Brigade d'intervention mise en place en 2013 pour neutraliser les groupes armés qui sévissent à l'est de la RDC. Il importe de rappeler que quelques semaines avant le vote de la résolution portant création de ladite Brigade, l'Afrique du Sud avait pris l'engagement d'acheter 50 pour cent de l'électricité que devra produire le futur barrage d'Inga III en RDC. Dans ce cas, tout comme dans d'autres, les gains économiques que l'Afrique du Sud tire de son engagement diplomatique pour la paix ne sont pas négligeables. À noter toutefois que, de manière globale, en raison des problèmes linguistiques et de cultures commerciales et juridiques différentes, la présence des entreprises sud-africaines en Afrique francophone demeure moindre (Games 2017). Ce constat est aussi valable pour le Nigeria.

Le Nigeria a-t-il autant de ressources que l'Afrique du Sud pour tirer avantage de son engagement diplomatique ? Ce sont les capacités financières qui ont permis à Abuja de jouer un rôle de leadership, que ce soit dans la décolonisation, la lutte contre l'apartheid, au sein des organisations africaines comme la CEDEAO et l'Union africaine, ou dans la gestion des conflits en Guinée-Bissau, au Liberia et en Sierra Leone. Cependant, la participation au maintien de la paix en Afrique a valu au Nigeria de sévères critiques, notamment sur la manière dont les gouvernements successifs ont été emportés par l'allure philosophique de l'afro-centrisme plutôt que par une traduction réelle et rationnelle de ce concept (Al-Hassan 2008). Cela explique pourquoi, en dépit d'énormes dépenses financières et de la perte massive de ressources humaines et matérielles dans les guerres du Liberia et de la Sierra Leone, le Nigeria a été incapable de réaliser des bénéfices économiques (Ogunnubi 2017 ; Scholvin 2017 ; Olukotun 2013 ; Pine 2011).

Dans le même temps, on constate que l'Afrique du Sud est critiquée elle aussi, mais sur le fait qu'elle s'appuie sur une mobilisation diplomatique qui sert uniquement ses intérêts. L'on mentionne que ce pays représenterait davantage un vecteur économique qu'une diplomatie pour la paix alliée à l'idéologie de la « renaissance africaine » (The Reality of Aid 2010 ; Crouzel 2000). Par le fait de ses exportations massives et de ses ambitions

économiques, l'Afrique du Sud est même accusée de contribuer au démantèlement des appareils productifs des pays voisins, voire de vouloir s'approprier des richesses d'autres États comme la RDC, au détriment de la stabilité (The Reality of Aid 2010). L'on constate que malgré les critiques, l'Afrique du Sud ne cesse d'affiner sa stratégie économique avec le reste du continent. C'est dans cette perspective que le Trade Invest Africa – un organe du Département du commerce et de l'industrie chargé de coordonner et d'opérationnaliser la stratégie économique de l'Afrique du Sud en Afrique – a été créé en avril 2016. Le Trade Invest Africa a pour mission d'améliorer la collaboration entre le gouvernement sud-africain et le secteur privé, dans le but de maximiser les opportunités d'investissements sur le continent.

Conclusion et perspectives

Qui va être la première puissance du continent ? Telle semble être la principale question qui sous-tend la compétition entre l'Afrique du Sud et le Nigeria, chacun prétendant détenir les ressources et les critères qui correspondent à ce statut. Pendant longtemps, l'Afrique du Sud post-apartheid était considérée comme la première puissance économique africaine. En 2014, cette position est allée au Nigeria. Cependant, face à de nombreux problèmes internes, Abuja n'a pu approfondir davantage son avance économique sur Pretoria. Toutefois, l'Afrique du Sud dispose de l'économie la plus performante, la plus diversifiée et la plus industrialisée du continent et est bien pourvue dans beaucoup de domaines essentiels au développement économique – infrastructures, banques, éducation, accès à la technologie, etc. De ce point de vue, l'Afrique du Sud a un niveau de développement plus avancé que le Nigeria. Par conséquent, autant en termes de commerce que d'investissements sur le continent africain, l'Afrique du Sud a une longueur d'avance sur le Nigeria. La part de l'Afrique du Sud dans le commerce interafricain est de 25 pour cent (32 milliards de dollars), pendant que celle du Nigeria se situe à hauteur de 5,5 pour cent, soit 7,1 milliards de dollars[6].

L'Afrique abrite des opportunités économiques importantes, raison pour laquelle elle est convoitée par les puissances établies et émergentes. Tout comme ces dernières, l'Afrique du Sud et le Nigeria, les deux puissances du continent, sont dans la mêlée, mais de manière disproportionnée. Cependant, en ce qui concerne la présence économique sur le continent, l'un et l'autre sont devancés par les acteurs non africains.

Le commerce intra-africain représente aussi des enjeux immenses. La prise en compte de ces enjeux a poussé l'Union africaine à impulser la mise en place d'une zone de libre-échange continentale africaine (ZLECA), dont

l'accord est signé en mars 2018 à Kigali au Rwanda. À terme, ce sera la plus grande zone de libre-échange au monde, et cela pourra accroître le commerce intra-africain de 52,3 pour cent (CAPC, CEA & UA 2018). Plus de 50 pays africains ont déjà adhéré à la ZLECA, y compris l'Afrique du Sud dont la signature est intervenue le 2 juillet 2018, lors du 31e sommet de l'Union africaine à Nouakchott, en Mauritanie. Le Nigeria traîne encore des pieds pour rejoindre l'initiative, ce qui semble en contradiction avec son ambition de leader et sa volonté de renforcer ses relations avec le reste de l'Afrique.

La projection économique de l'Afrique du Sud et du Nigeria dans le reste de l'Afrique dépend de leur développement économique au niveau interne. L'un et l'autre ont de grandes potentialités qui ne sont pas suffisamment exploitées, en raison de nombreuses lacunes au niveau interne : criminalité, corruption, pauvreté, inégalités, problèmes d'infrastructures et d'accès à l'électricité, etc. Les potentialités du Nigeria sont encore moins bien exploitées, en raison de nombreuses insurrections armées (Boko Haram, par exemple) dans le nord du pays et dans le Delta du Niger. Ce pays, la première puissance démographique en Afrique, a aussi besoin d'investissements massifs dans plusieurs domaines : infrastructures, technologie, système bancaire, commerce de détail, etc.

Une autre caractéristique commune de l'Afrique du Sud et du Nigeria tient aux ressources naturelles qui portent en grande partie leurs économies. L'Afrique du Sud dispose de beaucoup de ressources minières : or, diamant, platine, etc. Le Nigeria a, pour sa part, beaucoup de réserves de pétrole et demeure le premier producteur en Afrique devant l'Algérie et l'Angola (OCDE 2015:18). Il dispose également des plus grandes réserves de gaz naturel sur le continent. L'Afrique du Sud est, de son côté, le pays le plus industrialisé d'Afrique. Par exemple, la part de l'industrie sud-africaine dans le PIB était de 38,5 pour cent en 2012 (DEV 2012). L'économie sud-africaine est plus diversifiée que celle du Nigeria dominée par le pétrole[7]. Parmi les 667 investissements réalisés en Afrique du Sud entre 2010 et 2014, 19 pour cent sont allés dans les services aux entreprises, 17,86 pour cent dans les logiciels et services de l'information et 12,62 pour cent dans le système financier (FDi Intelligence 2015). Au total, plus de 51 pour cent des projets d'investissement ont été mis en œuvre dans des secteurs comme les technologies, les médias, les télécommunications, les produits financiers et de consommation (RMB 2015). Dans le cas du Nigeria, l'on note que l'économie se diversifie rapidement depuis quelques années. Par exemple, la part du secteur minier dans le PIB est passée de 38 pour cent en 2008 à 14 pour cent en 2014, et de 6 pour cent à 15 pour cent pour le secteur des

services dans le même intervalle de temps (Betts 2015). Le secteur pétrolier, qui représentait 30 pour cent du PIB du Nigeria dans les années 1980, se situe autour de 10 pour cent (OCDE 2015). Ces développements, s'ils se poursuivent et se consolident, pourraient améliorer de manière significative l'attractivité et la compétitivité du Nigeria.

Notes

1. Dans le même temps, le PIB de l'Afrique du Sud était de 351,1 milliards de dollars.
2. En effet, lorsque Mbeki avait été envoyé à Lagos, au Nigeria en 1977, pour y implanter un bureau de l'ANC dont il deviendra le chef jusqu'en 1978, Obasanjo était à la tête de l'État nigérian (1976 à 1979).
3. Entre 2011 et 2014, pas moins de 143 Nigérians ont été tués dans les attaques xénophobes en Afrique du Sud.
4. Le montant de l'amende est finalement ramené à 1,7 milliard de dollars après plusieurs mois de négociations.
5. Par exemple, la zone de libre-échange de la SADC lancée en 2008; et la zone de libre-échange tripartite lancée en 2015 et qui regroupe 26 pays de la SADC, du Marché commun de l'Afrique orientale et australe (COMESA) et de la communauté de l'Afrique de l'Est (CAE).
6. Selon Yemi Osinbajo, vice-président du Nigeria. Voir Kingsley Alu, « Nigeria will change intra-African trade matrix », Ledearship, 18 juillet 2018.
7. Le pétrole représente environ 10 % du PIB du Nigeria, près de 90 pour cent de ses exportations et environ 75 % des recettes fiscales de l'État.

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Models of Economic Growth and Development in the Context of Human Capital Investment: The Way Forward for Africa

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Abstract

The economic literature ever since the dawn of modern economics has been much preoccupied with the issue of economic growth. Economic growth has also been understood to establish the conditions for economic development. The better-known models of economic growth such as the Lewis, Rostow, Harrod-Domar, Solow, and Romer growth models are discussed. The discussions apply contextually to the problematic issue of growth and development in Africa. It is argued that a very necessary condition for growth and transformational development in Africa is heavy investment in human capital. It is pointed out that countries that invest much human capital to produce highly educated populaces usually reap the benefits of such in terms of high per capita GDPs, regardless of the levels of their technological and industrial output. Countries like New Zealand, Iceland, and Denmark offer evidence of this. Models of African development such as the Lagos Plan of Action in terms of the whole continent are discussed within the context of existing impediments to such progress.

Keywords: economic growth, economic development, human capital, growth models

Résumé

Depuis l'avènement de l'économie moderne, la littérature économique s'est beaucoup préoccupée de la question de la croissance économique. La croissance économique est également comprise comme établissant les conditions du développement économique. Les modèles de croissance économique les plus connus, tels que ceux de Lewis Rostow, Harrod-Domar, Solow et Romer, sont abordés. Les discussions s'appliquent contextuellement à la problématique de la croissance et du développement en Afrique. Il a été avancé que de grands investissements dans le capital humain étaient une condition indispensable

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à la croissance et au développement transformationnel de l'Afrique. Il est souligné que les pays qui investissent dans le capital humain produisent des populations hautement éduquées et en tirent généralement des avantages en termes de PIB élevé par habitant, quel que soit le niveau de leur production technologique et industrielle. Des pays comme la Nouvelle-Zélande, l'Islande et le Danemark en apportent la preuve. Les modèles de développement de l'Afrique, tels que le Plan continental d'action dit de Lagos, sont examinés dans le contexte d'actuels obstacles à de tels progrès.

Mots-clés : croissance économique, développement économique, capital humain, modèles de croissance

Introduction

The world as we know it today is economically divided up between the 'industrialised North' and the 'developing South'. The 'industrialised North' consists of North America, Europe, Japan, and parts of Eurasia – comprised principally of Russia. Note though that there are some outposts of the industrialised North in places like Australia and New Zealand. One question though is whether China with the world's largest GDP is part of the industrialised North or not. The question arises because China still considers itself part of the so-called 'developing world'. Previously, the division of the world into developed and 'under-developed' nations was expressed in tripartite terms of First World, Second World, and Third World. It was French economist Alfred Sauvy who coined this tripartite division in 1952 to distinguish between Western nations, Communist nations (Soviet bloc nations, China, etc.), and the so-called non-aligned. These non-aligned nations comprised all those nations that were previously colonised by the powers of Europe–Britain, France, Spain, etc. But with the fall of the Soviet Union, that tripartite division has fallen by the wayside though the idea of 'Third World' still remains. The Third World is seen to comprise all those nations that are seeking one or another to develop along the lines of the industrialised nations in the form of transforming their economies into ones where indigenous and imported primary products are transformed into finished products with the aid of modern and innovative technologies.

The result of this would be increased GDPs, increased average incomes, increased exports of finished products, increased value of currencies, and improved human welfare. Compare, for example, the two countries in Africa with the largest GDPs, Nigeria [population 174 million] and South Africa [population 53 million] the two with some other countries from the North. It will be obvious that an explanation is needed to account for the wide disparities in the metrics that economists care about.

Table 1: Nigeria and South Africa compared with some countries from the North

Country	Population (millions)	GDP ($ billions)	GDP/ per capita($)
Nigeria	174	522	3,000
South Africa	53	351	7,000
Belgium	11	484	43,000
South Korea	50	1,600	26,000
Norway	5	500	103,500
Hong Kong	7	274	38,000
Iceland	0.320 (320,000)	15	44,000
Switzerland	8	650	87,000

Source: Data.worldbank.org/country, 2013

The above metrics are quite interesting given that not all of the countries above are producers of industrial goods. Take, for example, Iceland with a very small population of 320,000 and with an economy dependent mainly on fishing and geothermal energy. The only heavy industry it engages in is aluminum smelting which provides a portion of exports, but the main exports are from fishing. So, the question is why does its per capita GNI amount to $38,000? Africa's largest GNI according to World Bank metrics is from Nigeria with a GNI of $522B while that of South Africa is second with $351B. The per capita GNI for South Africa is $7,000 while that of Nigeria is $3,000. Does this mean that the average South African worker is approximately twice as productive as the average Nigerian worker or is it about the way in which exchange rates are calibrated?

Note also that Switzerland is home to only 8 million people with a GNI of $650B, but that is almost twice that of South Africa's whose GDP is $351B with a population of 53 million. The population of South Korea is approximately the same as that of South Africa but with a GDP four times as large. What is at work here? Is it technology and productivity that are mainly responsible for per capita GDP differentials between nations. Erik Reinert in his *How Rich Nations Got Rich and Why Poor Nations Stay Poor* has this to say on the issue: 'Why is the real wage of a bus driver in Frankfurt [Germany] sixteen times higher than an equally efficient bus driver in Nigeria, as the World Bank recently calculated? I set out to find an answer, and this book is a result' (Reinert 2007: 2). I have an issue with this because Reinert's explanatory thesis is founded on the idea of a 'protective autarky for infant industries and technologies'. But this approach though quite plausible in general does not explain

the economic success of countries like Iceland and Switzerland. Or take other small countries like New Zealand and Norway, whose economic structures are not heavily industrialised. New Zealand's exports are mainly dairy products, wool, and meat. Norway depends mainly on petroleum exports though it does demonstrate some industrial prowess by its ship-building capacities. Yet, the per capita GNIs of both countries are $103, 000 and $36,000 respectively. So this is the issue: how to move countries from low productivity as witnessed by minimal per capita GNI/GDP to larger GNI/GDPs with larger per capita GNI/GDPs? This is the pressing question for African countries. Do the impressive GNIs of both Norway and New Zealand have to do with the implementation of their versions of the welfare state thereby yielding high GNI coefficients? These are the questions that I propose to explore in this article. I will first examine established theories of economic growth on the assumption that economic growth presages development. After discussion of these established theories of economic growth I then examine why most African countries despite showing growth have not shown much evidence of development – in the sense of the 'flying geese' model (Reinert 2006: 141 et seq.) according to which the developmental prowess of a country is determined by its ability to progress from the production of items that require less human capital skill to the production of items that require increased technological knowledge and skill. For example, the knowledge and skills needed to plough a field with a bull is less than doing the same with a tractor. The same holds for a monocultural agricultural society as compared to one which engages in manufacturing and industrial production within the context of a strong services sector.

In the following discussion I argue that the dominant concepts concerning growth and development are mainly those introduced by researchers from the North. This is so mainly because capitalism as an economic system developed first in the North whereby its earliest theoreticians on its progress necessarily hailed from that region. We can easily define Capitalism as the economic system whereby an initial stock of finance capital(K) is invested with the expectation that the value of its final product would be worth more than the intitial capital ($K + \Delta K$) to the extent of a net surplus of value accruing to the original investor. On account of its dynamic nature and the fact that future returns on capital are always fraught with risk, the idea of economic growth has been one of the major preoccupations of theorists of economics.

On Economic Growth

The usual and orthodox question that economists always ask regarding any economy in the short run is: what is the extent of its economic growth? Why is it a necessary and even sufficient condition for the economic health of a nation according to basic neoclassical theory that adequate growth be registered? First, I would rather see balanced growth than just growth. Yet the key question is still why is growth such an important indicator of the health of an economy? The intuitive answer points to the nature of the capitalist market economy. The decision to invest is determined by the expectations of returns on that investment normally called profits. In other words if NX is invested then the investor would expect at some future time NX + ΔNX. Much of investment is done by way of a country's banking operations from the Central Bank down to other banks. Individuals save their assets in banks and the banks in turn loan those assets because there are gains to be made for 'waiting' [rather than immediately consuming] – as Alfred Marshall argued in his *Principles of Economics* (Book vi, Chp.vi).

Thus, it is obvious that when the idea of profits or gains is factored into the question of why growth is of such importance for the health of the economy, it then becomes clear that growth is a necessary component of an economy on account of interest payments as a crucial component. It is because of this that all the major economists in the history of economic theory have argued for the necessity of economic growth.

Adam Smith's celebrated text *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* was essentially a text on 'growth theory' according to which he argued for free markets, unrestricted trade, and a specialised division of labour. As an aside, it is useful to note in the context of the thesis of this paper that Smith himself understood the importance of the investment in human capital to increase productivity and economic growth (Smith [1776] 1991: 228). But Smith's successors in classical economics theory, Ricardo and Malthus, were less optimistic about growth than Smith was. For Ricardo the limitations on the amount of land available in the context of rapid population growth and increases in landlord rent led to less surpluses for capitalist investment. This inevitably led to a stalling of growth and economic stagnation. A similar scenario occurred in the Malthusian model on account of geometric population growth which outstripped food supplies.

Marx, of course, had a different solution for the periodic no-growth occurrences under capitalist market economies. These no-growth periods were due to, 'lack of effective demand' as he put it. Surpluses were accruing mainly to the capital holders and rentiers. To get growth moving again, the surpluses generated from investments must be apportioned back to

those who created wealth by productive labour in the first instance. This was the ideological basis for the argument that it was incumbent on the anti-capitalist vanguard groups in the North to oppose what was called 'capitalist exploitation' on the part of those nations that were colonising the rest of the world. This was the theoretical basis for the Russian and Chinese revolutions, of 1917 and 1948 respectively. In Africa, the socialist type economy was seen as the antidote for colonial exploitation as some theorists saw it. Those politician-theoreticians who supported this approach to growth included Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana's first president, and Amilcar Cabral who fought against the Portuguese colonials in Guinea-Bissau. The argument here was that economic surpluses would be most appropriately employed by the state for growth and development. All this was effected under an economic umbrella that was much opposed by the West.

The problematic nature of the issue of growth was previously underscored by the world economic crisis which struck the United States in 1929. It was here that John Maynard Keynes came to the rescue with novel macroeconomic policies to generate growth and thereby put the unemployed back to work. Such policies were developed and expressed in his *magnum opus* titled *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* (1936). It was in this context that Keynes proposed the idea that in a serious and persistent economic slump it was incumbent on government to deficit-spend in order to employ the long-term unemployed. This was the socio-economic situation in which Keynes developed all those concepts that are now an integral part of modern macroeconomics. Consider the consumption function and the crucial notion that continuous growth requires that Savings = Investment for each economic period. According to Keynesian theory government investment during periods of stagnation is worthwhile because of the so-called multiplier effect (k) which is estimated as the reciprocal of the Marginal Propensity to Save (1/MPS). Some years later the idea of the multiplier was expanded by Samuleson's combining it with the idea of the accelerator (w=Capital/Output) so that investments in the expansion phase of the business cycle be driven not only by multiplier effects but also by the necessity on the part of businesses to invest in new production elements such as new plants and novel technology. My argument here is that the Keynesian multiplier effect on government investment could also lead to enhanced investment by way of the private sector via the acceleration effect. This combination of the multiplier with the accelerator is well-known in macroeconomic theory as the Samuelson multiplier-accelerator effect.

We have established so far that it is the goal of every modern economy to grow continuously but because of an underlying tension between consumption and production on account of the inequality between the

value of consumption and the value of production, the growth path of any economy will not be a straight line linear function as indicated by the Keynesian model. Admittedly that model shows only the expansion path of an economy where government spending boosts the economy from high levels of unemployment to lower levels or full employment. The growth path of any capitalist economy takes on a sinusoidal shape thereby demonstrating the well-known periodic disconnect between demand and supply normally described as the business cycle.

A few years after Keynes's *GTEIM,* growth models became the vogue in macroeconomics. This was so because of an increasingly globalised world and recognition of the important role that capital investment played in the production process. It is in this regard that the Harrod-Domar model became important. This model, developed independently by economists Harrod and Domar, was combined to show in strictly formal terms that net investment in period 1 not only increases the economy's productive capacity in this period but also increases the potential output of the economy in period 2. Thus according to the long-run analysis of this H-D model, a growing economy must show not only increasing demand but also an increasing productive capacity. Thus the H-D equation for balanced or warranted equilibrium growth is one which shows a direct relationship between the economy's growth rate according to investment and the propensity to save, and the *productivity of capital.* We have: dI/I = s(dY/dK)–i.e. the required growth rate equals the propensity to save multiplied by the productivity of capital.

In later times the H-D model was radically modified by Robert Solow (1956, 'A Contribution to the Theory of Economic Growth', *QJE*). This new Solow model has been fine-tuned over time to become known in general as the Neoclassical Growth Theory. What Solow did was to change from the single production process to a multivaried and flexible one in terms of labour inputs and matching capital. Of importance too was the fact that the Solow growth model offered much leeway for growth according to the stochastic vagaries of technological change. So here is the Neoclassical Growth model put more formally: $dI/I = dY/Y = b(dK/K) + (1 – b)dL/L$ where $b = (MPP_k)(K/Y)$ and $1\text{-}b = (MPP_l)(L/Y)$.

To put things in time context we note that Harrod (1939) and Domar (1946) developed their joint model in the period following Keynes's dynamic anti-depression growth model. Solow formulated his model for growth in the mid 1950s just at the time that the decolonisation winds of change began to blow both in Africa and Asia. Historians recall that the British Empire was so vast that it generated the quip that here was an

Empire where the sun never set. In case of Africa the British controlled most of Eastern and Southern Africa while the French were in charge of most of West Africa – except for 15 per cent of the area – and North Africa. After WWII two(2) major spheres of geopolitical interest developed, that of the West and that of the Soviet bloc with China also aligned with the Soviet-Communist bloc. Yet after independence set in during the 1950s and 1960s, most of the newly independent nations regarded themselves as 'non-aligned'. At the same time the West and the communist bloc offered two (2) distinct models of growth and development.

The Russian revolution of 1917 led by Lenin proposed in theory a non-capitalist economic system as the way for progress. The economic system offered by the Soviets and the Chinese, following Mao's revolution in 1948, was one where the state was practically in total control of the economy according to which the supply and demand of commodities were determined by state fiat. This kind of economic system lent itself to the rapid development of state-controlled heavy industry in the Soviet Union and collective agricultural output in the more rural China. The prowess of the Communist system was touted by the fact that both the Soviet Union and China were able to develop nuclear weapons and that the former was able to launch the first space vehicle known as 'sputnik'.

The newly independent nations were offered the dual choices of the Western-type 'mixed-economy' model or the 'statist' type model that was in place in the Soviet Union and China. The expressed goal for these newly independent nations was not only growth but development. 'Development' here meant essentially the eventual transformation of mainly rural and agricultural societies into ones on technological and industrial par with those of the North. As a result an ideological war began to woo Africa's nations to follow one model or another. This was the basis for the Walter Rostow's *The Stages of Economic Growth – A Non-Communist Manifesto* (1960). Rostow's linear growth model was founded on five qualitative stages: 1) the traditional society, 2) the preconditions for take-off, 3) the take-off, 4) the drive to maturity, 5) the age of mass consumption. But this model has not been realised anywhere in Africa. The issue with Rostow's model is that it is too schematic and does not take into the consideration the political and economic issues involved in established a real-world example of economic growth morphing into development. One could think that the best examples of the Rostow model in practice have been the nations of South Korea and Taiwan – both East Asian nations. But the path to development for both nations was not just a straight and unencumbered economic growth path, given that both were pawns in the Soviet Union-United States rivalry during

the Cold War era. What aided greatly was that the United States was very generous in offering to both countries as much low-cost productive capital as possible to make the take-off stage possible.

The only post-colonial case in Africa where there was any serious effort at development was that of Ghana when Nkrumah was President. Nkrumah placed Ghana in the non-aligned socialist camp according to which the state had an important and decisive role to play in the development process. In this regard, Ghana invested heavily in universal education and infrastructure such as roads, electrical power, dams, etc. The rationale here was that the private sector was too weak to make any meaningful developmental impact on the economy. But Nkrumah's approach was much opposed by the West and as a result he was overthrown in a CIA-sponsored coup in 1966, with local collaboration.

Another model of growth and development that was tried in Africa – Ghana specifically – was the Lewis model – after Arthur Lewis (1954, 'Economic Development with Unlimited Supplies of Labour'). This model was founded on the notion that in a society with an excess of rural-based subsistence wage labour, and an urban-based capitalist class, both sectors of the economy could interact in a such a way that the cheap labour migrating from the rural areas could serve as a catalyst for growth and development. Lewis accepted the classical and Keynesian argument that for an economy to grow there must be an adequate amount of savings to invest to make growth possible. But according to Lewis this would not be very feasible for developing nations because savings rates were very low in general and because the wealthy in those societies tend to be landowners who would either consume their rental surpluses or spend on non-productive items and enterprises. The solution is to focus on the capitalist nucleus that existed – either private or state. The goal then would be to extract as much surpluses from cheaper labour to invest in the embryonic capitalist nucleus.

The case of the Lewis model of economic development is interesting because of the fact that its developer was the theorist who worked closely with the government of Ghana to lay the foundations for sustained growth and development. But in this case, the case of Ghana, there were two models in conflict. Ghana was much interested in rapid growth leading to industrial development and the model employed to do so was the statist one then employed by the Soviet Union and China. One goal was to tax the most productive agricultural enterprises then use the proceeds to fund industrial state projects – especially in the areas of education and infrastructure. But the key project in this direction had to do with the Akisombo dam on the Volta river. The dam would provide hydroelectric power to help in the production of aluminium from Ghana's bauxite reserves. The proceeds from

the sale of aluminium would all accrue to the state which would then use such for industrial development. In this regard Ghana was an embryonic state socialist nation. But Lewis was of vintage neoclassical background. His programme for Ghana entailed increasing the productivity of agricultural labour and increasing the efficiency of the public services sector. Another fact of importance is that Lewis approached matters from a strictly economics background while Nkrumah as President approached economic matters from the standpoint of politics and political economy. As stated above, Nkrumah was overthrown in coup and the Ghana experiment in statist economics came to an end. That was what the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union was all about. African nations were offered the choice of capitalist free market economics or statist capitalism according to which the state was the main driver of planned economic activity.

In retrospect, the issue was about the role model influence of the developmental models of the Soviet Union and China, or the Keynesian mixed economy model. Of course, both models are to be understood as pure theory. The Soviet Union in its attempt to hold hegemonic sway in terms of their model of Socialism-Communism was not accepting of deviant ideas such as African socialism. One recalls in this regard the unfortunate demise of Tanzania's Ujumaa socialism. On the other hand, the Cold War counter-argument presented by Rostow (1960) was titled as *The Stages of Economomic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto.* Rostow's key argument, discussed above was that the five stage developmental path forward for the underdeveloped countries was for them to eschew the statist communist path and adopt the mechanisms of capitalist development. The crucial juncture here for Rostow was that at some point the preconditions for 'take off' would present themselves on account of a set of political and sociological contingencies.

Lenin's New Economic Policy (NEP) of 1921 according to which he sought to introduce market initiatives as a way to handle the destructive Civil War of 1917-1922 was ended by Stalin in 1928. The goal henceforth was to embark on a rapid industrialisation programme to catch up with the West and to resist Hitler's Germany in WW II. Stalin instituted a full statist economy in 1928 with the nationalization of most of the productive enterprises. That was the model that was prescribed for African nations by the Communist world. The same with China where the state owned most of the productive enterprises along with the collectivisation of the agricultural sector.

The West, on the other hand, had adopted multiple variations of Keynes's macroeconomic model. This was about government intervention into the economy to provide the right macroeconomic moves to create jobs and support the unemployed during times of economic depression. The name for such post-Keynesian types of government was 'mixed economy' as distinct

from the statist regimes of the Soviet Union, the East European bloc, China, etc. For the mixed economies, the market and the private corporations still existed but with government exercising its power to tax. These were the models between which African governments had to choose and as a result they were dubbed as 'pro-Western' or 'pro-Soviet'.

But such did not occur. The Kuznet hypothesis was not validated so there were a set of explanations offered. The major explanations were the political economy of neocolonialism within the context of the 'centre-periphery' dependency hypothesis. The names of Paul Baran, Raul Prebisch, Andre Gunder Frank and Samir Amin come to mind. Yet in this context there were no major solutions offered though the analyses were robust and valid. In the meantime, the market economy hypothesis espoused by the United States was seeming to bear fruit with the economic successes of Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. These were later followed by Hong Kong and Singapore.

In this connection, the neo-classical growth model of Robert Solow (1956) proved itself to match reality. The growth and the technological changes of Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan were deemed to derive from technological changes. It is in this regard that the Solow model is identified with neoclassical growth theory. Thus, despite the plethora of growth theories that followed Keynes's macroeconomic prescriptions as to how to set the conditions for economic growth, the dominant growth theory was that of Solow's (1956) – specifically the Solow-Swan model – fully within the neoclassical paradigm. It is this specific model that has been promoted over the years by institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank. The Harrod-Domar growth model was discussed above and its key point was that an economy's full employment growth rate was directly dependent on net investment which in turn was determined by the economy's marginal propensity to save and the marginal productivity of capital. But given the vagaries of the capitalist market system we are back to the Keynesian problem of regular disjunctions between savings rates and investment rates. It was at this point that Solow's model promised to add some flexibility to the H-D model.

Solow's path-breaking model begins with the rather problematic statement that 'All theory depends on assumptions that are not quite true. That is what makes it theory. The art of successful theorizing is to make the inevitable simplifying assumptions in such a way that the final results are not very sensitive' (Solow 1956: 65). The fact is that successful theories – especially those in the natural and biological sciences – are successful because their assumptions were shown to match empirical reality. This

would make the assumptions of successful theories such as Newtonian theory and DNA theory 'true'. In short, in the sciences there are successful theories and unsuccessful ones. It is the unsuccessful ones that depend on assumptions that are not quite true.

The purpose of Solow's paper was to offer a critique of the H-D model in terms of its conclusion that the neoclassical market economy was intrinsically prone to instability and periodic depressions and recessions on account of an endemic opposition between the 'warranted rate of growth' and the 'natural rate of growth' of the economy. As Solow put it: 'The characteristic and powerful conclusion of the Harrod-Domar line of thought is that even for the long run the economic system is at best balanced on a knife-edge of equilibrium growth' (Solow 1956: 65). According to Solow this opposition between the natural rate of growth and the warranted rate of growth derives from the fact that labour and capital are combined under 'fixed proportions'. Solow writes that under such conditions 'There is no possibility of substituting labor for capital in production. If this assumption is abandoned, the knife-edge notion of unstable balance seems to go with it' (Solow 1956: 65). But here is Solow's ultimate goal: 'The bulk of this paper is devoted to a model of long-run growth which accepts all the Harrod-Domar assumptions except that of fixed proportions' (Solow 1956: 66). The Solow analysis culminates in a single differential equation expressible as follows but which allows for changes in the supply of labour and the introduction of the crucial variable of 'technological change'. Thus we have: $dk/dt = sf(k) - \delta$ according to which dk/dt signifies the growth of capital stock per worker over time, $sf(k)$ which represents the investment rate(i) as a function of the existing capital stock and δ represents the rate of depreciation also a function of the capital stock.

According to Solow, the neoclassical economy would grow smoothly given labour and capital flexibility but would be necessarily affected by the depreciation of the existing capital stock per worker. The so-called 'steady state' according to Solow represents the equilibrium point at which depreciation costs just equal investments. Thus there would be no basis for the economy to progress beyond that point-except under conditions of technological change. This would cause the $sf(k)$ curve to shift upwards thereby intersecting the line $(n + g + \delta)k$ [where n represents population, g represents growth and δ represents depreciation] at a higher point. The following diagramme offers the basic structure of the Solow growth model.

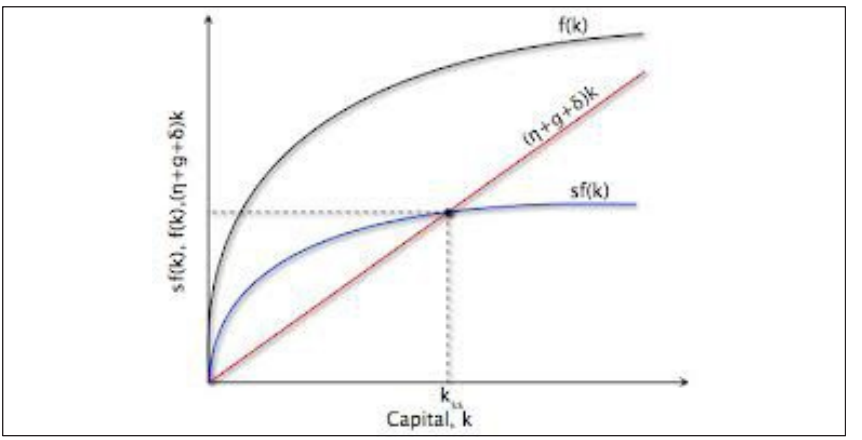

Figure 1: Basic structure of the Solow growth model

At point k the economy would be in a steady state of equilibrium from which there would be little tendency to diverge unless exogenous technology were introduced. It is this model together with slight modifications that forms the bedrock of contemporary neoclassical growth theory. In this connection, it is useful to note the contributions to growth theory by Trevor Swan (1956) whose model has been combined with that of Solow to produce the Solow-Swan growth model. The differences between the two models were of degree and emphasis, not of kind. Solow allowed for labour-capital exchanges, that is Capital /Labour ratios while Swan was more concerned with Output/ Capital ratios.

But the essential point is this: with economic growth and development being strongly connected to technological improvements, the Harrod-Domar model required a radical overhaul if the model were to offer the dynamics of growth over time. This was the purpose of the Solow model when it added time as a variable. The result was that substitutability of labour and capital had to be introduced as a way of adding flexibility to the Harrod-Domar model. That flexibility was necessary to accommodate technological change. But technological change is not some kind of *deus ex machina*. It must have a source.

Over the years there has been a veritable avalanche of articles and books on growth theory following Keynes's *magnum opus* of 1936. Following Harrod and Domar there was the Cambridge-Cambridge theoretical debate on the nature of capital with Joan Robinson and Pierro Sraffa on the European side and Solow and Samuelson on the American side (Sen 1970). And new models were always being generated as in the cases

of Romer (1994), Mankiw (1995) and Barro (1997). But it requires an 'emperor is naked approach' to point out that despite the great number of research papers on growth theory, the economic Third World still exists despite the inputs of battalions of growth theorists offering country-by-country advice at the IMF and World Bank. The world is still saddled with countries afflicted by huge income disparities all demonstrating unbalanced growth, high levels of unemployment and minimal per capita incomes. Yet the theoretical debate is still preoccupied with theorists debating text book concepts such as 'golden ages', 'vintage and non-vintage capital', 'turnpike theorems', and so on.

Solow informs us that 'my purpose was to examine what might be called the tightrope view of economic growth and to see where more flexible assumptions about production would lead a simple model. Underemployment and excess capacity or their opposites can still be attributed to any of the old causes of deficient or excess aggregate demand, but less readily to any deviation from a "narrow balance"' (Solow 1956: 91). Reference here, of course, is to the Harrod-Domar model. To determine the validity of both models the empirical question must be asked. The consensus among economists is that there was a period of growth among Western economies lasting from 1951 to 1973 that witnessed substantial growth to the extent that such period was dubbed as 'the Golden Age of Capitalism'. Economics historian Robert Fogel writes: 'By the late 1950s the United States and other Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development countries were well into the post-World War II expansion now called the Golden Age with growth rates twice the long-term average of the other world leaders. Measured by per capita income, the long-term average growth rate was about 1.9 per cent per annum, and the growth rate during the Golden Age was, for Western Europe, about 3.8 per cent (Kuznets, 1971; Maddison, 1995; and Crafts and Toniolo, 1966). Over the period 1950-1999, expansion multiples for GDP averaged about fivefold in Western Europe and the United States' (Fogel 2005: 8).

There were a number of explanations for this long expansion including replenishment of destroyed capital stock, technological change, etc. (Fogel 2005: 9) but the point remains that the Solow model is more in keeping with the actual empirical data than what was portended by the Harrod-Domar model.

The Developmental Role of Technology and Human Capital

The non-predictable element in the Solow model is the variable that represents technological change. Given the fact that developments in technology have always been a given within human sociology it should be easy to

incorporate such into any growth model by way of inputs in human capital. Paul Romer's theory on endogenous growth approaches matters from this direction. In 'Endogenous Technological Change' (1990) Romer argues that the Solow model can overcome its agnosticism about technological change by incorporating separate variables for human capital and technology. As Romer puts it: 'The four basic inputs in this model are capital, labor, human capital, and an index of the level of technology. Capital is measured in units of consumption goods. Labor services L are skills such as eye hand coordination that are available from a healthy physical body. They are measured by counts of people. As used here, human capital H is a distinct measure of the cumulative effect of activities such as formal education and on-the-job-training' (Romer 1990: 79). Romer also writes that 'technological change– improvement in the instructions for mixing together raw materials – lies at the heart of economic growth. As a result, the model presented here resembles the Solow (1956) model with technological change' (Romer 1990: 72). This is the basis for capital accumulation according to Romer. But what is more important here is that the 'second premise is that technological change arises in large part because of intentional actions taken by people who respond to market incentives. Thus the model is one of endogenous rather than exogenous technological change' (Romer 1990: 72).

Romer's key variables are H_{y}, L, and x which respectively represent human capital, labour, and units of technological inputs. Romer's point is that the combination of these three variables is what eventually produces output (Y_{p}). Thus technological change is endogenous to the model and guaranteed over time except for the following situation. As Romer puts it: '… if the total level of human capital is too small, a stagnation may arise. If H is too low, the nonnegativity constraint on H_{A} is binding and growth does not take place…. This result offers one possible way to explain the wide variation in growth rates observed among countries and the fact that in some countries growth in income per capita has been close to zero. This explanation is reminiscent of the explanation for the absence of growth in prehistoric time that is offered by some historians and anthropologists: civilization, and hence growth could not begin until human capital could be spared from the production of goods for immediate consumption' (Romer 1990: 96). This latter comment could be further amplified with the observation that populations were relatively small in prehistoric times and the structure of economic life was quite different. That structure was essentially one of 'reciprocity and redistribution' (Karl Polyani, 1944). Incentives to improve on modes of production were provided by population growth whereby demand for necessities increased.

The implications of the above discussion are that the Romer model could be more economically expressed by just three (3) variables Capital (K), Labour (L), and A (level of technology). This produces the usual formulation of the orthodox Cobb-Douglas production function as $Y = A(K)^{\alpha}L^{\beta}$. We unpack this formulation as follows: K in this instance represents physical capital and L represents labour with varying degrees of embodied human capital. A represents the level of technology already embodied in capital, K. But there is a feedback loop here: it is active labour (L) as human capital (H) that produces technology which in turn requires increased and novel amounts of human capital over time. This hypothesis is supported by Romer's observation that 'what is important for growth is integration not into an economy with a large number of people but rather into one with a large amount of human capital (Romer 1990: 98).

The reformulation above of the orthodox Cobb-Douglas production function guarantees that Solow's growth impasse is easily avoidable. The point is that existing cultures necessarily impart human capital skills from the earliest human growth years onwards. The street sweeper is subjected to human capital inputs in the same way as the engineer, albeit to a much lesser degree. *The moral here is that a necessary condition for economic growth and development for the countries of Africa are large investments in human capital at all levels.*

The problem with the Solow and Romer models is that they fail to recognise that labour is the driving force in economic growth and development, and that labour is necessarily embodied with human capital in all its activities. Furthermore, it is labour as embodied human capital that produces technology. In fact human capital is knowledge imparted by learning and operant conditioning into the thinking powers of humans. Human capital in turn is the source of technology which represents what is essential about humans. It is for this reason that human capital standing alone is enough to explain the fact that countries that are not mass producers of technological goods but are home to populations which benefit from substantial investments in human capital are economically successful. Cases in point are countries such as New Zealand, Denmark, Finland, Holland, and Norway whose investments in human capital guarantee that their citizens experience approximately twelve years of secular modern education. The investment in human capital for such nations is geared not only towards inculcating technical skills but also imbueing their citizens with the dispositions and skills necessary for critical thinking in all intellectual areas. The same applies to larger population nations such as Australia and Canada, which though not noted for their technological prowess, are home to populations that are guaranteed substantial investments in human capital.

Investment in human capital would seem to be the necessary requirement for economic growth and development. It is not only the basis for autonomous development in terms of new technological adaptations but also the basis for developing societies whose citizens are compatible with social requirements of modern technological society. By contrast, countries that have not invested adequately in human capital remain mired for the most part in technologies and thinking modes of the pre-modern era.

The UNDP's Human Development Index document provides a fairly comprehensive picture of the correlations causes between investments in human capital and the existing agreed-on metrics of human economic development and welfare. Evident proof of this is to compare the first ten countries on the UNDP's Human Development Index list and the last ten. But the same correlations that point to causal connections could be obtained by simply using four countries that are in the 'very highly developed' sector and the last four of the 'low human development' sector. The central point here is that development does not necessarily entail autonomous industrial and technological development but necessarily means having a populace whose behaviours demonstrate maximal investments in human capital not only in terms of both modern, technical and secular knowledge, but also in terms of social dispositions. For example, the very small country, Iceland is not noted for its industrial prowess yet with 10.4 years of investment in human capital its per capita GDP is $35, 116 and its average life-expectancy is 82.1 years. Iceland is 13th on the UNDP's HDI table and is among the 'very highly developed' countries. But consider the following table including eight nations out of one-hundred-and-eighty-seven. The causal links between investment in human capital and development in terms of its most important metrics are obvious.

Table 2: For the years 2012-2013 according to the UNDP's Human Development metrics

Countr(Very High Human Development)	Mean Years of Schooling	Per Capita GDP (2011 PPP $)	H.D.I. Rank
Norway	12.6	63.909	1
Australia	12.8	41, 524	2
New Zealand	12.5	32, 569	7
Denmark	12.1	42,880	10

Table 3: For the years 2012-2013 according to the UNDP's Human Development metrics

Country (Low Human Development)	Mean Years of Schooling	Per Capita GDP (2011 PPP $)	H.D.I. Rank
Chad	1.5	1,622	184
Central African Republic	3.5	588	185
Congo(DRC)	3.1	444	186
Niger	1.4	873	187

Source for tables 2 and 3: http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/table-1-human-development-index-and-its-components

To reinforce the consider the fact that even two years of schooling makes a very noticeable difference. Greece–now undergoing serious economic problems–ranks 29th on the HDI table with 10.2 years of schooling and a per capita GDP of $24, 658. It would seem that at least 12 years of schooling is the minimum to break into the upper ranks of development.

Alternative Development Models

In the modern era, there have been sets of strongly contested models that have sought to establish the optimal models for human economic transactions within and between communities. It is on this basis that real world economics becomes intermingled with politics thereby explaining the operative nomenclature of 'political economy'. In fact, economics in practice is political economy. But the objectivisation of any form of political economy required that the corresponding background theories be reified as being representative of human nature and behaviour. Thus, we have the ongoing ideological conflict between 'free market economics' on the one hand and 'more controlled forms of economic activity' on the other.

In this regard, three names stand out in the modern era: Smith, Marx, and Keynes. These names are important because their holders developed important models as to how the social economies of the modern world should be structured. Smith is seen by his followers to have developed the optimal social economic model according to which individuals within an economic space produce and exchange goods and services mainly on the basis of self interest under conditions of minimal government interference. The economic model developed by Smith has been reduced to phrases such 'free market economics' and 'free market economics produce optimal results', and so on. The Marxian model argued that left to its own devices the free market segmented into capital owners and workers would tend to be periodically disruptive of the economy, principally on account of the differentials between

the returns on capital and income. The solution, according to Marx, would be for the workers to expropriate the capital owners so as to correct the dividends imbalance. The capitalist market system did not collapse on account of its 'internal contradictions' as Marx presaged for a number of reasons, one of which was the expansion of capitalism into areas newly colonised by the economically dominant countries of Europe, whereby the gains made by workers extracted from the capital gains of overseas-invested capital, allowed for the reduction of costs (Lenin 1917) on account of cheaply produced raw materials in the colonial territories.

But that did not solve the issue concerning structural capitalism given the 'Great Crash' of 1929. The solution to that issue was provided by Keynes in his *magnum opus*. 'The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money' (1936). Keynes's solution, in contradistinction to Say's Law of Markets, was to create a crucial role for a nation's government in managing the endemic issues of periodic overproduction and underconsumption that plague the generic capitalist economy. The key element in Keynes's thesis seems to have been adopted by the majority of industrialised countries in that by intervening permanently in the market economy according to worker demands by way of trade unions and the like. Marx's predictions seem to have been forestalled. In fact, the important ex-state communist nations such as The Soviet Union and China, erstwhile practitioners of a totalitarian capitalism by the state, have now adopted versions of Keynes's 'mixed-economy' model. By way of political party representation, the various countries have been able through taxation, extract from capital and their populations enough surpluses to ensure adequate production of public goods and compensation during times of economic downturns.

But such theorising in terms of how the modern market economy should be run is rarely countenanced in African university or governmental circles. Academic discussions just assume that economics should be pursued according to the standard neoclassical model now current in Western universities. In terms of practice, the standard approach is to follow the ministrations of the IMF, World Bank and the lending agencies of the Euro-American world. The names of Kwame Nkrumah, Julius Nyrere, Claude Ake, etc. rarely ever come up in discussions about the optimal models for African economic development. This can happen only when academic economics in Africa views economics not as some species of accounting or engineering but as an evolutionary social science strongly embedded in politics and sociology.

What is to be Done?

With the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, the West was left triumphal on the economic scene. The path to economic growth and development was strictly determined thenceforth by Western institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank. Neoliberalism with its mantra of privatisation and minimal government intervention in the economy was the only model that the nations of Africa and the South were recommended to follow. The NEPAD [New Economic Policy for African Development] was the new programme that African nations were being encouraged to embrace. Before that, of course, one recalls the ECA (Economic Commission for Africa) and its blueprint for African economic growth and development. This was the Lagos Plan of Action (draft 1980) that urged models of balanced growth in the context of mixed economies along the lines as practiced by the nations of the European Union. The LPA also stressed self-sufficiency and intra-continental trade and cooperation. It should be noted that the LPA was developed as a Pan African initiative drawn up to map out a path for African economic growth and development. A vigorously critical response from the World Bank followed– prepared by Elliot Berg, an economist at the Bank. The Berg Report stressed that private markets rather than the state should be the prime mover toward economic growth and development, and that regional integration was not recommended and that – in so many words – Africa's path to growth and development should be by way of the Bretton Woods institutions and what are now called 'neoliberal' economic policies. The Berg report also argued that the developmental role of the state as the main agent of development should be reduced on account of the neoclassical economic principle that free markets tend to be better at promoting growth and development. It also pointed out that LPA neglected to point to the issue of governmental corruption as a major impediment and to suggest ways to curb such. In retrospect, the LPA was a much better theoretical starting point to tackle Africa's economic problems than the neoliberal and dependency ministrations offered by the IMF and World Bank.

So what is to be done? The answer I propose should include efficient and people-oriented government policies as a necessary step for development. That can be achieved only when the various populaces are boldly involved through direct action. With efficient and development-oriented governance the following measures should be implemented: 1) regional integration in terms of currencies and movement of goods, services, and labour. The EU model is worthy of emulation on this basis. Regional groupings such as ECOWAS, SADEC, etc. should be made to work more efficiently. 2) Pan African institutions such as trans-continental cooperative banks, research

institutes and well-funded universities should be encouraged and promoted. 3) There should be concerted and combined efforts of the populaces of West Africa to confront France's neocolonial policies regarding the CFA currency. Currently, the French Central Bank requires that member CFA countries deposit 65 per cent of their reserves into the French Treasury. 4) There should be more efforts to found a convertible African currency managed by a strongly capitalised African Central Bank in coordination with African governments in terms of their individual fiscal policies. Should such a currency be used for the capitalisation of indigenous projects in the form of regional and trans-continental railways, highways and roads, manufacturing, heavy industry production, solar energy enterprises, it would necessarily increase in unit value over time.

Heterdox economist Ha-Joon Chang (2008: 12) argues that the path to development is not the one recommended by neoliberal economics which includes free market transactions, minimal government, private enterprise, and invitation to foreign investors. Ha-Joon Chang has this to say about Korea's economic advancement. 'Whatever its recent problems have been, Korea's economic growth and the resulting social transformation over the last four and a half decades have been truly spectacular' (Chang 2008: 12). This rapid economic development and technological transformation are often described as a 'miracle', and this is Chang's explanation: 'The Korean economic miracle was the result of a clever and pragmatic mixture market incentives and state direction. The Korean government did not vanquish the market as the communist states did. However, it did not have blind faith in the free market either. While it took markets seriously, the Korean strategy recognized that they often need to be corrected through policy intervention' (Chang 2008: 15). More specifically: 'The government owned all the banks, so it could direct the life blood of business–credit. Some big projects were undertaken directly by state-owned enterprises the steel maker POSCO, being the best example–although the country had a pragmatic, rather than ideological, attitude to the issue of state ownership' (Chang 2008: 14). To ensure the growth of infant industries targeted industries were protected by tariffs (Chang 2008: 14). But above all, according to Chang, economic development for developing nations would depend heavily on manufacturing. He makes this point emphatically when he writes: 'Contrary to the advice of the Bad Samaritans, poor countries should *deliberately* promote manufacturing industries' (Chang 2008: 214).

But behind all this is South Korea's continuing investment in human capital. Despite rough beginnings, South Korea ranks 15th on the UNDP's Human Development Index and shows and average of 11.8 years of

schooling (cf Sweden 11.7 years of schooling). This is what explains its noted prowess in high technology and industrial production. The following OECD economics observation supports this thesis:

> 'Education played a key role in Korea's transformation from one of the poorest countries in the world to a leading industrial nation by promoting the development of human resources and technological change… The exceptionally rapid development of education in Korea is illustrated by differences in the levels of educational attainment for different age cohorts. The share of the population with at least a secondary education ranges from 98 per cent, the highest in the OECD area, for young adults (25-34) to only 43 per cent for older adults (55-64) (Figure 1). Similarly, 65 per cent of young adults have completed tertiary education, the highest share in the OECD, compared to only 13 per cent of older adults (Panel B). In addition to these quantitative measures, Korea has consistently ranked near the top in the OECD in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). As Korea has few natural resources, it must rely on the development of its human resources' (Jones 2013: 5).

In sum, 'universal access to primary and secondary schools promoted social mobility and income equality…. [thereby] laying the foundations for Korea's success in IT and the growth of a knowledge-based economy' (Jones 2013: 5).

Chang's analysis above could serve as a possible path for African development. On account of the abundant labour power that Africa possesses, there are areas in manufacturing such as sports equipment manufacturing that could be exploited. As an example, football as a sport is very popular in a continent of one(1) billion persons, yet the manufacture of footballs, which is highly labour intensive, is dominated by Pakistan and China. Africa could easily enter that market and those of other sports too. One major incentive here would be the fact that the cost of labour in this instance would be approximately on par with Pakistan and China, or even less. Similarly, other manufacturing areas that require labour inputs mainly could be exploited.

But perhaps the most important pay-off for African countries in terms of optimal investments in human capital would be in its capacity to encourage cultural changes within societies whose existing cultures developed within sociological structures and knowledge bases are just not appropriate for modern post-industrial and modern-technology reliant societies. Investments in education and human capital geared towards the knowledge banks of the modern world would do much to improve the political structures and atmospheres of the nations of the South including those of Africa. The nation state and the large economic communities are the socio-

economic structures on which the modern world operates, not the smaller communities of ethnic groups and their local particularities and premodern modes of thinking. Modern education and investment in human capital would recognise the logical content of this argument.

Impediments to Real Growth and Development

On account of the capital-providing hegemony of Western institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank, high-production and influential nations such as China, Russia, India, Brazil, and South Africa have set up an alternative economic bloc known as the BRICS nations. South Africa is the lone African representative but its capital base is quite insignificant compared to those of the other BRICS members. It is on this basis that larger African continental groupings are necessary to compete effectively with Euro-American economic groupings such as the EU, North America, and other continental-size economic areas such as China (1.4 billion population), India (1.3 billion population), and Brazil(a veritable continent in land area with a population of 200 million).

But there are real impediments to the implementation of the programme formulated above. Neocolonial class structures in a heavily truncated Africa promote the economic interests of its national comprador classes under an umbrella of petty and narrow nationalisms as presciently described by Frantz Fanon (1963) in the chapter, 'The Pitfalls of National Consciousness' of his *Wretched of the Earth.* In contemporary Africa nations such as South Africa and Namibia carry the highest Gini coefficients in Africa and the world. But on account of negligent data-gathering both nations could indeed be surpassed by countries such as Equatorial Guinea, Congo, Guinea, Nigeria, Egypt, Algeria, and others. The real economic impact is that the development welfare of the masses in terms of education, health services, basic infrastructure such as housing, etc. are woefully neglected in favour of massive and parasitical comprador class interests. This class broadcasts its class status by making ostentatious shows of its ill-gotten gains by garish display of the imported trinkets and baubles of Western and Asian capitalist production. Much of these kinds of behaviour are forms of 'rent seeking' that sap the productive energies of most developing nations. Such behaviours are normally called 'corruption'. Modern education in both its technical and humanistic forms could help militate against the pervasive and baneful practices of corruption. In this regard, students of economics in African universities should be acquainted with alternative forms of economic analysis which emphasise economics as an evolutionary social science grounded in political economy, sociology, political science, and history. As a result of

this neglect, very few students of economics in the African university are seriously familiar with theories such as 'dependency theory' and 'Marxian economic analysis', 'Austrian theory', and 'Neo-Keynesian theory'.

As a result, most African nations are buffeted by the ills of intolerable unemployment leading to population escapes to Europe under the most perilous conditions. Add to this the ills of very underdeveloped health services and education. The UNDP's annual Human Development Index amply formulates such economic problematics in stark quantitative terms. The issue of the modalities of African development is not just economic but also political, sociological, and ideological.

Conclusion

The issue concerning the economic growth and development of Africa seems to be an unending work in progress. The economic ingredients are all there for development but political and human elements must be tamed before serious progress can be made. In the above I have laid out the economic side of the issue, but such is necessarily intertwined with the political, sociological, and ideological considerations that must be seriously considered. In a presently globalised world, progress can be made only from the blue-prints formulated by theorists such Nkrumah and others many years ago, and now being ably adapted by the European Union, presently with the world's largest collective GDP. But in this, one key element stands out as an absolutely necessary prerequisite for economic development on the African continent. That is much increased investment in human capital. There are existing models to be emulated and modified to fit local conditions when necessary. The educational systems of countries like Finland, South Korea, New Zealand, and similar others are ready examples. That would entail more universities and research centres, and even the building of science cities. With increased investments in human capital the urgent implementation of the ideas of regional integration, single currencies, continental markets could then follow *pari passu.*

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