Africa in a New World Order

Lionel Cliffe and David Seddon

In this the 50th issue of the Review, and at the beginning of the last decade of the millennium, we take stock of the dramatic changes currently taking place in the global political economy and consider their significance for developments in Africa. We focus on the implications of the collapse of 'state socialism' in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union and the character of the emerging 'new world order' following the end of the Cold War, so triumphantly proclaimed by the Bush administration. In particular we explore (as does Chomsky in our first article) the modified role in this new order of the United States, poised now after its bloody victory in the Gulf (100,000 dead), to intervene more arrogantly and energetically in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Objectives of the Review

We also take this opportunity to reiterate the broad objectives of the Review as set out in the editorial to our first issue in 1974. These were to examine the roots of Africa's present condition and to contribute to debates among progressive intellectuals in Africa (and elsewhere) regarding the constraints to, and the potential for, broad-based economic, social and political development on the continent as a whole and in individual countries. Our commitment to a politically engaged and theoretically informed debate remains strong. We recognise the need to confront contemporary issues with realism and flexibility. Times have changed. Marxism-Leninism is increasingly subject to the kind of detailed critique of both theory and practice (that Pearce in this issue offers). Today on the left even 'socialism' is contentious. The related issues of democracy and human/civil rights have become the central preoccupation of many.

In the editorial to our 10th anniversary issue (no.32, 1985) - which looked back on a decade in Africa characterised by the widespread success of the armed liberation struggle and by major problems of post-colonial economic and social development in a period of global recession - we reminded ourselves of the commitment made in our first editorial:

to comprehend African reality at a number of levels . . . [rejecting] the orthodoxy of bourgeois social science which sees each national economy, state and society, and often each of their separate problems, in isolation.

But we also admitted that we had published relatively little on the specifics of the 'strategies of imperialist powers and of monopoly capital' and 'Africa's
changing position in the international division of labour . . . [and the great powers'] spheres of influence' (p.1). Since that time the Review has devoted more space to these subjects and will continue to provide more commentary and analysis from a global perspective. From the start, however, the Review recognised that:

we must not simply see Africa as the reflection of imperialism. There is a need to develop theoretical insights into the specificity of social formations that underdeveloped capitalism gives rise to, in response both to the pre-capitalist history of Africa and to its integration into the international capitalist system

(ROAPE no.32, 1985:3).

So, we also renew our commitment to make available to wider audiences the current debates and political struggles taking place within Africa, to underline the differences, as well as the similarities, in the circumstances facing African progressives and African peoples today.

We see our task over the coming decade broadly, therefore, as that of relating changes in the global political economy to the complex process of African transformation, while at the same time helping to identify both the constraints to and potential for 'progressive' development for the African people and to further clarify the meaning of this broad term in the 1990s. It is a task which will, more than ever, require collaboration and constructive debate among all those - based inside as well as outside Africa - who share such a commitment.

Crisis and Transformation

In our first editorial in 1974, we wrote that 'the world as a whole seems to be entering a new phase'. In retrospect that 'new phase' turned out to be characterised by a deep crisis of capitalism on a global scale. Two major recessions in the advanced capitalist states during the 1970s and the associated worldwide 're-structuring' have had catastrophic implications for most parts of the rest of the world during the 1980s. In Latin America and in Africa in particular, people suffered extensively from the failures of development strategies (themselves often prescribed from outside); from economic mismanagement, corruption, worsening terms of trade, lack of foreign exchange fuelled by a waste of resources (notably on arms), political repression, civil wars and military interventions. These problems were exacerbated by, and resulted in, a rise in foreign debt - placing governments and peoples at the mercy of 'structural adjustment' and 'liberalisation' policies imposed by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, which have worsened rather than improved the situation of the urban and rural poor. Nor has this 'restructuring' provided much prospect of a stronger position in the international division of labour for Africa as a whole. Now at the beginning of the 1990s it seems very likely that world capitalism is once again about to experience a major recession, with all the re-structuring and turmoil that this inevitably entails, particularly for regions already disadvantaged like Africa.

But the 1980s also witnessed dramatic political and economic transformation
in Eastern Europe. Starting in Poland, the edifice of ‘state socialism’, constructed with so much effort and pain during the early part of the century in the Soviet Union, and extended to Eastern Europe in the 1940s, was challenged and found wanting by its own citizens, including the workers in whose name the state existed but whose exploitation and oppression remained the foundation of ‘state socialism’. Central planning and ‘the command economy’ have been deeply criticised and new measures initiated to liberalise and even privatise substantial elements of the economy. The position and role of the Communist party and both the theory and reality of the one-party state have been fundamentally challenged. But neither the political nor the economic restructuring has been achieved in the USSR, and all the East European countries have experienced major political and economic turmoil.

How far these dramatic changes are to be explained by the ‘economic crisis’ of the centrally planned economies during the late 1970s and early 1980s, how far by the authoritarian character of ‘state socialism’ and how far by the increasing integration of Eastern Europe into the international capitalist system dominated by the West, is debatable. The fact remains that all aspects of ‘actually existing socialism’ have come into question both theoretically and practically. Not only have the national Communist Parties fallen from power, but political organisations offering ‘socialist alternatives’ in many Eastern European countries have also had to contend with widespread popular rejection of ‘socialism’.

Governments formed by the new non-communist and even anti-communist groupings are introducing ‘economic reforms’; in some cases the old regime is struggling to implement both economic and political reforms in order to ‘ride the storm’ and maintain effective control over the new forces for change. Many of these new political forces opposed to communist rule derive their strength from their appeal to ethnic and national identity and/or religious affiliation, always regarded as ‘reactionary’ and problematic in socialist ideology and strictly controlled under ‘state socialism’, but now developing again as a focus for mobilisation. The ‘emerging civil society’ in Eastern Europe is thus riven by deep cleavages and tensions which threaten both economic restructuring (perestroika) and political liberalisation (glasnost). These divisions are likely to involve not only the sectarian forces referred to above but also newly emerging social classes in the developing ‘capitalist’ economy and society. Given these tensions, there is always a possibility of heavy-handed efforts at the reassertion of ‘control’ by ‘conservative’ elements appalled at the threat to stability and the centralised state. Such reactions are of course paralleled by those in Africa like Moi and Kaunda who justify continued one-party rule as a protection against ‘tribalism’. Surely, the lesson from the East is that ethnic affiliations have to be reckoned with and cannot just be assumed away?

The New Imperialism

With the supposed ending of the Cold War and, significantly, at a time of deepening recession and further restructuring, has come the dramatic reassertion...
tion of the US' role as the dominant actor in constructing 'a new world order'. The Bush administration, after some hesitation, moved to provide limited and conditional aid to Eastern Europe (thereby reinforcing the conception of the new relationship with both 'East' and 'South' as one involving assistance to 'developing countries'). It also sought to encourage the development of nationalist and separatist movements. The United States had already begun to reassert its military-political hegemony in unmistakable fashion during the Reagan years, with major military interventions in Central America (invasions of Grenada, Panama) and the Middle East (bombing of Libya), and more discreet 'counter-insurgency' and 'low-intensity warfare' elsewhere as in southern Africa, where it has increasingly taken over the destabilising role from South Africa (see Minter's piece) - all in the name of 'the new world order'. The massively destructive police operation in the Gulf, whatever its implications for the Middle East, was meant as a 'lesson', not just to Saddam Hussein but to any third world regime that might be designated a threat in terms of whatever new post-war criteria the US cares to apply. But the Bush administration's decision to pursue the military option in the Gulf and ignore all diplomatic openings has heavily underscored not only the aggressive character of the new US-dominated world order but also the contradictions referred to by Chomsky between its foreign policy and its relative economic decline. The dragging of the United Nations into what was a US adventure clearly undermines the prospects that may have existed for strengthening the UN's system for resolving conflicts.

The effective withdrawal of the Soviet Union from many earlier commitments and its clear unwillingness to intervene directly outside its own frontiers ensures that the US is able to act unilaterally with much greater freedom. The United Nations remains heavily circumscribed by the pressures exerted by the major world powers, especially the United States and the Soviet Union. It is likely, however, that international agencies of the United Nations will in future receive considerably greater backing from the latter, while the former will continue to make use of the UN simply as a cover for its own activities, where appropriate, and ignore it, when convenient. But if the US still 'runs the show' in terms of international politics, it has increasingly faced an economic challenge.

The rise of Japan as an economic power has been dramatic over the past three or more decades. Only recently, however, has its impressive economic achievement begun to translate itself into more direct forms of intervention abroad. But Japan's overseas investment has risen steeply since 1984, boosted by the economic recovery of the mid-1980s, a sustained current account surplus and the sharp appreciation of the yen; Japan is now seeking new areas for foreign investment, both private and public. Today it is the world's largest source of overseas direct investment; it is also the world's largest donor of Official Development Assistance (ODA). It is one of the largest contributors to, and one of the most powerful voices in, the two major international financial institutions, the IMF and the World Bank. Its future role in the Third World outside
Asia is not yet clear, and its efforts to play a more strategic role have so far been overshadowed by the US. For example, the proposal made by former finance minister Kiichi Miyazawa for the restructuring of Third World debt was first rejected by the US and then repackaged and unveiled as the Brady plan for debt relief. In Eastern Europe, however, Japan has, over the last few years, quietly committed very substantial resources to ‘reconstruction’ and development, with the promise of more to come. In other parts of the world also, there are indications of Japan’s increasing role. In August 1989, for example, the Japanese government established a $2.5 million fund for the UN peace keeping mission in Namibia. In Africa, Japan is now one of the continent’s largest aid donors: at the end of the 1980s it was providing nearly $900 million in ODA to sub-Saharan Africa, compared with $130 million a decade before. Between 1990 and 1992 non-project grant aid will be worth $600 million.

The rise of the European Community and its challenge to the US since the mid-1970s is very clear. By 1980, the European Community accounted for nearly 14 per cent of world exports (excluding intra-European trade), with the United States exporting only 12 per cent of the total. But throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the countries of the EC also dramatically increased their trade among themselves, so that, if intra-European trade is included, the Community accounts for over 40 per cent of all world exports, making it a dominant trading bloc. This has enabled the Community to rival and challenge US interests in a variety of domains, including agriculture.

The recent national and international economic restructuring has been marked by the striking contradiction between the call for ‘open markets’, and the painful experience of ‘economic reform’ (liberalisation and structural adjustment) in the so-called developing countries, on the one hand, and the increased protectionism and support for national industries (agricultural and manufacturing) on the part of the advanced capitalist countries, on the other. But the struggles at successive meetings of the GATT and elsewhere, between the US, the EC and Japan over subsidies, and protection to agriculture in particular (which Watkins documents), are part of a more general struggle. The global capitalist crisis has involved a period of heightened competition and conflict of interests between these capitalist superpowers and different fractions of international capital, over global markets and access to the economies of ‘developing countries’. The victims of these ‘trade wars’ have always tended to be the producers of countries in Latin America, Asia and Africa.

The existence of a tri-lateral structure to the world capitalist system - US, Japan, EC - each with its own special interests and special relationships in specific parts of the ‘Third World’ to protect and defend, has raised the spectre of a world economy divided into major competing blocs, as in the 1920s and 1930s, fraught with heightened potential for conflict. The greater integration of the capitalist world economy, however, will ensure some different pattern from that or the period between the World Wars. One possible scenario would
see the development of two partly competing yet partly integrated centres of gravity in the world economy - that of the North Atlantic and that of the Pacific Rim. In such a configuration the United States and the Soviet Union would each be pulled both ways, adding to the precarious character of this new world order. The implications for most parts of the 'Third World' of such a prospect remain unclear, although there is little reason to believe that more than a handful of states will benefit from their relationship with these two poles. Whatever the pattern that develops there will be no escape (as Frank emphasises) from the dynamics of the global political economy.

But if the divisions within the capitalist world have become more acute, and the economic supremacy of the United States subject to powerful challenge, the US economy continues to exercise a major influence internationally (in part through the power of the dollar) despite its relative decline and its evolution from the world's largest creditor to its largest debtor. Furthermore, with the Soviet Union now largely absorbed in its own domestic problems, the United States has increasingly sought during the 1980s to reassert its global hegemonic power. Some have argued that the commonplace of the 1970s of the 'decline in US hegemony' was always misleading; that the US maintained its role as the dominant global superpower even through the difficult 'post-Vietnam' years and that its economic and technological eclipse was always overstated. Others have suggested that a more complex situation has developed since the early 1970s in which the US economy is increasingly challenged internationally by the rise of Japan and by the progressive unification of the European Community but that, despite this - or in some versions because of this - US strategic (political-military) supremacy gives it an essentially undisputed capacity to set the global agenda on international political issues.

Prospects for Socialist Development
The rapid disintegration of 'state socialism' has meant profound changes not only in Europe itself, but in all aspects of international relations. The Soviet Union's growing rapprochement with the United States and the end of superpower conflict on a global scale, have given way to 'interdependence' as the watchword of the Soviet leadership, while new themes, including 'the right to autonomous national development', have been emphasised in foreign policy towards the Third World (as Belikov points out). The Soviet Union and other Eastern European countries have drawn back still further from a commitment to a 'socialist' strategy for international cooperation and development. Even promoting 'socialist-oriented' development by appropriate intervention and assistance to specific developing countries and to specific political movements is questioned. It is important, however, in this connection to ask, as Saul does, how far such support or the export of such a model was ever really 'appropriate' to Africa - not least because the demise of 'existing socialisms' is being used as ammunition by critics of socialism, and may have led to a failure of nerve on the part of some progressive regimes.
Unable and unwilling to sustain a major presence and involvement in numerous regional conflicts and struggles, the Soviet Union has increasingly sought to collaborate with its erstwhile super-enemy, the US, to resolve such conflicts in southern Africa, the Horn and elsewhere, and to reduce its commitments overseas. There continues, however, to be considerable debate over Soviet foreign policy and 'aid' strategy. But while such collaboration between the super-powers has certainly encouraged the effective resolution of specific regional conflicts and long-standing struggles it has tended to throw up structures that suit the US and its allies. Increasing exposure to pressures from an increasingly integrated international capitalism has pushed states and movements committed to some form of socialist (or non-capitalist) development to 'convert' to capitalism and to encourage 'bourgeois democracy'.

The disintegration of 'state socialism' in Eastern Europe and the increasing interdependence and growing heterogeneity of the international economy has eroded both the concept and the reality of 'the Third World' and promises the emergence of a heterogeneous yet hierarchical and Inegalitarian structure of capitalist states, each with increasingly polarised internal class divisions. Capitalist development in the countries of what was the 'Third World' is likely, however, to be an uncertain project, with only a limited number able to achieve significant and sustainable progress in this direction. Despite the evident failure of 'structural adjustment' during the 1980s to provide the basis for renewed capital accumulation and capitalist development in most parts of the 'Third World' especially in Africa, it is almost certain that 'economic reform' will continue to be enforced, in the name of growth and development, however problematic and painful for both governments and populations. The demands of international creditors and lending agencies concerned to maintain debt and debt interest repayments will require this. The new 'concern' of the World Bank and other agencies with 'the problem of poverty' and the need to make more efficient use of human resources will undoubtedly (and correctly) be treated with considerable suspicion under these circumstances.

Prospects for Democracy?

In Mozambique, Angola and in many other African countries, there has been a retreat from 'Marxism-Leninism' and other self-defined 'socialisms' and from the planned economy, although the significance of powerful external forces (imperialism, in short) and internal constraints in preventing the pursuit of a more decentralised and 'open' (or democratic) form of socialist development should not be underestimated (as Minter and Saul remind us). There is also a move in these states, but also in others not at all wedded to any kind of non-capitalist path, to question what Shivji terms the 'party-state'. Governments in Algeria, Angola, Benin, Chad, Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Madagascar, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Tunisia, Zaire and Zambia have all been obliged to recognise the pressures for multi-party politics and have begun, to varying degrees, a process leading towards the formal recognition of a
variety of political parties. In countries like Zambia and Kenya, the commitment by government to a one-party state remains strong. In others, new political parties have already been recognised and elections are being held or planned. Debates about a similar transition to multi-partyism are going on in Tanzania (see Babu’s and Shivji’s contributions), in post-Barre Somalia and elsewhere.

But the emergence of more than one recognised political grouping and the appearance of multi-party politics is not necessarily the same as democracy. When western ‘donors’, the IMF and World Bank, demand political pluralism and ‘good governance’ along with economic liberalisation as conditions for assistance, as they are now doing, they have in mind the breaking of state power and the ‘opening up’ of the economy and society for capitalist development. Francois Heisbourg, the director of the Institute for Strategic Studies in London epitomises this stance when he argues that ‘without these prerequisites, there can be no durable economic development, no noteworthy foreign investment, and consequently no prosperity’ (The Guardian, 29 December 1990).

What is required for the kind of capitalist development envisaged, however, is political stability rather than democracy. With the collapse of the state socialist alternative, progressive forces in developing countries are faced with the prospect of increased integration and subordination within the hierarchical, inequitable structure of international capitalism, and with a continued drive for ‘economic reform’ and ‘adjustment’. Under these circumstances, the prospects for even ‘bourgeois’ democracy would appear slight; more probable are various forms of authoritarian regimes with strictly limited political pluralism. For progressives, the collapse of ‘state socialism’ and the difficulties associated with the socialist project, has put democracy once again at the forefront of the agenda. But is ‘bourgeois’ democracy, much as it may create welcome political space, all that progressives should be striving for in any case?

The experiences of countries like Botswana, Senegal, Ivory Coast, Morocco and Zimbabwe, where multi-party competition has officially survived in some form, is mixed. The last three are heavily controlled from the centre and have experienced severe civil and human rights restrictions. Is there any hope of more popular forms of democracy - ‘real people’s power’? And can such slogans with their echoes of liberation struggles and more recent grassroots movements be given some meaningful constitutional form - along the lines, perhaps, that Shivji explores? What he does bring out, and Eastern European experiences confirm, is that any such shift to democracy (and even any new conception of socialism) has to be located in the realm of civil society. More than simply the modification of state forms and the recognition of parties, the civil societies of Africa, strangulated by the ‘party-state’, have to be given time and space to breathe and for non-statist movements to emerge (as Copans emphasises). Here again Shivji’s specific recommendations, and the rather different formulations of Babu about Tanzania, need serious study. But it has also to be recognised that surviving elements of civil society are often hierarchical and far from democratic. They are in particular patriarchal, and much of the oppression of women is not through the mechanisms of the state. The
emergence of social and political forms that give expression to the aspirations of women, the rural poor, the unemployed and not just workers will require not just space from the heavy hand of the state but creative and novel mobilising initiatives. What has also to be put on the long term agenda is the development of linkages between democratic forms in Africa and those elsewhere so that an alternative, democratic world order might emerge.

One striking political development of the last few years in Africa, prior to the rise of multi-partyism, has been the widespread and massive upsurge in popular protest at those government policies implemented in the name of structural adjustment and economic reform. Across Africa, the concerns of these popular protests and movements have challenged not only the policies but even the character of the regimes. Their concerns have been ‘economic’ (unemployment, declining real wages), ‘social’ (cuts in welfare services, deteriorating living conditions, price rises) and ‘political’ (repression, political marginalisation and lack of democratic and human rights) - and often all three as they point the figure at misdirection of resources and aggrandisement by corrupt regimes in the face of imposed austerity.

Progressive intellectuals must consider whether the long march to democracy can even begin, if such popular forces cannot be actively involved in the development of a sustained political movement. The classic ‘socialist’ or Marxist strategy has always emphasised the role of organised labour and the progressive intellectuals, tending to be wary if not actively hostile towards such popular forces. But, as Michaela von Freyhold suggested in an earlier issue (no.39) of this Review, such an exclusive vision of the progressive forces in the struggle for real democracy and socialism is arguably misguided in Africa (and elsewhere in the ‘Third World’). Today, more than ever, with the fundamental questioning of the Marxist-Leninist tradition, a strategy which recognises the power of the people - ordinary women, men and workers in the broadest sense - and organises for popular, rather than ‘bourgeois’ democracy and for democratic socialism is likely to provide the most powerful challenge to state repression and to imperialism. The alternative to state power in the name of ‘socialism’ might well be popular power in the name of democracy.

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ROAPE Electronic Index (RIX)

An index of all issues of ROAPE on an easy-to-use PC database was due to be mailed out with subscription copies of this issue. However due to the additional weight of this issue (both intellectually as well as an extra 40 pages!), we have had to delay sending out disks due to postage limits. RIX will now be sent out with issue 51.

We apologise to those who are anxiously awaiting its arrival. All current subscribers, and those who subscribe by the end of June, will receive a free copy (thereafter an extra £2.50/$5.00 in addition to the subscription price). Due to related space reasons, an explanatory article about RIX will also be held over until next issue.
The Struggle for Democracy in a Changed World

Noam Chomsky

In the conception of US planners of the modern world order after 1945 the Third World was to function 'as a source of raw materials and a market'. The major threat to this system were nationalistic regimes (not the USSR or communism), which would be best kept in check by pliant but democratic means, but failing that the 'rascal multitude could be taught lessons'. The US role of policing this system has evolved since their defeat in Vietnam. With the end of the Cold War, the Soviet empire can be 'Latin Americanised' while the US is legitimising force, doing so, for instance, through the UN as now in the Gulf. However, with the economic rise of Europe and Japan, the US is now turning to them to pay the bills, while at the same time using its unchallenged military muscle to strengthen its relative economic position.

Versions of 'Democracy'

If we are to address this topic, we must clarify what is meant by 'democracy', and in just what ways the world has changed. Investigating these questions, we find that the guardians of world order have sought to establish democracy in one sense of the term, while blocking it in a different sense. There is every reason to expect these dominant themes of modern history to persist under the changed conditions of the current era.

In one interpretation of the term, a society is democratic insofar as the public can play a meaningful role in managing their own affairs. But from the first modern democratic revolution in mid-17th century England, elite groups have commonly regarded democracy so understood as a threat to be overcome, not a prospect to be encouraged. The reasoning is straightforward: the rabble cannot be trusted, as demonstrated 350 years ago by their reluctance to place their affairs in the hands of the gentry and the army, who were 'truly the people', though the people in their foolishness did not agree. The mass of the people were described as a 'rascal multitude, beasts in men's shapes'. The rhetoric may have changed, but the conceptions prevail until the present.

In the preferred version of democracy, the rabble must be barred from interfering with serious matters. The basic thinking was lucidly articulated by Walter
Lippmann, the dean of American journalism and a highly regarded progressive democratic theorist. 'The public must be put in its place,' Lippmann wrote, so that we may 'live free of the trampling and the roar of a bewildered herd.'

Lippmann distinguished two political roles in a modern democracy. First there is the role assigned to the 'specialised class', the 'insiders', the 'responsible men' who have access to information and understanding. These 'public men' are responsible for 'the formation of a sound public opinion.' They initiate, they administer, they settle, and should be protected from 'ignorant and meddlesome outsiders', the incompetent public, so that they can serve what is called 'the national interest' in the webs of mystification spun by the academic social sciences and political commentary.

The second role is 'the task of the public', which is much more limited. It is not for the public to 'pass judgement', but merely to place 'its force at the disposal' of one or another group of 'responsible men'. The public 'does not reason, investigate, invent, persuade, bargain or settle'. Rather, 'the public acts only by aligning itself as the partisan of someone in a position to act executively', once he has given the matter at hand sober and disinterested thought. The bewildered herd, trampling and roaring, 'has its function': to be 'the interested spectators of action', not participants. Participation is the duty of 'the responsible man'.

These ideas, described as a 'political philosophy for liberal democracy', bear an unmistakable resemblance to the Leninist concept of a vanguard party that leads the masses to a better life that they cannot conceive or construct on their own.

'The responsible men' are to be the managers of the corporate, state and ideological institutions, all closely linked. For similar reasons, in a state, capitalist democracy, the range of operative choices is narrowly limited by the concentration of decision-making power in the state-corporate nexus; but for efficiency, values and beliefs should be structured to ensure that few stray from these confines, or even are aware of them. As explained by Reinhold Niebuhr, the highly respected moralist and political thinker, the intelligent minority must devise 'necessary illusion' and 'emotionally potent oversimplifications' to keep the naive simpletons on course. Less discussed, because it strikes closer to home, is that the educated classes themselves must be deeply indoctrinated if they are to carry out their managerial role.

'Democracy' and the Third World

With some modifications, these principles apply to the Third World as well. Its population also has its 'function', but it is not quite that of the bewildered herd at home. And the modalities of control also differ; terror and violence are available to an extent not possible on the home front.
These were among the guiding principles of the planners of the modern world order in the 1940s. In this global system, the Third World was to be ‘exploited’ for the needs of the industrial capitalist societies, and to ‘fulfil its major function as a source of raw materials and a market’; the terms are those of George Kennan’s State Department Planning Staff with reference to Africa and South-east Asia, but the application is far broader. In Latin America, Kennan explained, ‘the protection of our resources’ must be a major concern, as elsewhere. Since the main threat to our interests is indigenous, Kennan continued, we must accept the need for ‘police repression by the local government’. In general, ‘it is better to have a strong regime in power than a liberal government if it is indulgent and relaxed and penetrated by communists.’ The term ‘communist’ is used here in its familiar technical sense, referring to labour leaders, peasant organisers, priests organising self-help groups, and others with the wrong priorities.

By the same token, the legitimate forces in the Third World are elements of the oligarchy, business community, and military who understand and serve US priorities. The function of the population is to be pack horses; the function of the elites is to keep them under control. If these goals can be attained with democratic forms, that is fine, even preferable, if only for propaganda purposes. If not, then other ways must be found, and in the Third World domains, there need be no delicacy about the choice of methods. The rascal multitude can be taught lessons in manners by terror bombing of the kind pioneered by England in Iraq 70 years ago; poison gas, as authorized at that time for use against ‘uncivilized tribesmen’ by a high official of the War Office, Winston Churchill, who advised that it should cause a ‘lively terror’ and condemned the ‘squeamishness’ of those who question ‘the application of western science to modern warfare’; death squads, disappearance’, and other devices of the neo-Nazi National Security States favoured by the US since the Kennedy years; and so on, in the familiar way.

Of course, a different formulation is required for the home front. First, the guise for intervention must be self-defence, a virtually invariant feature of statecraft. Second, the use of violence must be for noble objectives: freedom, justice, world order and democracy. But like all terms of political discourse, these have their special Orwellian meanings, constructed for the occasion. We are indeed inspired by a ‘yearning for democracy’, as the New York Times tells us, but ‘democracy’ in the proper sense.

The major threat to US interests is ‘nationalistic regimes’ that are responsive to popular pressures for ‘immediate improvement in the low living standards of the masses’ and diversification of the economies. Such initiatives interfere with ‘the protection of our resources’ and our efforts to encourage ‘a climate conducive to private investment’, which will allow foreign capital ‘to repatriate a reasonable return’. The threat of communism, is the economic transformation of the communist powers ‘in ways that reduce their willingness and ability to complement the industrial economies of the West.’ This is the real basis for the
intense hostility to the Soviet Union and its imperial system from 1917, and the reason why independent nationalism in the Third World, whatever its political cast, has been seen as the 'virus' that must be eradicated.

Towards a 'New World Order'
Since 1917, the use of force has been presented as self-defence against the Soviet threat - including intervention in Russia itself. Before the Bolshevik revolution, similar actions were taken, but in fear of other menaces. When Woodrow Wilson invaded Mexico and Hispaniola - where his warriors murdered and destroyed, re-established virtual slavery, demolished the political system, and placed the countries firmly in the hands of US investors - the actions were in self-defence against the Huns. In earlier years, conquests and interventions were undertaken in defence against Britain and the 'base Canadian fiends' it manipulated, or Spain, or the 'merciless Indian savages' of the Declaration of Independence. With the Cold War a fading memory, intervention continued as before. Last year, in the first act of aggression of the post-Cold War era, the US invaded Panama, killing hundreds (possibly thousands) of civilians, restoring the rule of the 10% white elite and ensuring its grip on the Canal zone. Not even the most fertile imagination could conjure up a Russian threat, so other pretexts were concocted, no less ludicrous but more suited to the occasion. Ambassador Thomas Pickering even informed the United Nations that the US interprets the Charter as entitling it to use force to 'defend our interests' - a momentary lapse into realism, dutifully ignored by the faithful.

After World War I then, the traditional pattern of intervention continued, but with two basic changes. First, the US joined England and France as a major actor in the international arena. Second, its interventions were now in defence of civilization itself against the challenge of the Bolsheviks.

The analytic framework devised after World War I was extended to broader domains in the 1940s, as the US became history's first truly global power and turned to the task of constructing a world order in its interests. Industrial capitalism was to be reconstructed under the leadership of Germany and Japan, but now under US control. Within the general framework of liberal internationalism, US business was expected to flourish, finding ample investment opportunities and markets for its excess production, expectations that were largely fulfilled. The function of the Third World has already been discussed.

From the 1970s, the post-war system has been moving towards what is now called a 'New World Order', but one that bears little resemblance to the construction of the ideologues, with their lovely phrases about peace, justice, and the sanctity of international law, if only the new Hitler in Baghdad can be stopped before he conquers the world. The basic contours of the actual New World Order were coming into focus 20 years ago, with the emergence of a 'tripolar world' as economic power diffused within US domains. The collapse of Soviet tyranny adds several new dimensions. First, there are now prospects
for the Latin Americanization of much of the former Soviet empire, that is, for its return to its traditional quasi-colonial status, providing resources, cheap labour, markets, investment opportunities, and other standard Third World amenities. This is a development that may have large-scale consequences. The US is distinctly uneasy over the prospect of German-led Europe and Japan taking the lead in exploiting this new Third World.

A second consequence of the Soviet collapse is that the US is more free than before to use force, the Soviet deterrent having disappeared. In any confrontation, each contestant seeks to play its strong cards, to shift the conflict to an arena in which it is likely to prevail. For such reasons, the US has always regarded diplomacy and international law as an annoying encumbrance, a fact familiar to those who follow the affairs of Southeast Asia, Central America and the Middle East, among others. With the current configuration of US strengths and weaknesses, the temptation to transfer problems quickly to the arena of forceful confrontation is likely to be strong. Furthermore, the US intends to maintain its near monopoly of force, with no likely contestant for that role. One consequence will be exacerbation of domestic economic difficulties; another, a renewed temptation to 'go it alone' in relying on the threat of force rather than diplomacy.

The Gulf conflict has brought these issues to the fore. Aside from England, which has its own interests in Kuwait, the major industrial powers showed little interest in military confrontation. The reaction in Washington was ambivalent. War is dangerous; defusing the crisis without a demonstration of the efficacy of force is also an unwanted outcome. As for the costs, plainly it would be advantageous for them to be shared, but not at the price of sacrificing the role of lone enforcer. These conflicting concerns led to a sharp elite split over 'the tactical choice between preparation for war and reliance on sanctions, with the Administration holding to the former course.

In the 'New World Order', the Third World domains must still be controlled, sometimes by force. This task has been the responsibility of the US, but with its relative economic decline, the burden becomes harder to shoulder. One reaction is that the US must persist in its historic task, while turning to others to pay the bills. Testifying before Congress, Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger explained that the emerging New World Order will be based on 'a kind of new invention in the practice of diplomacy': others will pay the costs of US intervention to keep order. In the *Financial Times*, David Hale, a respected commentator on international economic affairs, describes the Gulf crisis as a 'watershed event in US international relations', which will be seen in history as having 'turned the US military into an internationally financed public good', an internationally-financed police force'. While 'some Americans will question the morality of the US military assuming a more explicitly mercenary role than it has played in the past', he adds, 'in the 1990s there is no realistic alternative'. The tacit assumption is that the public welfare is to be identified with the welfare of the Western industrial powers, and particularly their domestic elites.
The financial editor of a leading US conservative daily, William Neikirk of the Chicago Tribune, puts the point less delicately:

we must exploit our ‘virtual monopoly in the security market . . . as a lever to gain funds and economic concessions’ from Germany and Japan. The US has ‘cornered the West’s security market’ and others lack the ‘political will . . . to challenge the US’ in this ‘market.’ We will therefore be ‘the world’s rent-a-cops’ and will be ‘able to charge handsomely’ for the service; the term ‘rent-a-thug’ would be less flattering but more but more appropriate. Some will call us ‘Hessians’, Neikirk continues, but ‘that’s a terribly demeaning phrase for a proud, well-trained, well-financed and well-respected military’; and whatever anyone may say, ‘we should be able to pound our fists on a few desks’ in Japan and Europe, and ‘extract a fair price for our considerable services’, demanding that our rivals ‘buy our bonds at cheap rates, or keep the dollar propped up, or better yet, pay cash directly into our Treasury.’ ‘We could change this role’ of enforcer, he concludes, ‘but with it would go much of our control over the world economic system.’

This conception, while rarely put so bluntly, is widely held, and captures an essential element of Washington’s reaction to the Gulf crisis. It implies that the US should continue to take on the grim task of imposing order and stability (meaning, proper respect for the masters) with the acquiescence and support of the other industrial powers along with riches funnelled to the US via the dependent oil-producing monarchies.

There has been much curious commentary about the ‘wondrous sea change’ at the United Nations (New York Times), now at last able to undertake its peacekeeping function with the Cold War over, no longer obstructed by the Soviet veto and Third World ranting. The facts, scrupulously avoided in the hundreds of articles on this topic, provide a different message, with no ambiguity. In the early years, the Soviet Union regularly blocked UN action, the organisation being virtually an instrument of US foreign policy. But as the world recovered from the war and UN membership broadened with decolonization, the picture changed radically. For the past 20 years, the US is far in the lead in Security Council vetoes and negative votes in the General Assembly, often alone or with some client state, on every relevant issue: aggression, annexation, international law, terrorism, disarmament, and so on. Great Britain is in second place, France a distant third, and the USSR fourth, with one-seventh as many vetoes as the US. There is no reason to suppose that with the Soviet withdrawal from world affairs, the US and its British client will suddenly end their campaign against international law, diplomacy, and collective security - which had virtually nothing to do with the Cold War, as a look at actual cases will show. Furthermore, the ‘anti-Western’ Third World rhetoric that is so commonly derided often turns out to be a call for adherence to international law, a weak barrier against the depredations of the powerful. In the case of the Gulf, the UN can act because for once it is not being blocked by the US and its allies, as in many other cases, some much worse than the one at hand - the near-genocidal Indonesian invasion and annexation of Timor, to cite just one atrocity still in progress, as always with the decisive support of the US and Britain.
In the post-Cold War period, the pattern continues without change. Since November 1989, four Security Council resolutions have been vetoed, two condemning Israeli human rights abuses, two condemning the US invasion of Panama. All were vetoed by the US, in one case joined by Britain and France, in another with Britain abstaining. The General Assembly voted two resolutions calling for adherence to international law, one condemning US support for its terrorist forces attacking Nicaragua, the other the illegal US embargo; the US and Israel were alone in opposition. A resolution opposing the acquisition of territory by force passed 151 to 3 (US, Israel and Dominica), another affirmation of the peaceful diplomatic settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict that the US has blocked for 20 years. Nothing here has anything to do with the Cold War, the Russian veto, or Third World psychotics. The tales about the UN have sometimes moved from merely misleading to outright deception, citing the cumulative total of vetoes from the 1940s but with the crucial matter of dates and circumstances suppressed so as to lend credence to the theses required by the propaganda system.

In accord with the pragmatic criterion, the use of force and terror is only a last resort. The IMF is to be preferred to the CIA and the Marines, if possible; but it is not always possible. Some of the new devices can be found in the Uruguay Round negotiations for a New World Economic Order, now in disarray because of conflicts among the rich, but sure to be revived in one or another form. Western powers call for ‘liberalization’ when it is in their interest; and for enhanced protection of domestic economic actors, when that is in their interest. The major concern of the US in the GATT negotiations was not so much agricultural policy as the ‘new themes’, as they were called: guarantees for ‘intellectual property rights’, removal of constraints on services and investment, and so on; a mixture of liberalization and protectionism, determined by the interests of the powerful. The effect of these measures would be to restrict Third World governments to a police function to control their working classes and superfluous population, while transnational corporations gain free access to their resources and monopolise new technology and global investment and production. The corporations, furthermore, are granted the central planning, allocation, production and distribution functions denied to governments, which suffer from the defect that they might fall under the baleful influence of the rabble. These facts have not been lost on Third World commentators, who have been protesting eloquently and mightily. But their voices are unheard - again, in accord with our traditional values.

We might also take note of the broad if tacit understanding that the capitalist model has limited application; business leaders have long recognised that it is not for them. The successful industrial societies depart significantly from this model, as in the past - one reason why they are successful industrial societies. The US became the bread-basket of the world and the greatest industrial power, instead of pursuing its comparative advantage in production of furs, because of state subsidy, investment, and protection - which, incidentally, increased sharply under Reaganite ‘conservatism’. The sectors of the economy that re-
main competitive are those that feed from the public trough: high tech industry and capital-intensive agriculture, along with pharmaceuticals and others. Departures are still more radical in most of the other state capitalist systems, where planning is coordinated by state institutions and financial-industrial conglomerates, sometimes with democratic processes and a social contract of varying sorts, sometimes not. Japan and its periphery are a familiar case, along with Germany, where, to mention only one feature, the IMF estimates that industrial incentives amount to a 30 per cent tariff. Some comparative studies of Latin America and East Asia attribute the disparities that developed in the 1980s in large part to the deleterious effects of greater openness to international capital markets in Latin America, which permitted huge capital flight, unlike East Asian economies with more rigid controls by government and central banks - and in the free market miracle of South Korea, by punishment up to the death penalty.

The glories of Free Enterprise provide a useful weapon against government policies that might benefit the general population, and of course, capitalism will do just fine for the former colonies and the Soviet empire. For those who are to 'fulfil their functions' in service to the masters of the world order, the model is highly recommended; it facilitates their exploitation. But the rich and powerful at home have long appreciated the need to protect themselves from the destructive forces of free market capitalism, which may provide suitable themes for rousing oratory, but only so long as the public handout and the regulatory and protectionist apparatus are secure, and state power is on call when needed.

The costs of the emerging world order will be obvious to anyone who surveys the immense catastrophes of capitalism in the past years, particularly the past decade, dramatically evident in the wreckage of the inner cities in the world's richest country and throughout the vast regions that have lone fulfilled their service function - though some sectors, linked to the rich men who rule the world, do very well for themselves. But the wealthy and privileged will not escape unscathed. The physical environment to sustain human existence is severely threatened as policy is driven by greed, and weapons of mass destruction proliferate in large measure because of great power interests. There are also growing conflicts among the three major power blocs: (1) German-led Europe; (2) Japan and its periphery; (3) the US and the trading and resource bloc it is seeking to consolidate in the Western hemisphere and the Middle East. In earlier eras, such conflicts led to global war. That will not happen in the present case, for two major reasons; the interpenetration of capital is far higher, so that state power has broader and more complex interests than in earlier periods; and modern weaponry is so awesome that only wars against weaker opponents can be contemplated.

We can make this prediction with complete confidence; if it is wrong, there will be no one to refute us. Such factors as these will shape the new methods for continuing the war against the Third World, now in a different guise and
with a more varied array of competing actors. Popular forces in the US and Europe have placed certain barriers in the path of state terror, and have offered some help to those targeted for repression, but unless they gain considerably in scale and commitment, the future for the traditional victims looks grim.

Grim, but not hopeless. With amazing courage and persistence, oppressed people continue to struggle for their rights. And in the industrial world, with Bolshevism disintegrating and capitalism long abandoned, there are prospects for the revival of libertarian socialist and radical democratic ideals that had languished, including popular control of the workplace and investment decisions and, correspondingly, the establishment of more meaningful political democracy as constraints imposed by private power are reduced. These and other emerging possibilities are still remote, but no more so that the possibility of parliamentary democracy and elementary rights of citizenship 250 years ago. No one knows enough to predict what human will can achieve.

We are faced with a kind of Pascal’s wager: assume the worst, and it will surely arrive; commit oneself to the struggle for freedom and justice, and its cause may be advanced.

Noam Chomsky is Professor of Linguistics, Massachusetts Institute of Technology. This is a shortened version of a paper given at a CIIR (Catholic Institute for International Relations) Conference in London, 18-19 January 1991.

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No Escape from the Laws of World Economics

Andre Gunder Frank

The artificial division of the world into 'capitalist' and 'socialist' does not correspond to the reality of contemporary world development; the real struggle is between the US, the EC and Japan, as the world is becoming increasingly divided into three or more blocs. But nothing can ensure independence from the process of world economic development and history: neither 'policy' nor 'ideology'. For all regimes, democratic and non-democratic alike, it is dependence within the global system which establishes the framework for policy and political practice. Even the 'choice of the people' is determined by economics. The development of political social democracy in the West has been much less the cause than the consequence of success within the capitalist world-economy. As long as the debt burden continues and mounts, the debt-ridden economies of the South will suffer and their democratic development be prevented or threatened. The same is valid for Eastern Europe's new or aspiring democracies. But freedom of the market does not equal democratic freedom: on the contrary, in the market it is 'one dollar, one vote', so that 'many dollars means many votes and no dollar - no vote'. In the absence of economic power or electoral political democracy, the people of Eastern Europe were obliged to organise themselves in grassroots social movements of participant democracy. In the South also, the economic crisis and lack of electoral political democracy obliges the people to organise and mobilise among themselves to create a civil democracy.

The material real world has disconfirmed many ideas and undone many ideals in recent years. Ideological positions right and left have been undermined and undone by the course of world economic events. Among these political ideological positions disconfirmed by economic reality are Francis Fukuyama's 'end of history'. The course of largely economically driven history shows that neither history itself, nor his and our ideas of history - even of democracy - are at an end. In particular, historical materialist reality in the past, present and, I fear, future belies Fukuyama's underlying position that 'the ideal will govern the material world in the long run'.

* Francis Fukuyama is a former deputy director of the US State Department Policy Planning Staff, now consultant to the State Department and the Rand Corporation.
The material evidence is that world economic forces beyond anyone's control reshape international and national political relations as well as local social movements to override all kinds of ideological notions from left to right. The real competitive struggle is in the world economy among, especially, the United States, Europe and Japan. The real competition is not the false ideological and political cold war between the United States and the Soviet Union. The erstwhile militarily and politically defeated enemies in Japan and Germany are winning the economic and technological competition in the world economy.

The more the 'superpowers' dedicate their resources, efforts, and ideologies to their respective military and political 'defence' against each other, the more defenceless do they render themselves against the real threats of world economic competition. The artificial division of the world into American-led capitalist and Soviet-led socialist political blocs is unreal. It does not correspond to the real arena of political economic competition or to the reality of the growing division of the real world into three or more economic blocs in the Americas, Europe and Asia. Ironically, as the Soviet challenge recedes, America turns to 'Japan bashing' instead.

Of course, if the supposed Soviet enemy had been able to beat Japan in world economic competition, there would have been even less reason to 'democratise' the regime there than there now is in Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) governed Japan. But as it turned out, Soviet economic failure made economic perestroika inevitable, and it in turn made political glasnost necessary.

**Free Market Capitalism vs Socialism**

Take capitalism, privatisation, the market, world market export promotion, and competitiveness. The current privatisation craze is just as economically irrational and politically ideological as the earlier nationalisation craze was. In and to the market, it makes very little difference whether an enterprise is owned privately or publicly; for they all have to compete with each other equally in the same world market. The only exceptions are public enterprises that are subsidised by the state budget and private enterprises that are also subsidised from the state budget and/or otherwise bailed out 'in the public interest'.

Moreover, public and private enterprises can make equally good or bad investment and other management decisions in the market. In the 1970s, (public) British Steel overinvested badly, and (private) US Steel underinvested badly. In the 1980s, both closed down steel mills over the public objections of labour. So did simultaneously the private steel industry in Germany under a Christian Democratic government and the public steel industry in France under a Socialist government. Privatising public enterprises now at bargain basement share prices that double the next week on the national stock exchange is just as much of a rip off as nationalising loss making enterprises above market value, or profitable enterprises with little or no indemnification.
This now-you-see-it, now-you-don’t game is all the more deceiving when enterprises in the East and the South are bought up with devalued domestic currency purchased (or swapped for debt) by foreign companies or joint ventures with foreign exchange from abroad. The whole privatisation sham debate is really far less about productive efficiency than it is about distributive (in)justice.

The currently fashionable ‘model’ of ‘private capitalist’ export production and world market success are the East Asian Four Tiger/Dragon NICs/NIEs (Newly Industrializing Countries/Economies) of South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore. To begin with, all of them owe their present economic position to political beginnings derived from the cold war for the first three and from racial/communal problems on the Malaysian Peninsula in the case of Singapore. Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong benefited enormously from American and other economic and political support as bastion outposts in the cold war. For political reasons, the United States enforced a land reform in Korea and Taiwan (as well as in Japan), whose redistribution of income became the basis of their domestic markets and initial import substitution. Only then could they launch their export led growth. Hong Kong and Singapore are city states, which benefit from large hinterland sources of labour and capital without having to share their political and economic burdens. In Korea and Taiwan, growth was heavily dependent, and in Singapore less so, on national state intervention and Japanese foreign investment. Neither was the case in Hong Kong. So the essential ‘magic’ of private capitalism in this ‘model’ is questionable at best.

Is export led growth (ELG) the essential answer, at least after an initial period of import substitution (ISI)? It is according to the gospel of the World Bank, the IMF, and their many spokespersons and followers. However, ELG has been the practice if not the model as well in other countries in Asia, notably the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, and then Thailand and Sri Lanka; yet without equal success. Lately the People’s Republic of China, or at least its southern and eastern coastlands, have gone in for the same ELG. Moreover, ELG was also implemented in Latin America, notably in Mexico which started this ‘model’ in the 1960s, and Brazil, Argentina, Chile and Peru, not to mention parts of Africa, like Tunisia and the Ivory Coast.

However, the Latin American ELG of the 1970s led to the economic disaster of the 1980s ‘lost decade’ (national product and income in 1990 is significantly less than it was in 1980) and the hopelessness of the 1990s (many countries experienced further declines in 1989, some by 10 and 20 per cent).

Perhaps, the exception is Chile (1989 growth was eight per cent), where the iron 17 year dictatorship of General Pinochet has left a growing export economy with a healthy balance of trade and payments, albeit with an impoverished majority of the population. However, the Chilean ‘success’ was not based on ELG of manufactures, let alone on their technological upgrading. On the
contrary, Chile tried and failed on that score, except for exporting cluster bombs to Iraq for use in its war against Iran. Instead, Chile succeeded in ELG based on the use and misuse of its natural and agricultural resources - which is precisely the 'development strategy' also imposed by the equally 'Chicago Boy/Friedmanite monetarist' Economics Minister Martinez de Hoz in Argentina. Yet he only succeeded in laying the basis for the worst depression and highest inflation in Argentina's history. So what is the model of success or failure, and how is one or the other implemented?

Take Eastern Europe, for instance. Its economies also failed for a variety of reasons, including the Soviet model emphasis on now outmoded heavy industry - and military economy - while the action was in high tech in East Asia. The East European economies have been bested even by the East Asian NICs/ NIEs. Of course, if the East European NICs had become, indeed even remained, more competitive in the world market than the East Asian NICs, they would have had no revolution of 1989.

So, whatever the agreements or disagreements about what the model of success is supposed to be, there now seems to be universal agreement on the model of failure: Socialism. The 'evidence' is in Eastern Europe, for all to see. But is it really? Also in the 1970s, the East European countries (and 'socialist' countries everywhere) switched from ISI import substitution to 'import led growth'. They now sought to fuel their growth by importing technology and capital from the West, which they intended to pay for by exporting the derivative manufactures back to the West and the world market. Actually, this import led growth (ILG) strategy of exporting manufactures to import technology by the East European NICs was only the supply constraint/scarcity economy version of the self-same ELG strategy of the demand constrained surplus economies of the East Asian and South American NICs, which imported technology to export manufactures.

Unfortunately for them - and for the peddlers of ideological models for success - the East European NICs failed, just like the South American ones did, and a few South East Asian ones to boot. No doubt, there were domestic reasons for all these failures as well as world economic ones. The latter, in a word, were derived from the world economy in crisis, which permitted only few successes to penetrate the protected and recessionary import markets in the West and the world generally. The 'solution' everywhere was to run up debts instead.

In the 1970s, moreover, the crisis which reduced domestic investment demand in the West made credit-financed exports to the South and the East all the more necessary and welcome. So the banks, awash with investible money, loaned and loaned. Debts piled up in the South American and East European NICs alike, and in some South East Asian ones, like the Philippines and Indonesia, as well. This debt economy prospered until the renewed recession in 1979-82 converted the 'solution' into still another problem.
However, all those who now find ideological comfort or even discomfort in the failure of ‘really existing socialism’ and the ‘success’ of world market export led growth should make the following comparisons among others with ‘really existing capitalism’:

- In the 1970s, the same export/import led growth strategies were adopted by Communist Party led governments in the East (Poland, Romania, Hungary) and Military Dictatorships in the South (Argentina, Brazil, Chile).

- In the 1980s, the same debt service policies on the IMF model were adopted and implemented by Communist Party led governments in the East (Poland, Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia) and by Military Dictatorships, other authoritarian governments, and their successor democratic governments in the South (Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Philippines).

The curious political irony is that ‘really existing socialism’ really failed, not least, thanks to the unsuccessful implementation of import/export led growth models and IMF style austerity policies in the East. Yet ‘really existing capitalism’ pursued the self-same models and policies in the South and in most of it failed equally. However, nobody in the West or East says so; and nobody in the South any longer has a plausible ‘socialist alternative’ to offer. Why was there a ‘change of system’ in (part of) the East in the face of failure, but none in the South in the face of the same failure?

So Jeanne Kirkpatrick was wrong when she said that ‘totalitarian’ countries in the East don’t change, while ‘authoritarian’ ones in the West do. No policy can yield independence from the world economy. For all are dependent, or interdependent as it is now fashionable to say, in one way or another even if some are more equal and (inter)dependent than others. History has demonstrated materially that even (temporarily) being a ‘superpower’, or adopting ‘socialism’ cannot offer non-dependence or independence from world economic development and history.

*A fortiori*, the ‘Third World’ cannot escape dependence, let alone by going into debt, which is only another expression and instrument of dependence in the world system. Therefore by the mid-1980s, I concluded that ‘delinking’ Third World countries from the ‘capitalist’ world economy, as I had advocated in the 1960s, is no longer a realistic policy. Moreover ‘liberation’ through domestic ‘socialism’ in Third World countries offers scarce alternatives; and the ‘socialist bloc’ cannot offer an alternative economic division of labour, which might support politically progressive regimes in these countries.

**Electoral Political Democracy for All?**

Does democracy ultimately mean the expression and implementation of the ‘will of, by and for the people’? Is it the democratic ‘ideal [that] will govern the
material world? Where and how then does a democratic electorate, or its elected government, govern the material world or even economic policy regarding it? In the mid-1970s James Callaghan and Jimmy Carter suddenly abandoned the economic policy promises on which they were elected.

Milton Friedman wrote a column entitled 'From James to Jimmy' counselling the latter to do like the former, but arguably more weighty material reasons than just Friedman's advice intervened to oblige this change of policy. For social democratic parties and governments elsewhere in North America and Western Europe did exactly the same: Pierre Trudeau in Canada, Helmut Schmidt in Germany, Francois Mitterrand in France (after his forced U-turn in 1981), Felipe Gonzalez in Spain, and the list could be extended. Indeed, Americans voted for Reagan, but not for Reaganomics, as all opinion surveys demonstrated. All these governments disappointed the electorates who voted for them and turned to implement Friedman's monetarism, but they did not do so just because of the governing power of his idea(s). It was material economic circumstances that governed and obliged the governments to implement anti-popular economic policies.

Was it any different in the 'socialist' countries before the arrival of democracy - or for that matter is it now that democracy has 'finally' arrived? Take Poland for instance. Why did the governments of the Communists Gomulka and Gierek, the Communist General Jaruselski and Solidarnosc's Prime Minister Mazowiecki all implement the same anti-popular policies? Indeed, Solidarnosc and the Communists proposed essentially the same weak economic reforms in 1981 before General Jaruselski imposed martial law on 13 December. Then, he lacked the political power to impose even the Solidarnosc sponsored reforms; because he was governing with martial law instead of the people's will represented by Solidarnosc! Where and what is the democratic expression of that will now that Solidarnosc is in power (or rather in government) and is forcing even more drastic anti-popular economic belt tightening on the population than the previous government? The dearest case of the failure of electoral popular democracy to govern the material world or to implement its own economic policy is, of course, in the Third World.

Where is the democratic governance of the material world or even of economic policy by and for the people of Argentina in the elected governments of Mrs Peron, the Junta generals from Videla to Galtieri, and the elected presidents Alfonsin and then Menem - all of whom implemented one economic austerity policy or another? All failed to satisfy both the consumer desires of the people and the producer development of the nation/country/state.

Why did they all follow essentially the same economic policies in the face of the same material economic circumstances? They all did so, because they had to. That is, they all had to do what 'the people' wanted, but what economic circumstances demanded. However, not simply the 'national' economy and its wealth or poverty places constraints on the exercise of the popular will.
No, it was and is first and foremost the dependence within the world economy which sets out the narrow margins of ‘democratic’ choice and policy. Little wonder - or is it much? - that our opening epigraph is right and that people behave like any normal democratic electorate and vote with their pocketbooks.

But to how much avail? Of course, there may be special avail in special circumstances. Thus, Nicaraguans freely voted against the war, offered by Ortega and Bush on the one side; and they voted for the money, offered by Chamorro and Bush on the other side. Let’s hope that the winning side now delivers the peace and money they promised. The Panamanian ‘elected’ and American installed President Endara went on a lenten fast/hunger strike in the attempt to get the money he says he was promised for his people. For first due to the embargo and then to the invasion, now Panamanians suffer from 50 per cent unemployment.

The people of the German Democratic Republic did indeed vote ‘Deutsche Mark uber alles’. The grassroots democratic social movement New Forum probably contributed more than anyone else to bringing down The Wall and bringing on the elections. However, they were soon thanklessly shoved aside by the move to unification, by the elections, and by the voters. It should have come as no surprise, especially after the election in Nicaragua, that East Germans abandoned first New Forum and then the Social Democrats (who were still leading in opinion surveys a couple of weeks before the election). The people voted freely and democratically - for Helmut Kohl, who had unscrupulously offered them the way to Deutsche Marks the fastest and the mostest.

Indeed, after the wall came down, a large majority of East Germans - like New Forum - still favoured independence. Reunification only became the issue of immediacy on both sides of the border after 2 - 3,000 thousand East Germans daily started to vote with their feet, or their Trabi cars, for the Deutsche Mark on the other side.

Even the exchange of East German marks for West German ones - and the conundrum of at what rate to exchange them - only became an issue, because the pressure of the East Germans’ economic demands threatened a fait accompli beyond anybody’s control. In a word - of our epigraph ‘economics is more important than nationalism or ideology’ in the whole process of the reunification of Germany (and of Europe). Had the East German economy not faltered in the 1980s, both absolutely and relative to that of West Germany, there would have been little movement of ‘democratic’ opposition against the regime. The wall and then the regime itself would not have come down.

There is indeed recrudescent nationalism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. The Balkans are threatened with balkanisation, which in living memory led or contributed to two World Wars already. Even rapid inspection affords the recognition, however, that immediately behind all this nationalism and ideology lurks the more important economics of it all.
The expanding and deepening economic crisis in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union contributed materially to the desire and ability of social (and also ethnic/nationalist) movements to mobilise so many people at this time for such far-reaching political ends. The course and (mis)management of the economic crisis generated shifts in positions of dominance or privilege and dependency or exploitation among countries, sectors, and different social, including gender, and ethnic groups within the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. All of these economic changes and pressures generated or fuelled social discontent, demands, and mobilisation, which express themselves through enlivened social (and ethnic/nationalist) movements - with a variety of similarities and differences among them. It is well known that economically based resentment is fed by the loss of 'accustomed' absolute standards of living as a whole or in particular items and by related relative shifts in economic welfare among population groups. Most economic crises are polarising, further enriching, relatively if not also absolutely, the better off; and further impoverishing both relatively and absolutely those who were already worse off, including especially women.

This change also generates resentments and mobilisation in both groups. The less privileged mobilise to defend their livelihood and its ravaging by 'the system' and by those who benefit from it through corruption or otherwise. Among readily identifiable ethnic groups, these include Turks in Bulgaria, Hungarians in Romania, Gypsies and others in Hungary, Albanians in Serbia, Serbians in Yugoslavia, Romanians, Azeris and a host of others especially in Soviet Central Asia.

However, the more privileged also develop resentments against the 'system', which obliges the richer to 'carry' or 'subsidise' at their own 'expense' their 'good for nothing' 'lazy' poorer neighbours. Moreover, these more privileged groups see even greener pastures for themselves on the other side of some socialist/capitalist or other border. Among these are many Russians, Armenians and others in the Soviet Union and especially the economically more developed Lithuanians, Latvians and Estonians.

**Freedom of the Market = Democratic Freedom?**

Most curious of all, perhaps, is the now fashionable identification of free market 'capitalism' and electoral political 'democracy' as though they were inseparable if not indistinguishable.

The 'successes' of the East Asian NICs and Japan have scarcely been associated with much electoral democracy. Japan has had elections, but the LDP has been unalterably dominant almost as long as the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) in Mexico. Moreover, the LDP and PRI factions do not reflect alternatives of political choice as much as of personal leadership. South Korea, Taiwan and Singapore have 'prospered' under completely authoritarian regimes, which are only now beginning to bend in response to economic success. In
Hong Kong, of course, there has been and still is no question or discussion of any kind of political democracy by either the near mainland Chinese or the distant insular British. At best, the Hong Kong Chinese themselves demand some democratic self-determination, if not by voting, then by leaving.

In the West, that is in North America, Western Europe and more recently parts of Southern Europe and Oceania, political social democracy has been much less the cause than the effect of economic success in the capitalist market - and importantly so in the world capitalist market. Countries in the West have been able to afford the precious luxury of electoral political democracy only where and when the basis of their economic wealth afforded it to them.

It is delicate and controversial to point out that their relations of ‘imperialism’ and ‘colonialism’ in the past and of ‘unequal exchange’ still today with the South have materially helped the West achieve and maintain its basic economic wealth, income, social democracy - and therewith also their political democracy. Unfortunately for them, the ‘socialist’ countries in the East were only very moderately able to benefit from such inflows of income from the South (the reasons for this failure have less to do with the inadequacies of socialist planning at home than with their inadequate insertion in the world market abroad).

As for the dependent South, it has of course, long suffered economically, socially and politically from the support that it affords to economic development and political democracy in the West.

There is little material basis if any to expect significant improvements in these economic-political relationships in the world economy in the foreseeable future. On the contrary, material development in the world economy is likely to make matters worse in the short and medium/long run. As long as the debt burden continues and even to mount in the near future, the debt ridden countries in the economies in the South will continue to suffer and the debt will continue to threaten their democracies. Alas, the same must be dangerously true in the new or aspiring but still debt ridden democracies of Poland, Hungary, Yugoslavia and elsewhere in Eastern Europe. Any financial arrangement à la IMF, or even the commercial terms for the proposed new European Investment Bank, can inevitably only maintain and aggravate these burdens and dangers - and extend them on to other parts of Central and Eastern Europe and perhaps the Baltic Republics.

In the medium run, parts of Central Europe (East Germany, Bohemia, Hungary, Slovenia) may well be incorporated into the ‘Common European Home’, but in a dependent position at the back of the ground floor where they will compete with the recently already incorporated parts of Southern Europe. Other parts of Eastern Europe (Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia, perhaps Slovakia) are more likely to be relegated to the basement, where they are likely to be less ‘Europeanised’ than ‘Latin Americanised’ or even to suffer ‘Lebanonisa-
tion'. Poland is already experiencing Latin Americanisation; and Kosovo, Transylvania, and the Transcaucasus are already threatened with Lebanonisation.

World economic material and labour saving long-run development is furthering marginalisation of ever larger parts of the Third World along the African way. However, industrial and agricultural progress and decline in the West are also marginalising growing parts of its population into racial, ethnic and other drug and crime ridden ghettos. Now that massive unemployment and even more accelerated regional differentiation and social polarisation is also coming to the East, the same kind of economic, social and political marginalisation threatens there as well. Indeed, in southern parts of Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, not to mention Western and other parts of China, this marginalisation is already making its mark.

Like money of course, electoral democracy appears very desirable, especially when one does not have any. Then it is easy to appreciate the coming of elections among multiple parties and a freer press to debate political and other options. This is particularly the case in the 'socialist' East, where oppressive Communist Party bureaucracies and often foreign domination have hamstrung economic development and political expression. Of course, the return of electoral democracy is also welcome in those parts of the South, in the Americas and southeast Asia, where military or other authoritarian regimes have run the economy into the ground and into a hole of debt. The human cost has been first tens of thousands of assassinations, disappearances and torture, and then increased hunger, sickness, infant mortality and crime. A whole generation suffers from tragically reduced life opportunities. However, the new democracies offer little hope to reverse this human tragedy.

In the face of this material real world history, some people may well wish to associate democracy with the free market and/or capitalism. For now in the East, this association is still one of hope for the future. However, in the South the association is one of bitter experience past and present. In some countries, the terrible state of the economy already again threatens the democratic state.

Unfortunately, the Poles are already experiencing the same bitter fruits of market/democracy (cum debt) as the Argentineans, Brazilians and Filipinos have in recent years. So it is hardly the case that market and democracy, or economic and political freedom, always go together. In fact, the opposite could be argued equally well. In an electoral democracy, it is one man (now, fortunately, one person), one vote. In the market, it is one dollar, one vote. That is, many dollars, many votes; no dollar, no vote.

Indeed, those who have or can earn only few or no dollars at home are marginalised not only from voting economically, but tend to be also excluded from voting politically. It is hardly accidental that the most marginalised poor vote the least in elections. In the United States they are 50 per cent, and the homeless have no residence and therefore not even the right to vote.
Similarly, those who have no or earn only few dollars abroad, but only pesos or zlotys at home, are also marginalised both economically and politically in the world system, unless they now have marks or yen. The yearly 'Economic' (really political) Summits of the Group of Seven (G7) offer a vivid illustration of this principle. They illustrate it all the more so, since the G5 only admit Canada and Italy into their circle by traditional noblesse oblige. Moreover, the charmed circle of real decision makers is limited to the G3 governments or central banks of only the United States, Germany and Japan, with even those of Britain and France on the outside looking in. What is worse, the market not only excludes the already dollarless from this political influence at home and abroad.

The operation of the market is also generally polarising to make the rich richer and the poor poorer - and thus even more marginalised. The Bible tells us that this is not a recent fact of life, when it observes that 'to those that hath, shall be given; and from those that hath not, shall be taken' even the little economic and political vote that they have. Of course, the market like a lottery does offer the opportunity to some, and the illusion to many, to win a better position in it, mostly through the exercise of some temporary monopoly power, legal or illegal, moral or immoral. That opportunity is what makes the market - and the lottery - so attractive to so many, including the losers. The latter, however, also have one other political option to press their case to be heard: they can and do mobilise themselves through social movements to exercise another form of democracy.

In the absence of political democracy in the East, people had massive recourse to civil democratic social movements to lay the basis for electoral party democracy in the first place. It would be tragic now to abandon the conquest of this civil democracy to the blessings of the exercise only of political democracy through political parties, which contest elections for a government to run the state (as best it can under the external and domestic economic constraints). Unfortunately, although all the New, Civic, and other Forum movements in the GDR, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary sought to maintain their identity and independence from the new political parties, they were soon overwhelmed by the electoral process.

For in the West and the South, civil democracy increasingly complements political democracy everywhere, precisely because of the limitations of the electoral process organised through political parties. Social movements arise and mobilise people for a myriad of economic, social, cultural and political causes and demands of the population, which elections and the government cannot provide or do not offer without the popular pressure exercised through this civil democracy. Indeed, it is again the economic crisis, especially in the South, which obliges people to organise and mobilise themselves in grassroots social movements of participant democracy and alternative production and distribution to defend livelihood and identity against the ravages of the economy and the neglect or domination by the state. Of course, as observed above, it
was also first and foremost the economic crisis in Eastern Europe and the
Soviet Union which fuelled the social movements to demand and achieve some
economic perestroika and political glasnost there. The need for the same or
other social movements acting in and through civil society will also remain
after the installation of elected governments based on political parties.

At the same time, such social movements in civil society, no less and often
more than political parties in government, will also represent regional and
ethnic or nationalist interests and demands. The best we can hope for is that
each will recognise the others’ equal right to existence within the political in-
stitutions of the state and the international community of states. The worst we
can fear, along with Fukuyama, is that ethnic, nationalist, and chauvinist groups
will go into renewed armed battle with each other in another process of bal-
kanisation, which threatens us all.

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This article is greatly reduced from a comprehensive argument which appears
in full in ENDSpapers 21, available from Bertrand Russell House, Radford Mill,
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Perestroika, the Soviet Union and the Third World

Igor Belikov

The process of dramatic and contradictory change in the Soviet Union, 'Perestroika', has been accompanied by unprecedented and vehement debates on a broad range of political ideological and economic issues. These debates have involved not only fundamental domestic issues but to no less extent the interpretation of world developments and relations between the Soviet Union and other countries. Among the many issues that have come under critical scrutiny and revision are previous views and policy outlooks on the Third World.

In the early stages of this ideological and political state the initiative belonged to Gorbachev. He formulated a set of approaches and ideas on domestic and major international problems which was labelled 'new political thinking'. With regard to the Third World the 'new political thinking' emphasised the global nature of the problems of developing countries, their complexity, specific characteristics and the differences of Third World societies from both 'the world of capitalism' and 'the world of socialism'. It also stressed the danger of regional conflicts for international security and the necessity for their peaceful solution through cooperation of 'all interested parties' on the basis of 'balance of interests'. Despite existing contradictions, it was argued, a tendency towards the growing interdependence of all parts of the world permeated international political and economic relations. The Soviet Union, stated the Soviet leader, did not stand for the break-up of 'historical ties' between the developing countries and the West.

The 'new political thinking' made no reference to opposition of two paths of development in the Third World: pro-socialist and pro-capitalist. On the contrary, political and ideological pluralism was acknowledged as the foundation of the contemporary world at large, including developing countries. 'Each system, state, political force - I.B. - preserves its own philosophical, political and ideological views.' At the same time, the Soviet leader repeatedly criticised 'neo-colonial exploitation' and the 'unjust' mechanisms of international economy which 'makes the rich richer and the poor poorer'. He also reiterated Soviet support for national liberation movements. The most important was that these ideas were not turned into new sacred teaching but admitted interpretations which could vary within a wide range. In the new ideological and
political climate, mass media and academics no longer confined themselves to commenting on official formulations but went beyond them.

The first point on which this newly-born intellectual pluralism manifested itself was the problem of socialist orientation (non-capitalist development) in the Third World. For a long time the concept of socialist orientation has not been just a scholarly theory but an essential element of Soviet ideology and foreign policy.

Since its emergence in early 1960s it was assigned the task of substantiating the vision of national liberation movement as an integral part of 'the world revolutionary process', the main content of which was 'the transition from capitalism to socialism on a global scale'. Regimes which had opted for socialism were proclaimed as a vanguard of development in the Third World. Their experience was extolled as the only way to the quick and successful solution of development problems. The concept of socialist orientation was immune to any criticism. Its main texts could be commented upon, but their verity could not be put in question. No wonder that this concept, as well as the experience of the regimes which had proclaimed their adherence to socialism and Marxism-Leninism, now became a field of vehement and bitter debate. The results of the historical experience of the USSR and the other countries of 'real socialism', the critics argue, disproved the presumed socialist nature of many of their structures and institutions. *Lendemain qui chante* has turned out to be a system politically repressive and economically and socially ineffective. Yet it is the 'real socialism' model that the orientation concept was based upon; therefore, its principles are no longer valid. Radical regimes which took steps at radical transformation along socialist lines, exponents of the new critical vision point out, were also guided by the 'real socialism' principles to a great extent. Their experience has not lived up to expectations in terms of progress. They face the same or even worse problems than the regimes that pursued other socio-political strategies. Their emphasis on ideology and political factors and their adherence to scientific socialism, the critics conclude, have provided no tangible advantages.

The advocates of the socialist orientation perspective admit at most the possibility of some minor 'corrections' in the traditional approach. They see in the 'deeper understanding of Marxist-Leninist theory', its 'purification from Stalinist distortions' and 'creative application' the way out the present crisis. However, these prescriptions are quickly losing their credibility! For the critics, the experience of the Soviet Union and of radical regimes serve as arguments in favour of new parameters for the understanding of progressive development in the Third World. The assumption underlying their position is that instead of dichotomising capitalist and socialist elements and principles in political, economic and social fields, priority should be accorded to universal developmental mechanisms. These are said to include: the formation of civil society - political democracy which provides all classes and social groups with the ability to express openly and to defend their interests; the establish-
ment of self-sustaining and self-regulating economic mechanisms on the basis of market relations and competitions; pluralism of all forms including private property, real autonomy and economic unity; further integration into the international division of labour and world economy; the search for mutually advantageous forms of cooperation with foreign capital, transnational corporations and international financial institutions (IMF, World Bank).

Another issue, now the subject of intensive debate, is the perception of capitalist development in the Third World. The conclusion of the early 1960s that capitalism is a system 'historically doomed' and 'genetically alien' to the Third World, the critics persistently argue, has been disproved by reality. In the post-colonial period capitalism developed both in depth and in scale. Certainly, it is not the case that the process of capitalist development in the Third World is progressing smoothly and without contradiction. These contradictions and unevenness can be explained by the specific environment in which capitalism develops, the results of which can no longer be treated as the deepening of a 'vicious circle of dependency and underdevelopment'. A number of developing countries have demonstrated tremendous socio-economic achievements in the last two decades. The Soviet Union and other 'real socialist' countries have to learn from their experience and development strategy. The development of capitalist relations is not only an irreversible reality for the overwhelming majority of Third World countries, the partisans of critical approach maintain, but constitutes a form of historical progress.

A new approach is also expressed with regard to the relationship between the 'advanced capitalist countries and the Third World'. Many Soviet writers now argue that the direct involvement of transnational corporations and transnational banks in the economy is an unescapable necessity for all developing countries and that their activities, together with those of international financial institutions, contribute to narrowing the gap between North and South. A more critical and sober view is being formed of the progress towards a New International Economic Order (NIEO). The collapse of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA), whose principles were very close to those of NIEO, has clearly demonstrated the counter-productiveness of efforts to ignore the 'unjust' rules and mechanisms of international economy in favour of artificial, 'just' ones. There is no longer unanimity among Soviet writers on the notion of neo-colonialism. A considerable number of them argue that the characterization of the current relationships between developed and developing countries in terms of neo-colonialism is no longer correct and creates in the latter a psychology of looking for foreign scapegoats for their own blunders, and of neglect of the problems of domestic economic development, together with a passive expectation of 'miraculous changes' after victory over the external enemy through political means.

The above mentioned changes in perceptions and assessments of Third World developments have generated differences in Soviet academic political circles and public opinion regarding the prospects of relationships between the So-
viet Union and developing countries. For the most orthodox exponents of the traditional policy outlook, the basic principles of relations between the Third World should remain virtually intact. The Soviet Union should continue its support to developing countries on major international issues, as well as its anti-imperialist rhetoric and keep close ties with radical regimes as its important allies. This view now is that of a clear minority. For more flexible supporters of continuity, changes should be carried out in economic relations with traditional partners in order to make them more effective and 'more mutually beneficial' and economic cooperation with new partners in the Third World should be encouraged. Soviet assistance enabling the survival of friendly regimes should be maintained, though with some gradual cuts it is recommended that political ties are developed on a less ideological basis. A certain softening of support to the radical demands of developing countries, their anti-imperialist rhetoric and the emphasis on independence between North and South is envisaged.

The cornerstone of this policy outlook is the belief that the Soviet Union and the Third World have a set of substantial and long-term common interests that should not be jeopardised by hasty reapproachment with the West.

There exists, however, a third substantially different approach to this issue. The current trend to focus on the economic aspect of international relations which decreases the importance of military, political and ideological factors and relates to the deepening economic crisis in the Soviet Union, its promoters say, requires radical changes in Soviet-Third World relations. They insist on the need to stop all Soviet military supplies and to cut economic aid to a minimum level. The Soviet Union, they claim, 'cannot and should not be a “guarantor” of regimes in developing countries which do not enjoy wide social support and are unable to defend themselves.' Soviet obligations and presence in the Third World should be reduced to actual available capabilities. For the future, they stress, the Soviet Union should be very careful and must evade establishing relations of close partnerships, let alone those of alliance with developing countries (even the regimes of socialist orientation), if they risk overburdening its resources or stimulating tension in relations with the West. For some writers, radical changes in Soviet-Third World relations are viewed as a part of the revision of the very nature of Soviet foreign policy. They call not only for peace with the West all over the world, but for the resumption of 'the values of European civilisation'. What is advocated, in fact, is not a mere political cooperation, but the integration of the Soviet Union into the community of 'civilised countries' with consequent changes in the approach to the Third World.

As to President Gorbachev, he seems to be truly dedicated to his belief in the possibility of involving the Third World in building a new, harmonious global community, based on 'universal human values'. Changes in favour of more economic pragmatism and de-ideolisation in relations with developing countries are admitted, but they are viewed as a long-term process, a task which is
to be achieved through a number of stages. A radical shift is apparently thought to damage Soviet image and interests too heavily. However, the pressure in favour of radical change is very strong. This approach has the broad support of public opinion. Intensive propaganda by the Soviet media of Soviet large-scale and disinterested 'internationalist aid' has finally produced a backlash. For many ordinary people, 'wasting of our money on sluggards abroad' is seen as one of the reasons for the current deep economic crisis, their sufferings and misery.

So, the issues of the Third World are now vehemently debated in the Soviet Union. To a great extent however, the Third World serves as a background for ideological conflicts on key issues of domestic Soviet politics. The time for a balanced and dispassionate analysis centred on the Third World itself is yet to come. And this may take some time.

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Agriculture and Food Security in the GATT Uruguay Round

Kevin Watkins

Launched in 1986, the General Agreement on Tariffs & Trade (GATT) Uruguay Round of international trade talks has been dominated by a confrontation between the US and the EC over farm policy reform. Both sides proclaim their commitment to devising a GATT regime which will bring an end to the anarchy in world agricultural markets, yet neither is willing to address the underlying cause of the present malaise: structural over-production in their own farm sectors and the resulting accumulation of surpluses. The use of export subsidies to put these surpluses on to world markets caused developing countries severe trade and food security problems in the 1980s; and a Uruguay Round deal is unlikely to bring any relief. What it will do, however, is introduce new regulations which, enshrined in international trade law, will restrict the right of developing countries to manage their own food systems. Most importantly, the use of trade measures to control food imports and price support measures to promote staple food production could be severely constrained, or banned, by a ‘farm superpower’ GATT agreement.

During the 1980s the international agricultural trading system experienced its deepest and most protracted crisis since the Great Depression. Prices for the main temperate food staples fell to their lowest levels in real terms since the 1920s, farm budget spending in the industrialised countries spiralled and trade conflicts, notably between the US and the EC, became flashpoints in a fast disintegrating liberal multilateral trading order.

It was against this background that agricultural trade reform emerged as the most pressing, and most divisive issue on the agenda of the GATT Uruguay Round. It is an issue which has been dominated by the US and the EC. The US, espousing an aggressive free market ideology, has attempted to use the GATT as the multilateral extension of domestic farm policies adopted in the mid-1980s. These have been aimed at consolidating its market domination through the use of a variety of direct and indirect subsidies to dump farm surpluses on to world markets. Under the GATT regime advocated by the US, farm protection would be phased out globally, thus removing barriers to US export dumping. Theoretically, US farm legislation would also be subject to GATT rules and 60 years of interventionist policies, inaugurated by the New Deal, reversed. In practice, however, it is unlikely that Congress would pass the necessary
legislation (especially in areas such as dairy and sugar production, where an uncompetitive US relies on import quotas). For its part, the EC has argued for a GATT settlement which will protect its share of world agricultural markets, allow for increased protection in key areas, reduce budgetary pressures and, as a bottom line, leave its Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) intact.

Last December, differences between the US and the EC over farm policy reform forced the suspension of the Uruguay Round. After four years of deadlock the talks appeared destined to collapse. Such an eventuality remains possible, though unlikely for three reasons. First, both the US and the EC recognise the threat which a GATT breakdown would pose to an already chronically unstable world trading system. Second, they are unlikely to jeopardise agreements in other areas, especially in the negotiations on investment, services and intellectual property which are of vital interest to the multinational corporations that have dictated US and EC GATT policy from the outset. By contrast, agriculture is of marginal economic significance. Finally, negotiating rhetoric has obscured the very substantial areas of agreement between the US and the EC over farm policy reform. Talks now under way in Geneva and the frenetic CAP-reform debate launched since the December summit are likely to bridge remaining differences and set the scene for a GATT deal.

This has important implications for developing countries. Having been treated as extras on the stage during the negotiations, governments in the South will have to live with new GATT rules extending, for the first time, to the regulation of agricultural policy. One of the paradoxes of the Uruguay Round is that industrialised countries, in which farming accounts for less than 5% of GDP and employment, will be using the GATT to dictate farm policies to countries in which agriculture typically accounts for over two-thirds of employment and 25% of national income. Another is having implemented protectionist policies for some 60 years, the US is likely to succeed in severely constraining the right of developing countries to protect their food systems through GATT.

**Origins of the 1980s farm crisis**

The agricultural trade crisis of the 1980s can be traced to the tendency of production in the industrial farming systems in the US and Europe to outstrip domestic and international demand growth.

In the US, farm policy makers have grappled with this problem throughout the post-war period. Under the New Deal, which provided the framework for future farm legislation, it was envisaged that government payments to farmers to remove land from cultivation (land set-aside), coupled with tight controls on imports, would prove sufficient to support farm incomes without excessive budgetary expenditure. These price support mechanisms failed. While land set aside reduced cultivated acreage, farmers were given an incentive to maximise output on their remaining land by increasing the application of chemicals and other inputs; surpluses mounted. By the 1960s, structural over-
supply and corporate grain exporting interests, notably the Cargill corporation, had forced a shift in policy emphasis away from supply control and towards aggressive export promotion. The Public Law 480 concessional food sales programme was designed, in the words of one commentator, as 'the Trojan Horse of commercial agricultural trade', opening third world markets and creating long-term dependence on US farm surpluses. By the mid-1970s, the US share of world cereals trade had reached over 60% - more than double the level two decades earlier and overseas demand accounted for over a third of US cereals output; third world demand accounted for some 40% of total cereals exports.

From the late 1960s, the US's domination of world markets came under challenge from the EC where high guaranteed price support under the CAP, allied to technological advance, prompted huge productivity gains and production surpluses. These were dispersed on to the world market, normally with the help of hefty export subsidies. As in the US, productivity gains and rising self-sufficiency were associated with increased capital intensity, a sharp decline in the number of farmers and a parallel rise in average farm size. Because government subsidies have rewarded virtually unlimited farm output, rather than supported farm incomes, they have been concentrated on larger farmers. Recent estimates from the Commission indicate that around two-thirds of CAP price support subsidies are allocated to the largest 10% of farmers.

During the 1960s and 1970s, US and EC farm surpluses were absorbed, admittedly amidst growing trade frictions, by the expansion of world agricultural trade. Third world import demand was the most dynamic force behind this trade expansion, growing at double the rate of OECD demand. However, conditions changed dramatically with the onset of the debt crisis in the early 1980s. Rising self-sufficiency in key Asian markets, including India, Pakistan and Indonesia, and falling oil prices further constrained import demand. Agricultural trade growth averaged slightly over 1% per annum for the first half of the 1980s compared to 5% in the 1970s. US exports were especially hard hit because of dollar over-valuation and debt problems in key Latin American markets. Between 1980 and 1986, the US world market share in wheat and coarse grains fell from 55% to 36%. Farm output in the US and the EC, insulated from world price trends by price policies designed to maximise productivity, continued to rise despite the changed external market conditions. From 1980-1987, agricultural production in Europe and North America rose at double the rate of increase in domestic consumer demand. The result: an inevitable accumulation of surpluses and a severe price depression. By 1986, world cereals reserves, held mainly in the US and the EC, had climbed to 316m tons - equivalent to a quarter of global consumption, or two-and-a-half times annual world trade volume. With world prices declining, the costs of supporting farm incomes rose to impressive levels. In the US, 1986 farm budget expenditure stood at $30bn, or ten times the level in 1980; in the EC it had doubled to over $22bn in the space of three years. Amidst growing tensions between Community member-states, the 1986 Fontainbleu Agreement raised the VAT contri-
butions needed to finance the spiralling CAP budget.

The crisis in world markets was compounded by a radical shift in US farm policy. In the early 1970s, the Nixon Administration had attempted to scale down federal farm income support by linking US farm prices to those prevailing on the world market. It was possible briefly to realise this objective because the high world prices prevailing during the food crisis of 1973 made Deficiency Payments unnecessary.

Under the 1985 Farm Act, the Reagan Administration adopted a modified version of the Nixon strategy under radically different market conditions. Government market intervention prices, or Loan Rates, were cut by a third and the costs of supporting farm incomes transferred to federal budget Deficiency Payments. At the same time, corporate grain exporters, now able to purchase cereals at prices substantially lower than their costs of production, were given subsidised access to surplus stocks through a $5bn Export Enhancement Programme. By the end of 1986 some $18bn of income supports and direct subsidies, was being used to export rice, wheat, feedgrains and cotton - double the market value of the crops themselves.

The Reagan strategy, continued under the Bush Administration, sought to enhance the competitiveness of US grain exports and, by depressing world prices (a by-product of US world market domination), to discourage production elsewhere. The main rhetorical target was the EC, with Agricultural Under-Secretary, John Block, graphically describing the 1985 Act as an attempt to 'squeeze the CAP until the pips squeak.' In the event, the EC matched US surplus dumping dollar-for-dollar despite growing internal strains. But the Farm Act was also targeted against developing countries. It was envisaged that flooding world markets with cheap grains through commercial food dumping rather than food aid, would discourage food self-reliance and reinforce dependence on US cereals, seen as essential to both US trade interests and farm income maintenance. Republican Senator Rudy Boschwitz, one of the key architects of the Farm Act, defended the cut in domestic farm prices and attendant rise in federal income support payments by arguing:

*If we do not lower our farm prices to discourage these developing countries from aiming at self-reliance now, our world-wide competitive position will continue to slide... This [discouragement] should be one of the foremost goals of our agricultural policy.*

One of the main US objectives in the Uruguay Round has been to secure a GATT system which, by restricting the rights of developing country governments to protect their food systems, will enable this policy of 'discouragement' to succeed.

**Impact on Developing Countries**

Even before the 1980s, developing country agricultural exporters were adversely affected by US and, increasingly, EC farm policies. This was especially
true following the accession of the UK, formerly one of the world's largest cereals importers, to the Community. With the introduction of Community preference, guaranteed farm prices some 30% higher than existing levels and the implementation of the CAP's variable levy, an import tax insulating farmers from world competition, Britain became a net exporter of cereals in the 1980s. Traditional suppliers, such as Argentina, highly dependent on Community markets were ousted. True, CAP distortions created market demand in some new areas. For instance, in animal feed substitutes - such as soya and cassava - imports boomed because GATT rules prohibited their protection, while CAP market supports priced domestic cereals out of the market. However, these loopholes were swiftly filled - normally to the disadvantage of developing country suppliers. In the early 1980s, for instance, cassava supplied by Thailand and Indonesia was subject to 'voluntary export restraints', while US soya imports have been left unregulated.

Import substitution under the CAP was followed by surplus disposal, normally with the help of hefty export subsidies. In the cereals sector the Community was a net importer of 25m tons of cereals in 1976; ten years later it was exporting 19m tons. In the case of sugar the turnaround was even more dramatic, thanks to a sharp increase in the volume of output subject to guaranteed price support. From a position of self-sufficiency in the mid-1970s, the Community is now the world's largest exporter, transferring over 4m tons - equivalent to a third of domestic production - on to world markets.

The use of export subsidies to bridge the gap between internal CAP support prices and world market prices has severely depressed world market prices, and hence the foreign exchange earnings of rival exporters. It has been estimated that CAP export subsidies in cereals and sugar depressed world prices by between 10% and 16% in the early 1980s and also helped reduce world sugar prices to their lowest ever levels contributing to the collapse of the International Sugar Agreement. Export subsidisation has also reduced developing country market shares in most temperate farm products.

Impact on Developing Countries: Sub-Saharan Africa

The impact of US and EC farm policies on sub-Saharan Africa has been contradictory. Under the Lomé Convention, a number of countries in the region have benefited from privileged market access (in the form of quotas negotiated under the Beef Protocol and the Sugar Protocol), and guaranteed prices set at near CAP-supported levels. This has provided beneficiaries with a substantial rent. However, the picture is complicated by the price depressing effects of subsidised EC exports on the residual world market, and on regional markets. Thus Mauritius and Tanzania, which export over 90% of their total sugar exports to the EC under the Sugar Protocol, have made substantial net gains. But Zimbabwe, which exports 85% of its sugar exports to non-Community markets, has probably suffered net losses. Similarly, while Botswana and Zimbabwe have been major beneficiaries of the Beef Protocol, they have also had to contend with the dumping of EC beef surpluses in regional markets.
Arguably more important is the impact of US and EC farm surpluses on staple food production and regional food self-reliance. Over the past two decades there has been a substantial transfer of consumer preference, in much of the developing world, towards imported wheat and rice and away from local root crops and coarse grains, such as millet and sorghum. Wheat and rice imports, boosted by rapid urbanisation, have risen by over 6% per annum for some two decades in sub-Saharan Africa, while per capita staple food production has stagnated, or declined, in many countries. While the net effect is complex, subsidised commercial food exports combined with food aid has fostered this shift in consumer tastes and fuelled sub-Saharan Africa's chronic food import dependence. Low priced imports depress local staple prices, exclude domestic producers from expanding urban markets and depress investment in staple food production.

The onset of US-EC farm trade hostilities in the mid-1980s compounded both the trade and food security problems of developing countries. Inevitably, the major Latin America and Asian exporters were the worst hit. Argentina, according to one study, lost some $3bn per annum in the mid-1980s as a direct consequence of the 1985 Farm Act and EC export dumping - a sum equivalent to half of annual debt service repayments at the time. But sub-Saharan Africa did not escape unscathed. The price depressing effects of US maize dumping in southern Africa, for instance, forced the Zimbabwean Grain Marketing Board to cut producer prices from $109t to $60t in 1986, and to set reduced ceilings on quantities purchased.

Efforts to promote domestic food self-reliance also suffered a severe set-back. At the height of the 'farm war', both the US and the EC were dumping wheat in Mali and Burkina Faso at prices as low as $60t with the help of export subsidies in excess of $110t. Production and marketing costs for comparable local grains were reported at around $100t. An International Fund for Agricultural Development complaint about the impact of EC beef dumping on its projects, neatly summarised the unequal competition between peasant producers and the treasuries of the North:

*Imports of subsidised beef, mainly from the EC, pose a considerable obstacle to the viability of IFAD projects in the meat sector. All meat prices in Togo are influenced by these subsidised European imports, whose landed prices are about $1200t at a time when world prices are over 80% higher . . . and the equivalent price for live cattle from the Sahel region about $1500t.*

These examples illustrate the disincentive effects of commercial food dumping. Even in sub-Saharan Africa, these have been far more significant than food aid (which represents some 25% of total imports on average) in terms of its effects on local food markets. Yet while there is an extensive literature on the impact of food aid, the impact of commercial export subsidisation have received little attention. This partly explains why African researchers and governments alike have shown little interest in the Uruguay Round farm negotiations.
The Uruguay Round

In May 1986, at the Tokyo G7 economic summit, the industrially advanced countries acknowledged the serious problems facing world farm trade. Four months later, a comprehensive mandate for addressing the problem of reform was agreed at the GATT ministerial meeting which launched the Uruguay Round. This recognised an urgent need to bring more discipline and predictability to world agricultural trade by preventing restrictions and distortions, including those related to structural surpluses, so as to reduce the uncertainty, imbalances and instability in world markets.

The Uruguay Round was to devise trade and farm policy rules to achieve this goal, bringing agriculture under the auspices of effective GATT rules.

Agriculture and GATT

No framework for addressing this task existed since the US, ironically in view of subsequent experience, effectively removed farm policy from the GATT's remit in the 1950s. When the original treaty was drawn up in 1947, the US insisted that the general ban on quantitative import restrictions should not extend to imports of agricultural commodities for which domestic supply management measures (land set-aside) existed. Even this did not go far enough to satisfy Congress, which in 1951 passed legislation subordinating GATT obligations to domestic farm policy. Four years later, the US was granted a waiver from any GATT obligations covering import restriction on farm produce - the assertion of national legislative sovereignty over multilateralism was complete.

Attempts to extend the GATT prohibition on export subsidisation suffered a similar fate. With concessional sales accounting for around a third of cereals exports by the late 1950s, the US was unwilling to countenance the extension of the GATT's export subsidy prohibition, adopted in 1955, to farm policy. Instead, it succeeded in negotiating a weak and unenforceable code requiring governments not to use subsidies to gain 'more than an equitable market share of world trade.' In the early 1960s, the EC took advantage of the GATT's nonexistent agricultural rules to gain acceptance of the CAP.

By the early 1970s, the paramount US interest had changed. Having designed a GATT system tailored to prevent infringements on an essentially inward-looking farm income support policy, that system now appeared as an obstacle to US farm exports. The loss of markets in the EC and emergence of the Community as a major trade competitor heightened the Nixon Administration's concern to create a new regime restricting the authority of governments to control imports. But the Community steadfastly refused to subject farm policy to GATT negotiations, let alone to GATT rules designed in Washington. The fragile buoyancy of world agricultural trade averted crisis in the 1970s, but by the early 1980s the trade deficit, coupled with the deepening crisis in world agricultural markets, increased the political stakes in the GATT for the US.
Having identified agricultural exports (probably incorrectly) as one area in which the US retained a competitive advantage - service and high technology industries being others - a GATT system capable of removing impediments to farm trade became one of the major strategic trade objective's under the Reagan administration. This was especially true after the passage of the 1985 Farm Act, which needed improved market access to turn domestic price cutting and export subsidisation to good effect.

In its initial GATT submission, the US called for a ‘zero option’ agreement: the phasing-out of all subsidies, other than those which did not provide a production incentive, over a ten year period. The US position was endorsed by the Cairns Group, a coalition of 14 self-styled ‘fair traders’ spanning the GATT’s traditional North-South divide. The Cairns countries also demanded a freeze on trade barriers, coupled with specific commitments on improved access. Subsequently, the US repackaged the ‘zero option’ by introducing a demand for an end to all direct export subsidisation in five years. Deficiency Payments, the main form of US export subsidisation, were not included on the grounds that they constituted a form of general income support. By contrast, EC export restitutions, which bridge the gap between EC and world market prices, were to be completely outlawed.

Faced with what amounted to a demand for abolition of the CAP, the EC reverted to GATT arguments of the 1970s. The ‘two-tier’ premises of the CAP (a supported internal price insulated by external prices by a variable levy and export subsidies) was, it proclaimed, a non-negotiable aspect of European unity. As an alternative to the free market, the Community proposed a twin-track approach. In the short-run, international commodity agreements would be used to raise world prices; in the long-run, a carefully phased subsidy reduction - though not abolition - would be negotiated. The commodity agreements would have protected the EC’s market position in cereals and dairy produce, and reinforced its domination of world sugar markets, while reducing the costs of CAP support. The Community also demanded GATT recognition of its right to ‘rebalance’ the CAP, trading-off subsidy cuts in surplus sectors (cereals and dairy) for the right to raise protection in sectors characterised by low self-sufficiency (oilseeds and animal feeds). These divergent starting points led to deadlock. The final US-Cairns negotiating position, tabled before the failed December summit, called for 75% subsidy cuts within ten years combined with a more heavily weighted reduction of export subsidies.

After seven crisis meetings in the Council of Ministers, and amidst growing tension between member-states, the Community offered cuts of between 10-15% over five years, prompting a walk-out by the US and Cairns countries. Since the Brussels meeting, the EC has moved towards accepting a compromise proposal it rejected in Brussels. Drawn up by the Swedish farm minister, Mats Hellstrom, this calls for cuts of 30% by 1996. Like the US proposal, the Hellstrom text also calls for heavier cuts in direct export subsidies; and like the US proposal it does not include Deficiency Payments as an export subsidy.
From the US standpoint, the advantage of the Hellstrom plan, apart from its conveniently selective approach to controlling export dumping, is that it would provide for an interim settlement. While falling short of the 75% Brussels demand, it would leave the way open for deeper subsidy cuts after 1996 - allowing a period for the CAP to implode under the weight of its financial contradictions and political constraints. In Europe, the Council of Ministers has accepted the need for even more stringent price cuts which are likely to fall in the range envisaged by the Hellstrom paper. Coupled with a possible restructuring of the CAP towards US-style Deficiency Payment supports, this could provide the framework for a settlement. There has also been movement towards a deal on the thorny problem of rebalancing. The Community has now offered to exclude US soya from import prohibitions, raising the prospect of more stringent market access conditions for developing country suppliers of soya, cassava and, more marginally, groundnuts.

Implications for the South

Developing countries have a major interest in seeing the introduction of GATT rules to outlaw subsidised over-production and export dumping. But there is little prospect of such rules emerging from the Uruguay Round. This is partly because of the false premises on which the farm trade negotiations have been based. Essentially, it has been assumed that surplus production can be eradicated by reducing government agricultural subsidies, and hence prices. While textbook economic theory might suggest this is a common-sense approach, experience suggests it is unlikely to succeed. In the EC, farmgate terms of trade (prices as against the cost of inputs) have fallen by a half over the past decade, and especially sharply since the introduction of the 1988 'stabiliser' mechanism. Yet productivity has continued to grow, and cereals, dairy and beef surpluses are now almost at their record 1985 levels. Similarly, the falling real farm incomes in the US since 1985 has failed to stem the tide of over-production despite record farm bankruptcies.

Part of the problem, is that technological advance has compensated for price cuts, especially on the largest farms. Another, is that in a market where prices are tending to fall over time, producers can only increase their margins by lowering their unit production costs at a faster rate, typically by applying ever-increasing quantities of industrial inputs - the so-called 'treadmill' thesis. Sicco Mansholt, the CAP's founding-father, has persuasively argued that both trends are reinforced by the side-effects of bankrupting the most marginal farmers. As small producers leave the land their holdings are often brought up by larger, more capital intensive operators able to increase productivity through greater economies of scale (this has happened in the UK dairy industry in recent years). The result: fewer farmers but more surpluses. Biotechnological innovation, especially in the cereals and dairy sectors, will reinforce these trends by enhancing the capacity of the most-capital intensive farms to counter the impact of price cuts in the 1980s. All of which explains why the EC Commission has warned that, current price cuts notwithstanding, cereals output is
projected to rise to 190m tons by 1995 compared to the record 160m tons of 1986.

Effective GATT rules on the dumping of farm surpluses would alleviate many of the problems faced by developing countries. Such rules, outlawing the sale of commodities at prices lower than their cost of production, already apply to manufactured goods, and there is no reason why they could not be applied to farm produce. However, neither the US nor the EC are likely to countenance a ban on dumping in the face of pressing surplus disposal problems. During the Uruguay Round, they have done little more than attempt to devise rules heavily weighted towards acceptance of their own methods of dumping. For instance, the US has consistently refused to acknowledge that its Deficiency Payments constitute *de facto* export subsidies. The fact that they enable farmers to produce at market intervention prices set, in the case of cereals, around a third below average costs of production has been ignored. So, too, has the fact that over 40% of the production supported is exported. By signalling its intent to move towards the US system, the EC, working on the 'if you can't beat them join them' principle, will create its own genre of GATT-friendly surplus food dumping. The net result is that developing country exporters and food producers will continue to face competition on world and local markets from the treasuries of the North. This is part of the reality behind the rhetoric of the 'level playing field'.

**Special and Differential Treatment**

While there is little prospect of effective GATT constraints on the farm policies of the North, the same is not true for the South. Under existing GATT rules on *special and differential treatment*, developing countries are not required to reciprocate industrialised country liberalisation measures 'inconsistent with their development, financial and trade needs.' At the opening of the Uruguay Round and the April 1989 Mid-Term Review, this commitment was reaffirmed. However, the industrialised countries, led by the US, are committed to phasing out special treatment for all but the poorest developing countries, and even then applying it only on highly conditional terms. This would transform the GATT into an extension of the World Bank-IMF system, with the force of international law and the threat of retaliation used to secure market liberalisation and financial deregulation.

If the direction of the farm trade talks is an effective barometer, the industrialised countries appear likely to succeed in this endeavour. In its initial 'zero option' paper, the US made no distinction between farm subsidies in the North and those in the South, all would have to be phased out over a ten year period. A subsequent paper paid lip-service to the principle of *special and differential treatment*, but in substance provided only for extended adjustment periods for the poorest countries. The more advanced developing countries, or those with competitive agricultural export sectors (the Cairns countries), would be expected to comply in full. While stressing the special circumstances of the farm
sector, largely for self-interested reasons, the EC has not dissented from the US position on the treatment of developing countries.

This approach raises important questions about the balance of obligations in the GATT negotiations. As recently underlined by a major Ford Foundation study, many developing countries, including a number in sub-Saharan Africa, have introduced sweeping liberalisation measures in the context of structural adjustment programmes. Yet these count for nothing in the GATT bargaining process. By contrast, the industrialised countries have become increasingly protectionist over the past decade, and have shown no signs of reversing this trend during the Uruguay Round. The Multi-Fibre Arrangement, which sets arbitrary quotas on Third World textile exports, is likely to survive the Uruguay Round, as are the trade barriers against tropical products exports. Especially damaging from a sub-Saharan African perspective has been the absence of any industrialised country commitment to phasing out escalating tariffs, import taxes which rise with the degree of processing (and hence value-added) undergone by commodities and hence discourage investment in manufacturing. According to UNCTAD, the combined offers of industrialised countries on tropical products will bring the South as a whole gains of less than $1bn, and losses to sub-Saharan Africa in particular (because tariff liberalisation will erode preferences under the Lomé Convention). Elsewhere, both the US and the EC have sought to institutionalise existing non-tariff measures (such as anti-dumping actions, voluntary export restraints, 'safeguards'), while the Community has argued for a GATT code which will allow it, in blatant contravention of the GATT principle of non-discrimination, to target specific developing country suppliers.

Food Policy Sovereignty

The asymmetry of GATT negotiations aside, it now appears clear that the US will succeed in securing an agreement which severely restricts developing country food policy sovereignty. Under the Hellstrom proposals, developing countries would be required to cut agricultural subsidies by between 15% and 30%, with an extended adjustment period of five years for the least developed. They will also be required to ensure minimum levels of market access for food imports, and undertake not to introduce new trade measures to reduce the proportion of market demand supplied from overseas - a recipe, in other words, for continued food dependence.

Turning to trade policy, a GATT text drawn up by the former chairman of the agricultural negotiating group, Art de Zeeuw, and accepted by other industrialised countries as the basis for a long-term agreement, summarises the obligations of developing countries as follows:

*Developing country assistance to agriculture . . . shall be exempt from . . . reduction commitments . . . provided that (1) it has no, or a minimal, effect on trade, and that (2) it does not act to maintain domestic prices at higher than free-at-frontier prices for like products.*
Such a provision, were it to be enshrined in the GATT, would effectively outlaw measures designed to raise food self-sufficiency through price support and import protection. It ignores the fact that ‘free-at-frontier’ prices are effectively dumping prices, set by commercial subsidies and food aid, which bear no relation to costs of production. On these grounds alone, there is a case for protection on anti-dumping grounds (witness current US and EC recourse to anti-dumping legislation to control South Asian electronics imports). The de Zeeuw proposal on agriculture would also appear to conflict with the rights of all countries under GATT rules to protect ‘infant industries’ although a particularly strong case could be made for the protection of sub-Saharan African staple food producers on such grounds.

But the real objection to the de Zeeuw proposal is political. Surely there is something fundamentally amiss when countries which spend some $260bn annually in supporting the incomes of a relatively small farming population, in which agriculture has been the most heavily regulated economic sector for over 50 years, and in which radical farm policy liberalisation is not even on the political agenda, dictate food policies to countries which tax their agricultural producers and face chronic food shortages and problems of malnutrition. The US argument that governments will remain entitled to provide ‘decoupled’ budgetary support to farmers, apart from being inherently contradictory (what type of subsidies do not influence production decisions?), is as irrelevant to sub-Saharan Africa as it is politically unacceptable in both the US and the EC. The simple fact is that developing country governments, most of them dependent on agriculture for their revenue base, do not have the financial resources to support incomes through budgetary expenditure.

Some indication of what might be expected under a new GATT regime has already been provided by the US response to the 1988 Nigerian ban on US wheat imports. Having threatened retaliation against Nigerian textile exports to the US, the Bush Administration has warned that it will use a Uruguay Round settlement to outlaw the ban and secure the free import of US wheat into the country (formerly the US’s largest market). Other marketing arrangements which would fall foul of the reformed GATT would be intervention buying of the type practised by the Zimbabwe Grain Marketing Board (which has paid producers a premium over world prices), tariffs (such as those on rice in Gambia) and quotas (used to restrict rice imports in Niger). Whatever the virtue or failings of these policies, the use of the GATT by the US to prise open developing country food markets raises profound questions about policy sovereignty and food security; questions which have yet to figure on the Uruguay Round agenda.

Alarming as the US abuse of the multilateral system enshrined in the GATT may have been, the response of African governments to the threats posed to the food security of their populations can only be described as inept. For the most part, they have been concerned to ensure that a GATT liberalisation deal will not result in higher food import prices. Thus Morocco, Egypt and Tunisia
have pressed for an industrialised country commitment to the creation of a fund to facilitate commercial food imports and/or enhanced food aid. This reflects the political commitment of governments in the region to maintain cheap food imports to urban consumers and, more especially, government officials and the military. However, apart from the misplaced development priorities and class interests which such 'cheap food' policies reflect, they are premised on a profoundly mistaken view of the market effects of any Uruguay Round agreement. For reasons already outlined, such GATT agreement is unlikely to end over-production and surplus dumping by the North, thereby raising world prices. The real problem faced by food importers in the 1990s will not be high world prices (International Wheat Council projections suggest a protracted price depression is the more likely prospect). As in the 1980s it will be a lack of hard currency and, in the case of sub-Saharan Africa, competition for food aid from the Soviet Union. An additional problem, which will arise if the US succeeds in its GATT agricultural reform objectives, will be international trade rules prohibiting efforts to achieve greater food self-reliance.

Only the Jamaican Government, belatedly supported by Mexico and India, has consistently fought against the US's position. It has called for GATT rules which recognise a fundamental distinction between subsidies in the North (which finance over-production and cause world market distortions, which should be subject to policy disciplines), and subsidies designed to increase food self-reliance, protect rural employment and promote ecologically sustainable farming (which are properly matters of national policy sovereignty). While a growing number of sub-Saharan African governments - including Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Madagascar - have now endorsed this demand, it is likely to prove too little too late.

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Further Reading


Concern over the diversion of aid and investment funds away from Africa to Eastern Europe is valid but there is a tendency to see those changes as significant for Africa only in so far as they affect its relationship with the West. Their primary significance should be sought in the implications for African-Eastern European relations, which have been of such importance in shaping contemporary Africa. The most profound danger of political change in Eastern Europe is the implicit threat to an alternative moral vision - that of socialism. The shortcomings of 'actually existing socialism' require critical evaluation, but so too do the implications of the rapid transformation currently taking place, not only to understand better what has happened in Eastern Europe but also to appreciate the similarities and differences between Eastern Europe and Africa. In Africa, perestroika has preceded glasnost, raising the question as to whether regimes in which free markets are being promoted, often by repressive means, can open up politically; in Eastern Europe the issue seems to be whether the delicate, newly-democratised regimes and their unruly civil societies will tolerate or survive austerity. But while Eastern Europe is part of Europe and will undoubtedly be further integrated into Western capitalism, Africa, already marginalised, may well suffer further marginalisation.

Commentaries on the likely consequences of Eastern Europe for Africa have tended to emphasize above all the diversion of potential aid and investment funds from Africa and Latin America to Eastern Europe. It is felt that the investment of billions of dollars that would be required to revive Eastern European economies (not to mention that of the Soviet Union) and to consolidate democracy may occur primarily at the expense of Third World countries. Furthermore, what aid will be available may be subject to stricter conditionality. In addition, both the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe are entering a period of profound involution, with their economies and politics in deep crisis or transition, and are unlikely for the foreseeable future to play a significant aid or foreign policy role. Gorbachev has recently made it clear that there are going to be deep cuts in the Soviet foreign aid programme. The reasons for this are not simply economic; considerable popular resistance and even resentment have emerged within the Soviet Union against foreign aid when severe domestic economic and social problems have not been addressed.
Nevertheless, this way of looking at the problem sees the transformations in Eastern Europe as significant for Africa only insofar as they affect the relationship of Africa with the West - specifically access to Western loans and credits rather than any intrinsic relationship that Africa might have enjoyed with Eastern Europe itself. While this view is understandable, it is nevertheless mistaken, at least in the nature of its emphasis. One should insist that the primary significance of the political changes in Eastern Europe should be sought in Africa’s relations with the countries and regimes in that area, as well as with the world order evolved as a result of the emergence of the zone of socialism after the Second World War. Furthermore, it should be sought at least as much in the intangible world of politics, diplomacy and power as in the tangible one of economics.

**African/Eastern European Relations**

In several areas, relations with Eastern Europe have helped profoundly in shaping contemporary Africa. First, the achievement of independence in Africa was tied structurally to the new world order, central to which was the emergence of Eastern Europe to socialism. African states as we know them today were incubated within the Cold War, and it is inconceivable that without this new world order the emergence of Africa to independence, though ultimately inevitable, would have been anywhere as rapid, politically momentous or strategically significant. By their emergence after the War as a counter-hegemonic bloc - coincidentally as African nationalism was entering its decisive phase - the socialist countries had a profound impact on the speed and direction of development of African nationalism. And if the Cold War helped directly or indirectly to speed up the process of negotiated decolonization, it was an absolute prerequisite for what Istvan Kende has termed the ‘principal type of contemporary war’, the revolutionary wars that liberated Angola, Mozambique, Guinea and Zimbabwe. Such wars, fought almost exclusively in the Third World, were an altogether new type of military phenomenon which allowed small, lightly armed irregular forces to stalemate and frequently defeat much larger and more powerful conventional armies.

Second, it was within the political, ideological, diplomatic and military spaces created by the Cold War that the new states fashioned their strategies of survival and development, the accumulation of diplomatic influence abroad and political expansion at home. This situation endowed Africa with much greater diplomatic influence than might otherwise have been the case. By allying with the socialist countries in the United Nations and other global forum, the newly independent African countries in particular helped to redraw the geopolitical map, turning the diplomatic tables on the former Western colonial powers. With the change in international alignments, Africa might expect to face a diplomatic deflation potentially as great as the economic recession.

Third, and most important, socialism provided a powerful alternative paradigm of rapid, autonomous non-capitalist development which profoundly
influenced African countries, socialist as well as non-socialist, and their intellectuals and planners. For African countries coming to nationhood in the late 1950s, and their leaders and youth, Soviet scientific achievements exercised a powerful attraction. The names of Soviet astronauts were household words in many African countries. I recall well the long and vociferous arguments in my elitist, conservative and starchily English high school in Ghana in that period, between students extolling Soviet power and the Soviet path, and those advocating the 'American way'.

Costs of the Cold War

On the other hand, of course, the Cold War had serious costs for Africa, and for better or for worse it is these negative aspects that are most likely to be recalled: the militarisation of continental and national conflicts, which festered endlessly because neither side possessed or was allowed a decisive military advantage; regimes that were politically and administratively weak acquired and came to rely disproportionately on military capability; regimes as diverse as Zaïre and Ethiopia, sustained by foreign patrons, refused to reach the necessary accommodations with their national populations. The emergence of undemocratic regimes, sustained by the Cold War and autonomous from and unresponsive to domestic society, was undoubtedly the most important and perverse result of the Cold War for both Eastern Europe and Africa. Economic waste from investments for which the rationale was more strategic than economic and doctrinaire experiments in agriculture and industry did much damage to African countries on both sides of the ideological divide.

In retrospect, of course, it is not only Africa that 'gained' from the Cold War. Harrison and Prestowitz have underlined the extent to which US economic transfers and concessions to Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea, motivated by military and diplomatic considerations, were responsible for the economic 'miracles' in those countries which have now come to undermine the economic hegemony of the United States (IHT, 9 July 1990). In contrast, the Cold War had much more military and political rather than economic significance for Africa, and the benefits have proved both more ambiguous and less sustainable. It is entirely symptomatic of the limits and the decline of Africa's relationship with the socialist countries that the significance of the changes in the socialist zone should be seen not in terms of the loss of the benefits of association with Eastern Europe itself, but rather in terms of how it might affect Africa's dependency relations with the West, as well as in the ironic emergence of the socialist bloc itself, previously the example of self-reliant development, as a co-competitor with Africa for Western charity.

Impact of Eastern European Revolutions

Nevertheless, the real significance (or at least valuable aspects) of the changes in the socialist countries for Africa should not be lost sight of. A more holistic
A review of African political economy approach is needed if we are to evaluate meaningfully the full political and geopolitical costs and benefits of the Eastern European revolutions. The first result is clearly the redrawing once again of the geopolitical map and closure of the spaces within the international environment which African countries and other small nations had exploited to advance domestic as well as foreign policy strategies and objectives. The loss of Africa’s own geopolitical significance is reflected in the sudden deflation of the regional conflicts which had raged on the continent, some for well over a decade. If not peace, at least peace efforts have broken out all over the continent. Military and ideological deflation have gone hand in hand, the latter seen in the renunciation of communist ideology by several regimes and in the precipitate schemes of political liberalisation by client regimes on both sides of the political fence. The dictatorial and often bankrupt regimes which had survived by playing the geopolitical card Mobutu in Zaire, Mengistu in Ethiopia and above all the apartheid regime in South Africa find themselves suddenly high and dry, deprived of the foreign support which had sustained them, and anxious to negotiate with their opponents even to initiate schemes for multipartism. The winding down of the Cold War and the political revolutions in Eastern Europe may potentially have their most profound influence on the political terrain in Africa, and in the restructuring of the balance of power between states/regimes and their civil societies. If Stalinist dictatorships have been dissolved, why not their peripheral appendages? Or as The New York Times (July 1990) suddenly enlightened, argues from the other side of the fence, ‘Why Support Africa’s Ceausescus’?

While this is undoubtedly to the good, there should be no illusions that the unequal and uneven character of global perestroika, which has left US and NATO power intact and at the same time created conditions for unilateral interventionism (Panama, the Gulf, drug wars) and for reviving America’s hitherto declining power, necessarily constitutes a reliable foundation for peace. For Africa, the new order may prove politically and diplomatically costly. Now that Soviet interest in Africa has declined, the West can also afford to wind down its interest. With the rapprochement between NATO and the Soviet Union and conscious efforts at concerting their interests and actions, the space for small and Third World nations to manoeuvre between the powers is greatly reduced; for ‘dissident’ Third World nations it is difficult to find alternatives to mending their fences with the United States. There is the danger of the emergence of a North/South political and diplomatic polarization replacing the old rivalry between NATO and the Warsaw Pact. In the United Nations, the danger of the ‘... newly united superpowers using it for their own purposes, ignoring Third World concerns...' is already emerging (Wall Street Journal, 20 August 1990).

The problem is not only political and diplomatic but also military, and again springs from the uneven nature of global perestroika. As Malcolm Chalmers warned recently, if East-West arms control measures do not extend to the Third World, new powers could dramatically narrow the military gap between the North and South, at least in part through a ‘cascading’ to the region of arma-
ments banned or rendered surplus in the North by arms control decisions. In that case, the West may find itself devoting considerable resources to counter threats emanating from sources other than the Soviet Union (Toronto Star, 5 August 1990). This warning preceded by a few days the invasion of Kuwait. Following Iraq’s actions, the alleged danger from ‘potential Third World aggressors’ is being used as a new justification to hold the line on defence spending (Wall Street Journal, op.cit.).

In the same vein, this new order threatens to foreclose (or at least limit) the possibilities for cultural, ideological and political diversity in a democratic and pluralistic world order. While one might wish to argue that the decline of ideology inaugurates an era in which each nation can follow its own path to development and democracy, unfortunately this is not likely to be realized in practice. Claims of the final triumph of bourgeois rationality and of the ‘end of history’ do not portend tolerance for alternative pathways to social development. No longer preoccupied by national security considerations, Western donor countries are pushing aggressively (if opportunistically) for ‘democracy’. The open resort to political conditionality may well preempt distinctive local paths to democracy. If anything, we may be looking at a new (if peaceful) era of hegemony based on liberal and Western cultural values. Whatever its merits, political conditionality is likely to prove particularly controversial and unpopular in Africa more so perhaps than in Eastern Europe with its more explicitly ‘bourgeois’ revolution. Western efforts to dictate the form and speed of democratization to usurp, in other words, the role of determining local political change while overlapping to some degree with the aspirations of democratic movements in Africa, is yet likely to come into conflict with local sentiment and could prove counter-productive.

**African Socialism**

It has often been argued that in addition to discouraging the development of ‘democracy’, the Cold War had prevented African regimes from developing ‘pragmatic’ indigenous development strategies. This argument rests on a number of mistaken assumptions, among them the denial of ideological and normative originality to African socialism/thought systems, and a misunderstanding of the nature and extent of the influence of Soviet ideas. African leaders, particularly socialist ones, have always attempted to articulate African and local traditions to world-historical movements and ideas and will continue to do so given their awareness that any truly indigenous or autonomous development is precluded by the nature of the global system. In fact, to the contrary, the existence of an alternative world system facilitated some creativity and latitude in how this task was to be approached. This ideological and normative creativity, flourishing (however controversially) within the spaces afforded by the existence of the great world systems, may now be closed off in favour of a rigid neoclassical orthodoxy. The most profound effect of the political transformations in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union in my view is
the erosion (at least for the meantime) of an alternative moral vision of development, one which the socialist countries sought rhetorically to epitomize but which they in the final analysis betrayed.

On the other hand, popular support for the Communist Party in South Africa, and the continuing potency of Marxism as a tool of intellectual and political analysis in African educational institutions, demonstrates the autonomous character of ideological currents in Africa. Although the general notion of socialism in Africa was inspired in part by Eastern Europe, it should be stressed that African socialisms were always diverse in character, often indigenous and 'pragmatic' in inspiration and action and in most cases not closely related to Soviet forms. The problematics and general decline of socialism in Africa cannot simply be put down to developments in Eastern Europe or explained on the same grounds. In any case, most African Marxists have retained a fundamental distinction between Marxist socialism and 'actually existing socialisms' in the Soviet bloc. Nevertheless, as official ideology, 'socialism' in its various guises has been decisively hurt by the events in Eastern Europe. There is also no doubt that these events will reinforce perceptions in certain quarters in Africa that socialism is both 'foreign' and unworkable, and may make more difficult and dangerous the teaching of Marxism in African universities (a development which, unfortunately, will hardly be unique to Africa).

Lessons of Eastern Europe

For the reasons outlined above, it becomes possible to appreciate the significance (and even traumatic character) of the political education for Africa resulting from the events in Eastern Europe. The first lesson was the apparently fragile and ephemeral nature of the socialist hegemony in Eastern Europe and the Soviet heartland itself, a hegemony that most Africans, socialist as well as nonsocialist, had considered unassailable. On the contrary, what was revealed was the shallow roots of the communist regimes in civil society.

Second, and no less surprising, was the speed with which the socialist countries, and in particular the Soviet Union itself, plunged into conditions ominously reminiscent of the economic and political conditions of underdevelopment. Africans may be shocked at the economic situation in the Soviet Union, as I was while in Moscow this summer; even after living through sharply deteriorating economies in Africa, the state of the Soviet economy still came as a surprise, as did the prevalence of Third World-like conditions in many areas of Soviet national life. Still, for many Africans the most unpleasant surprise may have been the apparent dissolution of the mighty Soviet federation into ethnic and national chauvinism, religious fundamentalism, and civil war. No less distressing has been the feebleness of the superpower Soviet state in confronting these challenges and defending the hegemony of socialism and of the institutions of the Soviet state, particularly at its non-Russian periphery. Throughout Africa, the conviction had existed (even among those who had no sympathy for socialism) that Soviet socialism and state power had solved the prob-
lem of ethnicity and national chauvinism. Among African Marxists, Lenin's thesis on 'The National Question' has long been cited as the correct response to the nationality problem. The record of the Soviet Union on the issue of nationalities was of considerable symbolic significance. Socialism, even and non-discriminatory national development, political autonomy of the nationalities within the Soviet federation, and worker and peasant solidarity - these were the elements of the model. Perhaps in this area as in others, too little distinction was drawn between Lenin's formal thesis and the actual practices of the Stalinist state toward the nationalities. Instead of socialist democracy, principles of multinational integration and non-racial fraternity, were centralism, internal colonialism, Russian chauvinism and Stalinist repression what had kept the federation together?

Related to this, thirdly, is the insight that these events have given Africans into the nature of civil society in Eastern Europe. The stripping away of the veneer of the communist regimes has laid bare a quite different civil society than the ones that Africans had come to expect from the rhetoric of the regimes. The swing to the political right by the new Eastern European regimes, disquieting evidence of fascism, anti-Semitism, right-wing national chauvinism, and the haste to repudiate 'progressive' domestic and international policies, have come as a source of concern to many Africans. While the domestic orientation of these new regimes may be considered to be their business, their international orientation in particular the resumption of relations with Israel, accelerated Jewish migration into Israel, declining support for liberation movements from the ANC to the PLO, withdrawal of safe haven for 'terrorists' has significantly affected the balance of global power for Third World countries. Particularly in the Middle East it has made even more remote the possibility of a settlement (although other factors in the region have since overshadowed these actions in significance). In South Africa, nationalists have complained with what accuracy I cannot confirm of East European migration into the apartheid state. A quiet shift in Soviet policy on Southern Africa also appears to have occurred; after a meeting at the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Moscow in June, colleagues of mine working in the southern Africa area emerged distressed at the new position of the Soviet government, which they said echoed the position of the de Klerk government, particularly on what the Soviets saw as the 'ethnic' issue.

While many Africans may find disappointing this rupture with the principles of socialist internationalism, the reasons for it are easy to understand. However 'progressive' the old regimes may have been on the international front, they were undemocratic and, it is now clear, simply did not speak for civil society. What the political events of 1989 revealed, more than anything, was the striking distance between these regimes and civil society, between states that were in essence sub-imperial and societies that remained national. This is something that Africans should not only be able to understand but respect, since it is in many ways analogous to their own national political situations. It could be claimed permitting a little conceptual license that in Africa, no less
than in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, developmental dictatorships had degenerated in a process of 'orientalization', in which strong states had clamped themselves on weak and subordinated civil societies. Beneath the political facade of orientalism, however, society had survived, resilient and remarkably unreconstructed. In the face of this nonresisting resistance, the historical project of the autonomous, bureaucratized political leaderships had wilted and decayed. The final outcome of the peaceful capture of the enervated state and bureaucracy by resurgent civil society in a democratic revolution in Eastern Europe is a potent lesson that could be repeated in Africa and elsewhere in the Third World. But to those (particularly in the West) who would, as a result of these revolutions and a weariness of 'high politics', romanticize 'civil society' in the abstract, the contradictions revealed within East European society by the lifting of strong state power should prepare them to tolerate in Africa also what *Time* has aptly described as the 'return of the demons'.

**Problematic Transitions**

Ironically, at the very moment when Africa and Eastern Europe are drawing increasingly apart on international issues, their domestic agendas - the common struggle for economic recovery, democratization, and national reconciliation and consolidation have never been closer. One could argue that both Africa and Eastern Europe are involved in a similar contemporary enterprise, which is to demonstrate whether development is possible with democracy, and hence could end up profoundly influencing each other. However, the two have commenced at opposite poles of the process, raising interesting questions as to the more appropriate point of departure for this journey, and making even more vital an exchange of ideas and experiences. In Africa, it has been *perestroika* before *glasnost*, raising the question as to whether increasingly market-based adjusting regimes in which repression has been used to facilitate the transition to markets can turn in mid-stream to democracy. In Eastern Europe, the issue appears to be the other way round: whether the delicate, newly democratized regimes and their somewhat unruly civil societies will tolerate or survive austerity. In both, however, it is likely that the final product of these transitions in spite of the attempts of external forces to read their own agenda into them will take distinctive national forms each a renaissance in its own right rather than be a verification of the final triumph of liberal reason. It is possible that in Eastern Europe, where strong common elements in the transition (de-Stalinization, de-Russification, demilitarisation) are combined with the powerful influence exerted by the alternative hegemony of the EEC, there may be somewhat greater uniformity in the outcomes (although given the ongoing struggles between the opposing ideologies of democratic liberalism, populism, and right-wing nationalism, even the shape of these outcomes cannot be predicted with confidence). It is certainly safe to say that Africa's political revolutions, occurring at a distance from the hegemonic centres and lacking a similar cohering logic, may take more diverse paths.
Nevertheless, it is also obvious that Africa and Eastern Europe are attempting these transitions from different locations in the post-Cold War order. Situated in the historic heartland of Europe, in the newly proclaimed 'common European homeland', the former socialist countries are tied integrally to the security of Europe. The more industrialized of these countries, such as East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland, command a skilled, disciplined and cheap labour force, relatively developed infrastructure, and highly capitalized national assets. With their proximity to main European markets, they represent attractive centres of investment, even relative to the periphery of the EEC. These already more developed former socialist economies may be expected to benefit disproportionately from Western investment, widening the existing gap between themselves and the less developed ex-socialist economies and creating yet another line of stratification in Europe, while also crowding Third World migrants, not only among their European neighbour but in North America as well. In this respect, as in others, Africa, already at the bottom of the international totem pole, is being pushed yet further down. In any case, the bottom line is that after four decades of advocating the 'liberation' of Eastern Europe, the NATO powers cannot afford to let Eastern Europe fail. As anyone with a sense of history should know all too well, failure in this historically volatile area could have grave consequences for European security (not to mention the reputation of 'capitalism' and 'democracy' world-wide). Africa, on the other hand, can safely be ignored.

Those who see this vested interest in Eastern Europe being played out at the expense of Africa and the rest of the Third World are of course absolutely right. It is not only Third World countries that are being further crowded out of the world economy; in Western Europe and North America, Third World migrants, never particularly welcome, find themselves losing ground to migrants from Eastern Europe. Nevertheless, this is only part of the story. Their common agenda makes it more than ever necessary that Africa and the former socialist countries of Eastern Europe re-establish some form of dialogue and solidarity. New points of common understanding and alliance will over time arise, conditioned no doubt by the self-interest of small, culturally distinct nations to preserve their right to some autonomy and self-direction. Such conversations might not initially be as easy as one might think; intriguingly, civil society in Africa and Eastern Europe never talked directly to each other even when they were getting along. Contact almost always involved official intermediation, rarely including ordinary citizens on either side. For this reason, on both sides, at the level of the ordinary citizen the relationship ended and could not have helped but end in mutual ignorance and incomprehension. But this can be overcome.

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Salim A. Salim on the OAU and the African Agenda

Adotej Bing

On 11 October 1990, Salim Ahmed Salim, the Secretary General of the Organisation of African Unity, delivered the inaugural Africa Centre Lecture in London on 'The OAU and the African Agenda in the 1990s'. The issues he raised are likely to occupy African minds throughout this decade and perhaps beyond. This article gives an account of them but also offers a commentary on their implications.

Ending Apartheid

Not surprisingly the first issue was apartheid. Salim began by noting that a process of change was manifest in South Africa which needed to be consolidated. He reminded his audience that it had taken 27 years of military and economic pressure to get the National Party Government to start talking about the possibility of dismantling apartheid. Their commitment to or conception of change were, as yet, insufficient for Africa to abandon the weapons that had brought things to this stage.

Economic and Political Integration

In a survey of the priorities and achievements of Africa in the first decade after decolonisation, he noted that in 1960 there were only nine independent African countries but that by 1970 there were 41. In the first decade, roads were built, schools and hospitals constructed and a large number of doctors, engineers, teachers, and other professionals trained. By 1980, 71 per cent of African children had access to primary and secondary school. These priorities he argued were wholly appropriate, given the condition in which liberated Africa found itself.

Bing: At Independence, Tanzania had 12 African civil engineers, eight telecommunications engineers, nine vets and five chemists.

Yet the wealth which allowed these successes did not continue beyond the 1960s. Africa has had to confront a difficult reality. In the late 1980s the number of African countries categorised as 'least developed' increased from 21 to 28; another two are about to be added. The number of illiterates in Africa
increased by 21 million between 1962 and 1985. IMF and World Bank spon-
sored Structural Adjustment Programmes, even where they have produced
impressive economic performance indicators have not improved living condi-
tions and have been very severe on the poor, who have become poorer in the
process.

Partly in response to the continuing poverty of Africa but in continuation of
the agenda outlined by the likes of Nkrumah and Nasser immediately after
independence, Africa has been taking economic integration more seriously.
'Regional groupings' such as the Economic Community of West African States
(ECOWAS), The Maghreb Union, The Southern African Development Coordi-
nation Conference (SADCC), and the East and Southern Africa 'Preferential
Trade Area' (PTA), represent, Salim Salim argued, the building blocks on which
future integration of Africa would be built. A draft Treaty for an African Eco-
nomic Community has now been completed and will be submitted to the next
Assembly of African Heads of State in Abuja, Nigeria in June 1991. It is hoped
he said, that once adopted this document will trigger a process leading to the
economic integration of the continent. Many had questioned Africa's ability to
unite but, he observed, the history of Europe was replete with examples of
conflict and divisions: tribal, imperial, national, religious and linguistic. None
of these however had stood in the way of European integration.

African countries also would forge closer links with one another on the basis
of shared interests. An important factor in determining the prospects for inte-
gration is the success Africa achieves in dealing with inter- and intra-state
conflict, which in recent years has resulted in five million refugees and 12
million displaced people, with disastrous consequences for personal security
and economic performance. He warned that the process of integration would
require massive resources.

**Bing:** The question, as with all initiatives presented by Africa's ruling classes to date, is that they appear to stand or fall on support from the 'international community'. But should the integration of Africa depend on the solidarity of the 'international community'?

**Africa and Europe**

In this context Salim Salim spoke at some length on the different responses of
Western Europe to the events in Eastern Europe and Africa. It quickly moved
to set up a bank to channel funds to the countries of Eastern Europe, but has
repeatedly refused to countenance requests for a 'Marshall Plan' for Africa.
The disposition of good will in the world to the problems of Eastern Europe
raises important questions. The fundamental difference in the approach of the
West Europeans, Americans and the Japanese to the East European recon-
struction is not the function of private capital but of political direction. This is
the qualitative difference. For decades Africa and the rest of the developing
world have been calling for a new economic order which would facilitate the
flow of resources to the countries of the South. The West has not only refused
to accept the principle of resource flows, it has, with a few happy exceptions,

even reneged on its promises of official development assistance targets.

Bing: The cynical observer cannot help wondering why Africa's bourgeois and petit
Bourgeois nationalists still insist that the European bourgeoisie must play the good
samaritan when there have been precious few, if any, indications of their interest in

this role in the past, present or future. This continued ambivalence towards self reli-
ance on the part of Africa's ruling classes is especially alarming when Africa is

becoming increasingly marginalised as a result of important changes in the world

order.

But as Salim Salim pointed out, even without the collapse of 'actually existing
socialism', the dynamic of economic and political union in Europe was al-

ready signalling important changes in the world order. As a result of this, an
increasing number of decisions both inside and outside Europe were and are

being taken on the assumption that the European Union Express will soon be

arriving at la gare Delors. Of course the events in Eastern Europe have added

another dimension to this process, not least because they have made possible

the unification of Germany.

When the dust settles, the new world political order will be composed, at its

core, of three large capitalist blocks (a) the EC, Eastern Europe and possibly

Russia, (b) the USA and Canada and (c) Japan. At its periphery will be all of

South America, Africa and the rest of Asia. Each dominant metropole element

will more or less have its own periphery to the South. Bilateral imperialism

will have given way to multilateral imperialism. Except for Japan, large eco-
nomic blocks will be confronting a multitude of relatively small economies.

Africa's Response to a Changing World Order

The changes in the world order just outlined confront Africa with a great chal-

lenge. How Africa responds to them depends first on their psyche, second on

recent social, economic and political trends inside Africa and third on how the

world system 'treats' Africa.

The African Psyche

A generation ago Africa was a colonial possession of Europe. Before that,

Africans had been brutalised, subjugated and exploited for roughly four hundred

years. The African psyche has been fundamentally affected by this. The major-

ity of Africans either believe in the god of the Church of England or that of

the church of Rome, while a significant minority believe in the god of Mecca.

Simultaneously the vast majority also worship their own gods. The point however

is that the majority of Africans share the same world view and ethics as Eu-

rope's ruling classes purport to believe.
The colonial experience left Africans with a sense of inferiority. In 46 out of Africa's 54 countries, a European language is the language of state business. Among efforts to counter this sense of inferiority have been Kwame Nkrumah, Julius Nyerere, and Steve Biko. Nkrumah sought to define a African personality and to unite Africa. Nyerere gave Tanzanians their 'own' language with which to communicate with one another, and for his part, Salim Salim has himself made a call for Africa to begin its move toward a common language, by adopting Arabic, Hausa and Swahili as official languages. Biko tried to instil pride in being African black people in South Africa, and it is still the case that the way that final hurdle in decolonisation is overcome will play an important part in the psychological outlook of all Africans.

Social and Economic Trends
Since independence an African bourgeoisie (much of it, however, compradore) has developed. If it continues to grow, social and economic inequalities inside Africa will get worse.

On the demographic front Africans are becoming both more numerous and younger. By 2010 it is estimated that over 50 per cent of Africans will be 15 years of age or under. Africa had 9.2 per cent of the world's population in 1965; by 2000 it is expected to have 14 per cent. When (if) you reach 25 years of age, you have literally reached 'middle age'.

On the whole, food production has not kept pace with population growth. Agricultural output has been growing in the 1980s at around one per cent, population at around 2.4 per cent. Without an agrarian revolution of some sort, Africa is unlikely to continue to feed itself. And yet half the arable land in the world is in Africa. In the decades to come Africa is likely to witness frequent and devastating drought and famine, increasingly rapid rates of desertification, epidemics, plagues of locusts and other such calamities. As a result the political climate is likely to become hotter and more difficult for those in power. Pan-Africanism (racial or continental on one axis, and capitalist or socialist on the other) is likely to gain ground as the 'ideology' of African peoples (see below).

The World Economy and Africa
In 1983 with a population of around 500 million or 10 per cent of the world's total produced around 3 per cent of world output. By contrast, the US with around 5 per cent of the world's population produced 35 per cent of the capitalist world's output, while the EC with about the same population produced 20 per cent of the capitalist world's output. This means that on average the 54 African countries account for 1/52 of 3 per cent or 0.05 of one per cent of output. A world moving rapidly into the computer age when Africa has not yet moved into the industrial age!

Despite Africa's immense economic potential, it produces less than 4 per cent
of the world's output. In these days when African currencies are being devalued (Ghana went from 2.74 to the dollar in 1983 to 320 to the dollar in 1990), much of what is being produced inside Africa is being systematically under estimated. Thus Africa appears to be weaker than it really is. Africans are becoming more impatient with the way the world order is working, and increasingly convinced that not only will Europe and the US will assist to create a really new international economic order, but that they are out to recolonise it.

The world order created by the free world democracies is not itself democratic - not surprising to those who reflect on this from an Afrocentric as opposed to Eurocentric perspective. Nearly all countries in Africa except South Africa are members of the United Nations. But no African country has a veto in the Security Council, the real power house of the United Nations; maybe because it is not their security that is being protected? They are also members of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). But in none of these global bodies do African countries individually or collectively have a significant voice.

The IMF whose senior officials are de facto ministers of finance in many African countries, believes that balance of payments deficits are caused mainly by over-valued currencies and insufficient domestic saving. It refuses to accept the importance of structural causes for balance of payments deficits. Its watch words are 'get the prices right', and the market, led by foreign investors will generate growth, raise productivity and improve living standards. But the process of getting prices of local currency, capital, commodities and wages right has proved very painful, and produced results which only deepen the structural problems facing Africa. Africans know that the world economic system works systematically to reduce their incomes, and that foreign investment cannot be relied on for development and transformation. The World Bank and the IMF have proved unwilling to provide these funds. At each replenishment in recent years the US, Britain, France and now Japan, have prevented the Fund from increasing its capital stock to anything close to that demanded by Africa. When confronted with demands from Eastern Europe however, the West has been able to find the billions of dollars required.

Foreign direct investment has been a small proportion of Africa's Gross Domestic Product and even of investment. Portfolio investment which includes bank and other commercial forms of lending, have in recent times been larger. However this has led to the large debt burden that Africa now carries. Borrowing from multilateral sources (the Fund and Bank) is currently estimated at 8.5 per cent of Africa's GDP. High interest rates and low levels of new capital have resulted in a net transfer from Africa to the West estimated at $6bn in 1989. Recently, bilateral grants have increased and the terms of IMF lending in the form of the Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility, is much lower than it has been (50 year loans at less than one per cent interest rate).

At the same time African trade has been characterised by: worsening terms of
trade especially during the 1980s (for cocoa and coffee 14 year lows); by a
decreasing share of world trade (from 4 per cent in 1965 to 2 per cent 1990); and
increasing European protectionism (food, fibres and manufactures). On the
other hand, intra-Africa trade instead of rising, fell over the past 10 years. If
these trends persist, how can trade be an engine of growth?

Between 1979-81 to 1985-87 the terms of trade deterioration alone cost African
economies nearly $3 billion annually. Increased payments cost a further $2.1
billion, and reduced flows of net credit and direct investment another $2.6
billion. A total of $7.6 billion. During the same period, official grants increased
by $1.1 billion. Africa has as a result become a net exporter of capital to the
rest of the world, and even to the IMF and the World Bank. The net outflow
from Africa was $6 billion in 1989. While only 24 per cent of Africa debt is
owed to multilateral bodies such as the Fund and the Bank, 40 per cent of debt
service on non-concessional debt goes to these institutions. In 1986 Africa 'donated'
to these institutions $1 billion, in 1987 another $1 billion, in 1988 $2 billion and
$1.5 billion in 1989.

In November 1987 the OAU agreed a five point position on debt:

- Cancellation of the foreign debt of Africa's 28 least developed coun-
tries (whose total external debt stood at $46.37 billion representing
97.9 per cent of their GNP in 1988).

- A moratorium of 10 years on all foreign debt service payments (to
enable the debtor countries to use their limited foreign exchange to
repair their battered economies).

- A reduction of at least 50 per cent in the stock of debt outstanding
(a 50 per cent write-off of the remaining debt).

- Lowering the debt service ratio to 10 per cent of export earnings.

- Freezing interest rates on all outstanding and rescheduled debt.

These proposals were derided where they were not ignored. Zambia after eleven
years of pursuing IMF programmes and not getting anywhere fast, took mat-
ters into its own hands. It decided unilaterally to limit its debt servicing to 10
per cent of net export earnings, adopt a fixed exchange rate, re-introduce
administered foreign exchange allocations and price controls, lower interest
rates, establish an export-import bank to support other productive activities in
addition to exports, and undertake continuous policy review. The response of
the 'world' was swift. In the words of the former Zambian Minister of Finance
of the day, 'the World Bank has virtually stopped disbursing funds to Zam-
bia'. The British government, having offered a loan to Zambia conditional on
agreement with the Fund, promptly withdrew the offer. Today Zambia has
had to return to the IMF having failed to make headway alone. The lesson
must surely be: do not confront imperialism alone.
African Initiatives

The West might like continued dependence but it is what Africans begin to do about their economic and social conditions that will make the difference. The first significant response was the Lagos Plan of Action, adopted in 1980 by African heads of state, a programme of self-reliant development based on regional cooperation. But little if any action followed. In effect the Lagos Plan was shunted aside by the so called 'Berg Report' published by the World Bank in 1981. That Report laid the intellectual foundations for Structural Adjustment Programmes. The next major intervention was termed Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery (APPER), adopted by the OAU in 1985. It set out Africa's medium term development needs over a five year period. In 1986 it was taken to the United Nations where it was so modified, to emerge as the United Nations Programme of Action for Africa's Economic Recovery and Development (UN-PAAERD). The success of UN-PAAERD depended on sizable capital flows from the 'international community'. These did not materialize. Meanwhile the IMF and the Bank went ahead with their programmes of Structural Adjustment, the crux of which are to secure external balance in order to meet external obligations, and to create conditions conducive to foreign private investors, including privatisation.

But perhaps the document weakens its message by declaring that its success depends on support from the 'international community'. It is into this tangled web, that the draft document on an African Economic Community will be entering. Will it have any better luck that the Lagos Plan of Action, APPER and the rest?

Democracy

Salim Salim said that in all places, the purpose and rationale of democratisation was to place the people at the centre of the process of governance. He went out of his way to demand that democracy should not be taken as a universal model or blueprint capable of being imposed on all places at any time. The extent to which this can be achieved depends on local conditions. But these local differences, should not, however, he argued, be allowed to produce radically different standards of what is and is not acceptable. The pursuit of some universality is, he argued, what the African Charter on People's and Human Rights seeks to do.
But this document, it has been argued, is woefully inadequate even in its formal protection of human rights. Its provisions begin by first establishing what are the rights of the state and the obligation of the individual and only later, within that context, the rights of the individual and the obligations of the state. There are, of course, those who would argue that Africans are more collectivist than individualist and therefore to that extent, the provisions of this document reflect Africa's cultural norms.

It was not clear what he was asking for Africa. Should it be allowed not to be democratic? Certainly not. Was he calling for Africa to bow to the dictates of the West so far as the introduction of multi-parties is concerned? Certainly not. What he seemed to be saying is that Africans should be left alone to work out for themselves exactly what forms of democracy they want and how and at what pace they pursue them.

This is fine. But it does mean that if Africa's ruling classes are not going to do the West's bidding then they must first allow their own people to express their will, second listen to this will, and third abide by it? The political conditionality now proposed by the West contains within it, the germ of a proviso: 'You are allowed to rule yourselves so long as you do not criticise, oppose, thwart, stand up to, or even worse fight us.' So may not the present rush to multi-partyism in Africa be more likely to deliver what Western theorists think Africa deserves?

Almost all African countries except Libya, Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia, Mozambique, Angola, Guinea Bissau, began 'post colonial' life using a multi-party system of government which have given way to one party states or to non-party military dictatorships. But given the socio-economic conditions of Africa and the fact that up to 80 per cent of Africa's working people are peasants, multi-partyism is more likely than not, in the first instance, to lead to conservative victories, and a multi-coloured cloak of legitimacy. Thus the multi-party state is unlikely to be any more responsive to either the needs or expressed wishes of the majority of Africa's population than the one party and military states have been. What is that going to do to the political fabric of the continent if Africans become increasingly Pan-Africanist and anti-Imperialist? Chances are these regimes will be replaced once more by military governments, as in Nigeria, who will come to power to prevent 'radical' anti-imperialist and Pan-Africanist parties from winning the multi-party elections.

To date multi-party elections in Africa have produced no fundamental change in Senegal, Gabon or Cote d'Ivoire. It remains to be seen if the multi-party elections now promised in Mozambique, Zambia, and Zaire will similarly produce no change.

But what are the necessary conditions for a stable and effective democracy in Africa? First a number of rights need to be guaranteed. Relations between classes in African society need to be placed on a footing whereby the economically weaker, are not, just by that fact, politically emasculated. The first set of rights are 'political': the rights of the governed vis-a-vis rulers. Those who do not exercise state power need to be protected from its arbitrary use by those that do. In the first instance those that are governed must have a right to decide who governs them and how. The governed must
also have the right to associate in pursuit of political objectives and to express their opinions. They should not be arbitrarily detained, nor denied trial in an independent court.

More importantly they should have the right and be provided with the means to take their rulers to court if they in turn commit acts contrary to the law of the land. The citizens similarly need to have rights of access to information about themselves their rulers might have. Their rulers should also be bound to provide access to the information used to reach their decisions.

The importance of some of these issues was recognised by Salim Salim in his reference to the African Charter for Popular Participation in Development, adopted in Arusha, Tanzania in 1990. This calls on African governments not only to adopt development strategies and programmes in the interests of the people but also to develop and implement them through a process of participation of the population through autonomous grass roots organisations.

Non-interference
The most contentious issues addressed by Salim Salim was the question of intra- and inter-state conflict and the principle of non-interference as enshrined in the Charter of the OAU. He came out firmly supporting the principle, arguing that it had, in its time, kept Africa from ‘generalised chaos’. However, he acknowledged, in light of events such as those in Liberia during 1990, that it was time to review and reform it.

Bing: Of course it is well known that the principal is disapproved of by present OAU chairman President Yoweri Museveni. Possible reforms might include those instances when conflicts, though internal in character, have repercussions far beyond the borders of the country in crisis. Any amendment worth its while, should not only allow governments to exercise powers they already do - the right to call on friendly governments to assist them. It should also provide a basis for ‘the people’ of a country to call on the OAU, at the very least to pass judgment on events in a member country or in extreme cases to intervene.

Not surprisingly, however, even as he supported the principle of non-intervention, Salim Salim could not admit that the action taken by the West African states under ECOMOG, was in flagrant breach of the provisions of the charter. The OAU could not of course be seen to fully support a breach of its Charter. But the ‘intervention’ in Liberia by ECOWAS states clearly underlines the need for a review of the non-intervention clause in favour of something that can secure the support of the OAU.

Pan-Africanism: Racial or Continental
When asked why Jamaica only had observer status at the OAU, Salim Salim said Jamaica did not even have observer status. The questioner was drawing
the Secretary General’s attention to one of the central differences of opinion in Pan-Africanism: that between racial and continental Pan-Africanism.

Bing: ‘Racial Pan-Africanism’ sees it as a movement of ‘black Africans’ or simply ‘Africans’, people of African descent in Africa and the diaspora. ‘Continental Pan-Africanism’ conceives the movement for the political and economic unification of the African continent.

Some continental Pan-Africanists (Nkrumah) hold that Africa is primarily a geographic expression. Others (Diop) contend that blacks and Arabs in Africa have not only a parallel historical experience in relation to Europe but possess in addition a more fundamental and deeper homogeneity. A third strand argues that the geographic entity and the people that inhibit Africa, will not be of any consequence in the world, and will in fact become endangered, unless they come together within the framework of continental political and economic union. For all continental Pan-Africanists, ‘Africans’ are to be defined by political and legal, rather than by racial, attributes. Salim Salim who participated in the last (1974) Congress in Dar es Salaam not surprisingly supports the continental position.

In the last couple of years, there have been several attempts to organise another Pan-African congress; it is almost certain it will be held during the 1990s. However, the impact of this meeting on the fortunes of black people in the world rests to a large extent on how the question outlined above is ‘resolved’. To the extent that continentalism pursues its primary and overriding objective of continental unity only, it offers a realistic framework for Africa to begin to tackle its problems. (Editors note: plans are underway to hold the next Pan-African Congress. ROAPE will carry information about this in a future issue).

These and other issues constitute the challenges facing the OAU and those that would make a new Africa during the 1990s.

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Responses to the Gulf Crisis in the Maghreb

David Seddon

Governments in the Maghreb (northwest Africa) have generally opposed the military offensive against Iraq while condemning the invasion and calling for withdrawal. Even Morocco, which initially sent a small contingent of troops to Saudi Arabia, has moved closer to its neighbours in the Union of the Arab Maghreb which has been active in pressing for a negotiated settlement. Popular responses throughout the Maghreb have been strongly in support of Iraq and against the war; huge demonstrations have taken place in Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco. Fuelled by widespread and growing political frustration and by deteriorating conditions, popular resentment at Western (and particularly US) intervention in the region and in Arab affairs has grown dramatically since the war started in January and is likely to provide the basis for political instability in the Maghreb over the coming months and even years.

Government Responses

When the Arab League met in Cairo on 10 August, following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, Egypt forced through a resolution condemning the invasion and supporting the sending of Western and Arab forces to the Gulf. The response from the Maghreb states was generally negative: the resolution was opposed by Libya, Mauritania expressed reservations, while Algeria abstained and Tunisia boycotted the meeting altogether. Only the government of Morocco, under the control of King Hassan, initially supported a military response to Iraq's invasion and sent a token force of some 1,500 troops to Saudi Arabia. But this was no surprise; of all the governments in the Maghreb, Morocco has been consistently the most pro-US and most closely aligned with the rulers of the Gulf states, who have provided crucial financial and other assistance during Morocco's fifteen year war against the POLISARIO in the Western Sahara and throughout its economic crises of the 1980s.

By mid-November, however, following the decision by President Bush to double US forces in the Gulf, even King Hassan was expressing reservations and proposing another Arab summit to thrash out the issues at stake. In this he was discreetly supported by the other Maghreb states, including Algeria, and by France. Iraq made clear that it was prepared to negotiate, but insisted that a
condition of its participation in a November Arab meeting was the quashing of the decisions of the August Arab League summit; this the Maghreb states could not deliver.

In general, the governments of the Maghreb tended to favour 'an Arab solution' and pressed consistently during November and December for mediation and compromise. Even Libya maintained a careful neutrality and proposed a simultaneous withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait and Western forces from the Gulf, with an Arab and/or non-aligned peace-keeping force moving into Kuwait, and negotiations on key issues (such as the Iraq-Kuwait border, oil and debt disputes) to follow. The Maghreb governments generally condemned the invasion of Kuwait and were prepared to impose sanctions to help effect a withdrawal; they also condemned the use of force and refused to embargo food and medicines. Had the US commitment to deploy massive armed forces in the Gulf - well beyond the original plan to provide a defence for Saudi Arabia - not been made so emphatically and so early, the countries of the Arab Maghreb might well have thrown their weight behind a unified Arab front to compel Saddam Hussein to withdraw. In the light of claims by Saddam Hussein, in discussions with UN Secretary-general Perez de Cuellar on the eve of the war (The Guardian, 12 February 1991) that efforts to secure an Arab solution were undermined by the sending of 'allied' troops to Saudi Arabia and that he was prepared even at a late stage to consider withdrawal from Kuwait and to discuss 'a package deal', it seems that continued pressure by the other Arab states might indeed have secured a negotiated settlement, had not the US and its 'allies' committed themselves so definitively to the military option.

That the Maghreb states were unprepared to abandon hope for a negotiated settlement is exemplified by Algeria's efforts to encourage France to take a firmer position. On 15 January France formally tabled a resolution to the UN Security Council which went beyond lip-service to the idea of a Middle East peace conference and would actually have committed the UN to holding one. The last-minute proposal was turned down by Washington and London, both of which had the power to formally veto it. Whether the French initiative was genuine or simply a cynical attempt to preserve France's influence in the Arab world, it came too late.

A few days after the bombing raids on Kuwait and Iraq by 'allied' forces began on 17-18th January, the five members of the Union of the Arab Maghreb (Mauritania, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya) called for an urgent meeting of the Security Council to discuss the Gulf crisis. Their representatives made it clear that they regarded the scope and scale of the attacks to be significantly greater than the 'action' authorised by the Security Council resolution and to threaten in effect the destruction of Iraq. Their call was ignored.

**Popular Responses**

Meanwhile, the people of the Maghreb countries began to express their own
views in no uncertain terms. In Algeria and Tunisia, whose governments refused to approve the 'allied' assault on Iraq, street demonstrations began during January and continued into February. In Mauritania also, whose government has been perhaps the most openly supportive of Iraq's position - and to which Saddam Hussein's wife and four of his children were reported to have flown for safety twenty-four hours after American and British forces began their bombardment of Iraq - there have been numerous public demonstrations in support of Iraq. Even in Morocco, which officially supported the 'allied' military intervention at the outset, massive demonstrations have taken place in protest against involvement in the Gulf war.

In Algeria, anti-war demonstrations have been frequent, but generally peaceful, though the rising tide of Islamism - exemplified by the success of the Islamic Front (FIS) during the municipal elections in June last year - ensures that the demonstrations have considerable domestic political significance and are not simply an expression of feelings about the Gulf war. On the day after the war started some 300,000 people marched through Algiers with the support from a range of political groupings; but at the end of January a second major demonstration, of around 60,000, took place, backed mainly by the Islamists, in support of demands to open training camps for volunteers to fight in Iraq; and this time protests against the war were linked with demands for the resignation of president Chadli Bendjedid and for the establishment of an Islamic state. When, at the beginning of February, tens of thousands of Islamists marched through Algiers, carrying cardboard models of Iraqi missiles in support of Saddam Hussein, and burned flags of the 'allies' fighting Iraq, they also demanded the fixing of a date for general elections and called on president Chadli Bendjedid to speed up the process of political change. The FIS, the largest Islamist party in Algeria, called the march to protest against a speech by president Chadli in which he denounced political parties exploiting pro-Iraqi sympathies for their own political ends. The FIS are not alone in linking domestic political ambitions and dissatisfaction with the FLN government with protest against the war in the Gulf. Ahmed Ben Bella, for example, known to be seeking to gather around him the 'progressive secular' forces opposed to the government and its current policies, and freshly back from a visit to Baghdad, strongly supported Iraq during what was described as 'a fiery pro-Iraqi news conference'. But, beneath the current political turmoil in Algeria lie other roots of unrest. Indeed, much of the impetus for the popular protest derives from dissatisfaction with domestic economic and social policies and deteriorating economic conditions particularly among the rural and urban poor.

In Tunisia, shortly after the 'allied' bombardment of Kuwait and Iraq began, the parliament published a statement denouncing the 'allied' attack on Iraq and expressing its solidarity with the Iraqi people in its resistance against what it called 'the forces of destruction', while president Ben Ali, in a speech to the nation, appealed to Arab and Muslim leaders to put pressure on the UN Security Council for an end to the war in the Gulf and the calling of an international peace conference. However, police have been called out repeatedly over the last few
weeks to disperse large demonstrations supporting Iraq and Saddam Hussein. When, on 22 January, the opposition parties attempted to march in the centre of Tunis, their protest was broken up by riot police and armoured cars were brought out onto the streets. The government, despite its position on the Gulf war and its willingness since the Israeli bombing of Beirut to provide the PLO with a base in Tunis, is desperately concerned about the potential for far-reaching political conflict within the country. Despite a degree of political liberalisation over the last year or so - which has permitted the legalisation of seven new parties - the government sees the Islamists (particularly groups like En Nahda, which remains illegal) as a major threat to political stability. Consequently, popular demonstrations are heavily policed. In Tunisia, as in Algeria, the memory of popular uprisings against government economic policy and political restrictions during the 1980s is still vivid and threatening. The popular frustration and anger, however, is, for the moment, directed towards what is seen widely as the ‘old alliance’ of the USA, Britain and Israel (‘imperialism’). A campaign of material support for Iraq (giving blood and making donations of blankets, food and medicines) was so popular that it had to close two days early, because there was no room to stock any more.

In Morocco also, the government is faced with growing popular support for Iraq and for Saddam Hussein. Here, as in Tunisia and Algeria, the general support for Iraq is not unrelated to widespread popular dissatisfaction with deteriorating economic conditions and with the government policies which are seen as their cause, as well as with political restrictions and human rights abuses. But in Morocco, opposition to the commitment of troops to the Gulf is also an expression of concern about collaboration with Western forces generally seen as hostile to the Arab world and to Islam. As the general secretary of the trade union Democratic Labour Confederation (CDT) observed, ‘the people don’t want their sons allied to American imperialism.’

Factories, offices and schools were closed throughout the country at the end of January by a general strike in support of Iraq. In December a 24-hour stoppage, called by the two major unions in protest at government economic and social policies, gave rise to street demonstrations and clashes with security forces in several major cities and led to a significant number of deaths. In January, the unions again took the initiative, but emphasised the need to avoid provocation and urged strikers to stay at home. The organisers asked for donations to aid Iraqis affected by the war. Popular pressure had become so great that by the end of January, on the eve of the general strike, the Moroccan government announced that it backed the action and called on the people to observe a day of solidarity with their Iraqi brothers. While still censuring the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, King Hassan himself now referred to Saddam Hussein as ‘a brother’ and explained that the ‘small contingent’ of Moroccan troops were sent simply to guard the king’s palace in Saudi Arabia. At the beginning of February, the Moroccan Red Crescent appealed, with official approval, for donations to buy blankets, tents and medicines for Iraq, as ‘a sacred duty’. On 3 February a demonstration of some 300,000 people marched through the centre of Rabat,
shouting slogans against the countries ‘allied’ against Iraq, and demanding an end to the war. It was believed to be the biggest demonstration in Morocco since independence in 1956. To the cry of *allah u akbar*, protestors burned the flags of the United States, Britain, France and Israel as they marched through the streets. Saudi Arabia was also heavily criticised: one slogan called King Fahd ‘President Bush’s donkey’. Some marchers carried effigies of president Saddam Hussein and PLO leader Yasser Arafat astride models of Scud missiles, which for many Arabs have become symbols of Iraq’s struggle against the odds.

As the war continues and the destruction of Iraq becomes more evidently the objective as well as the consequence of the war in the Gulf, so opposition to it within the Arab world will grow, and Arab governments, whatever their inclinations, will find it harder to control the popular forces which increasingly link support for Iraq and opposition to ‘imperialism’ with demands for political change at home and radical solutions to current economic problems. These forces are growing in strength, in the Maghreb as in Egypt, Jordan and other Arab states.

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A New Europe: Consequences for Tanzania

A. M. Babu

The fall of the East European regimes as a result of denying their peoples freedom has delivered them over to reactionary politics of the right. If Africa is to avoid the same fate, a peaceful transition to stable democratic systems is urgently required that means immediate freedom of association and a free press. But it also means society must prosper and that in turn still dictates structural transformation. Building democracy continues to constitute political and economic tasks.

When Mikhael Gorbachev introduced glasnost and perestroika in the Soviet Union, many Third World socialists and radicals wished him every success in the belief that a transformed Soviet Union was likely to play a positive and progressive role in the world during the 1990s and beyond. But when he made that fateful speech in Finland late last year in which he called for a 'common European home' shock waves went through the radical Third World. Our experience of a common European home forged by the pre-World War One 'Great Powers' - Britain, Germany, France, Tsarist Russia and the Austro-Hungarian empire - is not exactly pleasant. December 1989 will certainly go on record as one of the most decisive turning points in history since the end of World War II. Its significance must not be seen from the point of view of the cold war's so-called 'numbers game', but in terms of Europe returning to its pre-World War One imperial menace - the Europe which has done so much damage to the rest of the world in conquest, slavery, colonisation, settlerism, distortion and diversion of our national histories, through the massive devastation of world wars, the depletion of our resources, and the endangering of the world’s environment.

In this earlier context the ‘non-aligned’ policy (it was more of a posture than policy) paid off to a certain extent, by exploiting the cold war fears of the potential winners or losers in the era of the diplomacy of ‘zero sum’ and ‘numbers game’ - a vicious rivalry which had dominated the superpowers’ foreign policy calculations.

Rosa Luxemburg, the well known German Marxist theoretician and friend of Lenin’s, remarked in 1918: ‘Any sustained rule by a state of siege leads to arbitrary rule; any arbitrary rule leads to corruption’. The power-holders of Eastern Europe chose not to heed this important and pertinent socialist advice.
It cost them dear. In 1989 the people of Eastern Europe could not take it any longer. Their anger was not directed at the world-wide injustice of Western economic domination, but at their own leaders who were seen as incompetent managers of their national economies, at best or at worst, as corrupt, power-hungry and backward-looking meddlers. They looked at their leaders with utter contempt and they saw them as exploiting socialist sentiments to perpetuate their own bankrupt rule and consolidate their stifling monopoly on power through a state of siege. They went on the streets and clamoured for change.

Without too much fuss, Eastern European governments fell like houses of cards. In spite of their monopoly on power, their massive propaganda machine, their control of the media and public affairs; in spite of their ubiquitous secret police, informers and agents, the power holders were taken by surprise at the extent of the people's anger and resentment against them. Far from advancing the cause of socialism and progressive thought their regimes, by denying people their freedom, have had the effect of turning them over to the reactionary politics of the extreme right.

The Implications for Africa

These resentful and hungry people from Eastern Europe are happily joining a Europe which has already moved to the right, and continues to move further in that direction. For Africa this is a bleak prospect. Our experience with Europe is bad enough; and with a right wing Europe, it is bloody. Not only the lives of millions of people of African descent living in Europe are at stake; the continent itself is at risk.

Already Hungary, Poland, and East Germany are changing their position in favour of South Africa whose interests are diametrically opposed to Africa's interests. A strong and consolidated right-wing Europe will inevitably promote pliant and reactionary dictators in an Africa tied to Europe by the umbilical cord of the Lomé Conventions; an Africa which is increasingly forced by the so-called 'recovery programme' to adopt anti-people measures and inevitably requires more dictatorial powers to carry them out; an Africa, furthermore, which still contains millions of extreme right-wing and fascist white settlers, mercenaries and hustlers of every kind, all the way from South Africa, via Zaire to Ivory Coast, ready to topple any government deemed to be 'soft' to the people. It is this frightening prospect that makes it imperative for Africa to take urgent economic and political measures to ensure the peaceful evolution of stable, democratic and prosperous societies throughout the continent.

Prospects for Tanzania

For a country like Tanzania this need is even greater than most. First, because the country is huge, with a population of 23 million, very strategically located, endowed with vast mineral, agricultural, livestock and water resources. Its
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population is very stable and orderly, which has earned the country considerable prestige and influence internationally. It is most influential among African countries. Its successes enhance the morale of African people everywhere, while its failures demoralise them immensely. Consequently, its responsibility to the rest of Africa is correspondingly crucial.

For instance, the Arusha Declaration aroused the enthusiasm of millions of people inside and outside the country because its objective was to alleviate the suffering of the down-trodden. That we have failed to achieve those lofty objectives cannot be blamed on the Declaration itself, but rather on the mistaken order of priorities. What should have been tackled last has been given a top priority, and that which should have been first was consequently never attempted. A top priority of any economy that emerges from colonialism must naturally be to change the structure of production which has sustained the colonial order. That structure in our case was left intact; and so, although we wanted to eradicate 'exploitation of man by man' within our society, we left open the exploitation of the whole country by perpetuating the colonial economy.

I thought at the time that we were on the way towards restructuring our economy from colonial to an internally integrated and independent national economy. On 9 December 1971, in celebrating our National Day, I boldly wrote in the London Financial Times, as the Tanzanian Minister for Economic Planning, that there was a mounting demand for corrective measures to the economy and that:

This strong demand for restructuring the economy from outward to inward orientation so as to make it more responsive to people's want was reflected very clearly during the bi-annual conference of TANU, held in September this year. It marks a decisive shift in our development strategy, whose impact will have a far-reaching effect. It marks acceptance of the basic premise of the new school of thought, that development stems from within and not from outside.

But of course, it didn't happen. There was no decisive shift, and no structural change was attempted. Instead a drastic change in government took place three months later with the priority of moving people to the Ujamaa villages, and the appointment of a Prime Minister who would steamroll the move to vijijini. The rest is history. But it is a history from which we must learn, and learn quickly if we are to avoid the possible negative influences of the emerging Europe. It's no use hoping only for the best; we must also prepare for the worst.

We must forget the old myth that our development will come about as a result of massive inflow of external resources. We have been hoping for that to happen ever since independence, instead there is a catastrophic outflow of wealth from Africa to Europe of more than $100 million per day. The inflow is less than one-third of this. In other words, every dollar that comes in extracts three dollars from the continent. This kind of relationship with our trading partners
in Europe has two most devastating effects on our economies for which we pay the penalty of permanent poverty. First, it leaves nothing for necessary internal capital formation; second, it diverts most of our socially necessary labour from production for our needs to production for the consumption and industrial needs of Europe. Any economy condemned to this task has no hope of ever building a national economy, and much less an independent one.

We cannot go into details here on how to extricate ourselves from this situation. But it cannot be stressed too strongly that the need for structural change is more urgent now than ever before because the more we delay the deeper we get entangled in a world system which is demonstrably inimical to our economic interests. The second urgent need is to strengthen our democratic institutions so that no external forces can mess around with us.

The first prerequisite in that direction is the evolution of a well informed public opinion which can only come about when the press is free. The argument that only rich people can afford to establish a paper should not be turned into an obstacle to the evolution of a free press. Uganda has shown us that you don’t have to be rich to have a free press; you only have to be literate - and the authorities must be sufficiently self-confident to withstand critical and public appraisal of their policies. The second condition for strengthening our democratic institutions is of course freedom of association. People of similar views and world outlook must be free to form their separate organisations and free to seek to convert as many people as possible to their views. The concept of the ‘one party state’ has everywhere proved to be moribund. It not only denies the people their basic human right of dissent, but more seriously, it helps to depoliticise the public and renders them politically unprepared for and vulnerable to unanticipated social changes. It reduces the public to the level of that proverbial grown-up-child whose growth has been stultified by the overprotective mother.

Finally, both politically and economically, there must be maximum freedom for individual initiative in all aspects of our lives. Let the people be free to initiate their own economic activity within the bounds of the laws of the country. Let the people freely discuss their problems without any fear of secret police or agent. Let them appraise their leaders and their societies critically without fear of the pompous ‘party bosses’ who arrogate for themselves the right to ‘think politically’. In other words, let there be freedom - from interference from others, from necessity and freedom to develop our individual capacities to the maximum.

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The Democracy Debate in Africa: Tanzania

Issa G. Shivji

The current debate on democracy in Africa (see ROAPE no.49) is stimulating but many views are rooted in liberalism, justify it in terms of 'development' or see it as an absolute good. Little attempt is made to situate it in the historical processes of people in struggle, resulting in a mistrust of the masses. Applying these strictures to the recently officially-launched debate on the party system in Tanzania, it is argued that the very way the debate is itself conducted must also be democratic and should reflect the people's own strivings not the 'negative' models of the East, or the 'positive' models (and pressures) of the West. The limitations of the present 'party-state' and its monopoly of politics are criticised. Proposals are made not for a specific constitutional formula but for an extended transition 'process' that should be followed, opening up debate in civil society and paving the way for a National Convention and a Constituent Assembly.

The Pitfalls of the Debate on Democracy

Once upon a time African radical intellectuals thought 'True Independence' was that which came through the barrel of a gun. The other type was fake, or 'flag' independence. In an otherwise brilliant analysis, Fanon (The Wretched of the Earth) undoubtedly placed prime value on violence as a political therapy to rejuvenate a colonial people. Well, since then we have had half a dozen examples of 'national liberation' through the barrel of a gun. The gun itself has not performed the task of a purgative. Liberators have turned tyrants and continue to tyrannise through the barrel of a gun.

Then there was a time when the divide between radicals and reactionaries was between those who upheld 'True Socialism', whose litmus test was a vanguard party of cadres guided by Marxism-Leninism, and utopian socialists, for whom socialism was an attitude of mind (inherent in African communalism). Some vanguardists worked hard to instigate military putches, attain state power and declare a Workers' Party allied with the erstwhile home of socialism - The Great Soviet Union. Other vanguardists worked - and probably continue to do so from their ministerial positions - within, what they called, 'national liberation movements' or 'mass parties' to convert them into vanguard parties, declare the commanding heights of the economy state property and place socialists in strategic places to build socialism.
Meanwhile history has taken its own ruthless course. After some three decades of independence, nowhere in Africa have we either Independence or Socialism, whether defined in terms of social-democracy or Marxism-Leninism. What we do have though are 'national liberation movements', ruling through the barrel of a gun; 'mass parties' riding on the backs of the masses and presiding over authoritarian legal and political systems; marxist-leninist vanguard parties napalming oppressed nationalities and eliminating youthful opposition, all in the name of 'Great Red Terror'. And we do have the state commanding the commanding heights of the economy, with the socialist cadres strategically in command bankrupting the state kitty pitilessly.

Meanwhile, of course, history has taken its toll of radicals too, even more ruthlessly. In despair or disillusionment, some of us have found refuge in the world of, what else but, the erstwhile State, others in the materially even more cushy world of FFUNGOs (Foreign-Funded NGOs). A few may have taken to the bottle and ruined themselves, while some others have rediscovered the world of pure science and are busy advancing 'neutral' knowledge.

So what is on the agenda now and who is an African radical as we approach the 21st century? Democracy is on the agenda and who dare challenge that? And of course an African radical is one who can go back to the Greeks and fathers of the French and American revolutions to expound the virtues of democracy. Former revolutionaries and radicals are bending over backwards to establish their credentials as democrats (not that some of them don't need to) - and specifically liberal democrats! The debate on democracy among African scholars is threatening to become an unabashed celebration of liberalism. This is where the first pitfall of the debate on democracy lies. So long as it remains imprisoned within the four walls of liberalism, I dare say, The Debate has not begun - it may be a Diversion but not a Debate.

During the course of the Harare Conference on 'State and Constitutionalism in Africa' (May 1989) Mahmood Mamandi passionately (if somewhat condescendingly) declared that 'a consistent African liberal is bound to be a Revolutionary (with a capital R, I presume); otherwise he is a downright reactionary'. Amen! But if I may hazard a timid interjection? The African radical in his (I shall not add 'her') theoretical and political practice has been consistently compradorial rather than liberal or revolutionary, consistent or otherwise. And that is precisely the crux of the matter. Can a liberal perspective on democracy in Africa be anything else but compradorial? Now, I know, the terms and concepts like 'compradorial' and 'imperialism', have gone out of fashion; have become dirty words. And those former 'revolutionaries' who are desperately trying to establish their liberal credentials literally spurn these terms. Yes, indeed we need to re-examine everything. Nothing is sacrosanct - terms, phrases, concepts. But, the first thing we need to re-examine are our own theoretical and political practices in the light of the actual practical struggles of the masses of the people, rather than bend over backwards intellectually and jump on the fashionable band-wagon of the west (and the east), from where we seem to get
our inspiration - spiritual and intellectual - not to speak of material sustenance. And when we do that we cannot run away from the imperialist/compradorial/statist syndrome whatever new terms we may invent to describe it.

In fact for me there are two types of comprador intellectuals. The moderates have a lot of faith in imperialism and the radicals have a lot of faith in the African state. What is common to both groups - and the erstwhile African politician, militant or otherwise - is, virtually, a total lack of faith in the masses of the African people. This is the second pitfall in the debate on democracy. But when one suggests this kind of self-criticism, the leading lights of the African intellectual world respond by either indulging in self-praise and justification, or flowery oratory to score points and win applause rather than any serious researching and self-evaluation.

Most of the time when we discuss democracy we are really referring to individualism (liberalism, which arose at a particular conjuncture in the history of the development of the bourgeoisie in the west) rather than the struggle for equality (democracy, which has appeared in human history in different forms at different conjunctures). Second, democracy for most of us, whether we like it or not, is associated with the organisation of the state and government structures (Parliament, courts, parties, accountability, elections) rather than a summation of the experience of struggles of the majority. Of course, these are not mutually exclusive: indeed we will all swear by our political science text-books that they are not. And yet in practice, and in our theoretical and political practices, we rarely let loose of the apron strings that bind us to imperialism or the African state or both; we rarely deviate from liberalism; and in our case therefore compradorialism.

Anti-imperialist rhetoric alone does not and cannot define an anti-compradorial stand. The second fundamental component of that stand is a clear standpoint on the African state on the one hand, and the role of the masses and popular classes, on the other. So, first and foremost, the question of democracy is the question of the struggle of the popular classes. Development, accountability, parties, elections, are but the symptomatic forms of the existence of, or moment in, that struggle.

And that brings me to the state of the debate, and specifically to Thandika’s very pertinent comments on Anyang’s view of democracy in his article ‘Political Instability and the Prospects for Democracy in Africa’ (Africa Development 1988:71-86; see also Thandika Mkandawire, ‘Comments on Democracy and Political Instability’ and Peter Anyang’ Nyong’o ‘A Rejoinder’, CODESRIA Bulletin, Vol 1, 1989:11-14). As instrumentalist and developmentalist, Anyang’ sees democracy as an instrument of development. Thandika argues that democracy as a value is ‘good-in-itself’ and, like any other people, African people deserve to have it; that one does not have to justify democracy in terms of development at all. While agreeing with at least the first part of Thandika’s argument, let me take it a critical step further. It seems to me Anyang’ has presented his democratic discourse within the ideology of developmentalism
(although I’m not sure if Thandika conceptualises in that way). As I have argued repeatedly elsewhere, this ideology has hitherto been the ideology of domination, the state and ruling class ideology in Africa.

Thandika has on the other hand presented his democracy as an absolute value - moral and political. Absolutist positions, of necessity, abstract from historical context and social forces. And that is problematic indeed. I submit that the centrality of democracy in the present historical context lies precisely in the fact that it expresses, or constitutes, an ideology of resistance and struggle of the large masses and popular classes of the people. Posed thus, the question of democracy cannot avoid the social and historical character of democracy. For there is democracy and democracy.

Democracy from a liberal perspective, I argue, is part of the ideology of domination - in Africa essentially a moment in the rationalisation and justification of compradorial rule. While, as an ideology of resistance and struggle, democracy can only be cast in terms of popular democracy whose exact contours and forms of existence can only be determined in actual social struggles in given, concrete, historical conditions. Yet, at the minimum, it has to be an ideology which articulates anti-imperialism and anti-compradore-state positions. Neither Anyang’s ‘developmentalist’ argument nor Thandika’s ‘democracy-for-itself’ allow us to do that. We are, once again, willy nilly, returned to liberal/moral paradigms.

To be fair, both of them, in their other writings, are acutely aware of the historical context and the social character of the democratic question. A number of fine pieces in Popular Struggles for Democracy in Africa edited by Anyang’ began to address the question in this fashion. We need to carry forward those approaches. My fear is that we occasionally stumble on popular democratic arguments while liberalism comes to us as second nature!

Finally, while still on the pitfalls of the intellectual debate on democracy, I think we should try and advance the debate in some directions already mooted in several recent conferences and writings of African intellectuals. The national question; rights struggles; self-determination are some of the issues which are central and need to be seriously pursued. The Anyang’/Mkandawire exchange augurs well for continuing the debate, while at the same time, enabling us to try and identify the pitfalls.

One direction in which the debate can be advanced lies in applying these broad concerns to the specific debates springing up in several African countries about possible institutional forms of ‘democracy’. The second half of this article contains some thoughts on the current Tanzania debate.

**Towards a New Democratic Politics in Tanzania**

In late 1990 President Mwinyi said that the Government was intending to form a commission which would monitor the views of the people in the current
debate on one-party vs. multi-party. However, he said, the Government would welcome any suggestion on a different method of concluding the debate. It is in the light of this invitation that I humbly offer my views.

Origin & Content of the Debate

The method that we eventually adopt to arrive at a decision on the various issues raised by the debate depends partly on how we see its origins and content. Examination of various contributions which have been made so far reveal at least two broad positions.

The first sees the number of parties as the central issue. It probably also holds that the immediate origins of the debate lie in two sources: changes in Eastern Europe and pressures from Western Europe to adopt a multi-party system. Those who explicitly or implicitly subscribe to this position, whether in favour of one-party or multi-party, use the experiences and theories of the one-party Eastern and the multi-party Western Europe as their points of departure and reference as well as in justification and rationalisation of their views.

The second position holds that the central issue in the debate is the question of democracy and that the party system is only an aspect of democracy. Furthermore, the debate on democracy has been an ongoing process, albeit with ups and downs. The most recent example of such a debate was the constitutional debate of 1983-84. This position therefore tends to belittle the changes in Eastern Europe as having little to do with the current debate in Tanzania.

It seems to me that both these positions have some validity. It is true that the immediate reason for the official opening up of the debate on one-party vs. multi-party has a lot to do with the changes in Eastern Europe and the pressures from donors and aid givers from the West. Thus so far as the power structures are concerned, the origin of the officially sanctioned debate lies in the impact of changes in the international environment. That there have always been pressures for democratisation from below, as the second position seems to hold, is also true, but these have been officially ignored or intimidated into silence.

In my opinion, the central issue in the debate is the question of democracy. Changes in Eastern Europe and pressures from the West have merely created some space for a debate which was always on the agenda so far as the popular forces are concerned. Our debate therefore should not be diverted. It should focus on the larger question of democracy and should be rooted in our own historical experience - frankly owning up to our past 'mistakes'; drawing lessons for the future and being courageous enough to propose what may have been unthinkable only a couple of years ago. This is not to say that other experiences can or should be ignored. But their relevance has to be established. We must approach other experiences honestly with a view to understanding and explaining our own situation rather than rationalise and justify some preconceived prejudices. Ultimately though our point of departure and
reference should be our own political practices over the last three decades of independence, not only in eventually arriving at any specific decision, but in forging the methods of making that decision.

I need hardly emphasise that the current debate on democracy is one of the most important national projects undertaken since Independence. This debate may prove to be a beginning of a new era in our national life, or a historical opportunity may be frittered away, depending on how it is handled. It is likely to determine the future political system, political institutions and political culture that we accept and legitimise as a nation. Under the circumstances, it is of utmost importance that we adopt the most democratic and open methods of both conducting the debate as well as arriving at specific decisions. It is only in this way that whatever system is eventually adopted will have a broad consensus and legitimacy.

What have been our past political practices?

Several developments since the decision to adopt the one-party state in 1965 have had a significant impact on the question of democracy. Its adoption not only transformed the institutions of the state and government but gradually transformed the party itself in four interconnected respects.

First, the Party ceased to be an organ and institution of the civil society and became part of the state. It became a state-party. It derived its authority from law as opposed to a political party which derives its legitimacy from, and is part of, civil society. Hence, increasingly and frequently, it began to depend on the use of coercion, which is characteristic par excellence of the state, rather than persuasion, which is a characteristic of an organisation of civil society.

Second, the material/financial basis of the Party also changed, with a direct and substantial subsidy from the state and indirect ‘contributions’ from paras-tatal organisations; the Party was also supported by the tax-payer rather than its members. Again this is a characteristic of the state whose organs depend financially on revenues extracted from residents (backed by the ultimate threat and use of force) as opposed to organisations of the civil society which depend on membership fees (based on a voluntary contract), donations from philanthropic bodies, contributions from well-wishers and sympathises.

Third, the day to day work, not only administrative but also political, is done by paid bureaucrats rather than by unpaid volunteers and cadres who do what they do because of a commitment to a cause. In practice, the bureaucratic structure of the Party became almost a replica of that of the state including such mundane paraphernalia as cars with Party number plates; Party flags and state police outriders.

Fourth, one of the other significant and inevitable result was that the Party ceased to be a regular ruling party let alone a political party. The self-perception of a state party, which it propagates and enforces on others, members and
non-members, is not simply that of a ruling party bent on staying in power but that of a supreme political existence which holds the last word on the social good and the political truth. The notion of the supremacy of the party - *kushika hatamu* - is a profound expression of the transformation of a party from a ruling party to a state party. This means that one of the main objects of a political party - to get into government and monopolise political power - is transformed into a singular object of monopolising politics. And this object is pursued single-mindedly with a far-reaching impact on the constitution and future of civil society itself. Let me explain.

Politics is not simply the question of state power, that is to say the relation of governance between the state and citizen and the division of power within and among the institutions of the state. Politics involves as well the approaches, ideologies and relations in respect of differences and different interests within the civil society at various levels - differences between gender and age groups; differences between capital and labour and the unemployed; landlord and tenant and the landless; differences among professions and between the professional and the lay-person; differences of language, race, culture and religions. Now it is true that even in developed capitalist formations, where there is a relative 'separation' of state and civil society, these differences too are directly or indirectly, in one form or another, mediated through the state, contrary to the assertions of the pundits of political pluralism. Yet it cannot be denied that there is a fundamental political difference between that system and the system of party-state. Under a system of state-party, where politics itself is monopolised, these differences in, and of, civil society, are not simply mediated through the state but come under the state's immediate hegemony. This has the effect of narrowing the space for civil society. This is probably best illustrated by the way monopoly of politics operated in our country.

**Monopoly of Politics**

The monopoly of politics resolved into four important levels. First, it meant that no organised politics or political activity could be permitted outside the state-party (see Article 10 of the 1977 Constitution). So all 'mass organisations' - trade unions, co-operatives, students, women and youth organisations, even football clubs and cultural troupes - are brought under the control of the state-party. The destruction of autonomous organised expression of the differences in civil society is the first profound effect of the monopoly of politics by the state-party.

The second effect follows almost logically. If organised interests cannot be permitted then any autonomous articulation and expression of those interests cannot be permitted either. So various media of expression, newspapers, magazines, radio and institutions or propagating ideas, schools and such also come under the hegemony of the state. True, different interests and the expression of those interests cannot be obliterated altogether but they can certainly be suppressed and discouraged. And while *individualised*, and therefore
harmless, expressions of differences may continue, even that may be discour-
aged by attracting a series of disparaging epithets such as ‘arm-chair critics’,
‘disgruntled few’, ‘detractors’, ‘unpatriotic elements’, ‘dissidents’ (and where
there is armed opposition) ‘bandits’.

The third effect is the cumulative result of the first two: the development of a
closed society. It develops almost imperceptibly behind the backs of the people,
so to speak. The closed society operates and manifests itself on different levels,
both institutional as well as ideological. Thus public affairs are conducted most
secretly, where the members of the public are spectators and rumour-mongers
rather than actors and commentators. Proceedings of the most important deci-
sion-making bodies - the National and Central Committees of the Party, for
example - are held in camera and their records are inaccessible, even to mem-
bers! The right of expression is circumscribed - monopoly of the press, severe
laws on edition - while the right to know is almost non-existent. Severe limits
on the rights of citizens are prescribed in law, which the people themselves
may not know, but feel in their bones.

Drawing lessons from experience and leading examples, which become part
of popular sub-conscious, people set their own limits through self-censorship.
Prudence dictates that these be even more restrictive than the legal limits.

Openness, one of the most important characteristics of a democratic society,
suffers. With it suffer the prestige and the social place of institutions given to
openness, by definition, such as the judicature, the parliament, the press or the
university. In the dark crevices of a closed society arbitrariness, intrigues, nepotism,
favouritism and political sycophancy flourish. At the leadership level, individual
merit, sincerity of purpose, personal honesty or political commitment
count for little. What matters is the ability to appease your superior and the
agility to chorus into the dominant song, even if it is exactly opposite to the
one sung on just the previous day.

The fourth effect of the monopoly of politics is ideological. It generates a po-
litical culture of intolerance which expects and actively solicits an unanimity
of views. This is most subtle yet profoundly prejudicial to democracy. I will
illustrate this point by taking the example of what has always been put for-
dward as the strongest argument in favour of the system of state-party (or one-
party as it has been, incorrectly called). This is the argument that the one-party
system has generated and helps to ensure national unity.

As I said, this argument is eminently ideological. It may not necessarily mean
what it says or may say what it does not necessarily imply. The first question
to ask is: what it meant by national unity? There are at least three meanings
that may be attached to the concept ‘national unity’ in this context. The term
national unity may be used to refer loosely to ‘national integrity’ or more
strictly to the integrity of the country, that is, a definite population on a defi-
nite geographical space under the jurisdiction of one specific state. ‘National
unity’ in this sense may be threatened by external aggression, invasion and
possible dismemberment, or an internal civil war for secession. None of these - barring Amin's invasion and the question of Zanzibar which I shall touch presently - has even been remotely a serious threat in Tanzania. Therefore one-party cannot claim credit for 'national integrity' or unity in this sense. As a matter of fact, it is precisely in the systems of state-party (or single party) where 'national integrity' in this sense is under real threat. Ethiopia, Sudan, Somalia, are living examples. Curiously enough, in Tanzania itself, some overt opposition to the union came after the formation of one party, CCM - not before when there were two parties, TANU and the Afro-Shirazi Party (ASP) in Zanzibar! Clearly therefore 'national unity' in this argument cannot mean integrity of the country or 'national integrity'.

The second possible meaning of 'national unity' may be a nation (country) without diversity and divergent interests; that is to say, the one-party system has helped us to attain national unity by obliterating all important differences and different interests. This certainly is not true and I am sure no one would want to argue that it is true. The present debate alone shows that our nation is pleasantly vibrant with divergent interests and different views.

We are then left with only one meaning of 'national unity' and that is that the single party has managed successfully to suppress any organised expression of diversity and differences in our society. If so, then what is really meant is not 'national unity' but (imposed) unanimity. It is my humble submission that that is exactly what has happened in our country. In that case, therefore, 'national unity' is an ideological euphemism for imposed unanimity. For, indeed both in theory as well as in real life, it is possible to have national unity without unanimity of opinions and interests. Unanimity is not identical with unity, for unity can flourish in adversity just as unanimity can disguise forces of disunity. National unity based on diversity would dictate different political attitudes and culture, a politics of consensus rather than a politics of coercion - whether physical or psychological.

A politics of consensus has a positive attitude towards diversity while a politics of unanimity aims at obliterating all diversity. A politics of consensus however can still maintain national unity by a continuous process of dialogue, debate and discussion in which there is 'give and take', and there are compromises so as to attain a consensus on major issues. Under the politics of unanimity, views of one side have to prevail, more often by the logic of force rather than the force of logic.

It is my contention that the process of the transformation of our political system into a state-party system has been accompanied by the politics of unanimity rather than consensus. The current debate therefore ought to address the question of political culture seriously. The methods that we adopt in arriving at decisions in the process of democratisation should enable us to transform our politics and build a new politics based on national consensus.

Contributions to the current debate have all addressed one set of issues: the
monopoly of power. But they have not touched the issue of the monopoly of politics. Hence even the most radical suggestions amount to no more than 'structural adjustment' (rather than 'structural transformation') at the political level. As should be clear from my preceding analysis, what is really needed is New Democratic Politics. The time to begin to build new politics is now and the place to begin, I suggest, is a New Democratic Constitution. That brings me to my main proposal which I hope will be taken up for further debate.

A Proposal for a New Democratic Constitution

I propose that we should aim at putting a new constitution in place before the next general election which would allow us some five years of transition. The transition period be divided into three stages: national commission followed by a two year interval; then a National Convention which will propose a draft constitution; then an election of a constituent assembly to adopt the constitution followed by a referendum to enact the new constitution.

The National Commission

The idea of a commission has already been mooted by the President. I propose however somewhat different terms of reference for such a commission. The commission's task would be to investigate and propose constitutional and other legal and administrative changes in those areas where there is no controversy and which constitute necessary pre-conditions for setting the process of democratisation in motion. Let me mention a few.

First, the separation of the party and the state. It seems to me that this is absolutely necessary if we are serious about any form of democracy. This means that CCM must relinquish its monopoly of politics as enshrined in Article 10 of the 1977 Constitution. As a ruling Party it would still continue to have the monopoly of power during the transition period but during this period people would be free to form groups, organisations, other forms of collectives to conduct political activities short of immediate bidding for political power.

Second, all legal, political and administrative restrictions on freedom of association (except the formation of political parties during the transition period) be lifted. This will allow various interests in the civil society to associate freely allowing formation of autonomous mass organisations such as trade unions, peasant associations, business and professional groups. One hopes that during this period organisations and movements from the bottom - grassroots organisations - would come into being and begin to operate, thus re-establishing some form of civil society autonomous from the state and the ruling party.

Third, all legal, political and administrative restrictions on the freedom of expression be lifted. This will hopefully encourage a vigorous debate and dissemination of information as well as the flowering of diverse opinions thus planting the seeds of an open society. Both the freedom of association and freedom of expression are already provided for in the Constitution. What needs
to be done is to streamline other pieces of legislation to bring them in line with the Constitution and, at the same time, raise the political consciousness of political leaders and state functionaries to respect unreservedly these fundamental rights. The Commission could recommend necessary legal changes, as well as ways and means of bringing these rights to fruition in practice.

In short, the Commission’s task would be very specific. And its recommendations would then be translated into necessary legislation. The Commission could be given a specific time period, say three months, in which to complete its job. The Commission’s work and the implementation of its recommendations would prepare the ground for the next stage. There would be an interval of say two years during which associations and organisations would be formed while at the same time the debate would continue, hopefully, even more openly, without fear and with greater participation not only of individuals but the newly-formed organised groups. Then it would be time to convene a National Convention.

The National Convention

All organised groups - trade unions, co-operatives, professional associations, industrial and business chambers, student unions, political groups (including CCM) - and even prominent citizens would be invited to send delegates to the Convention. The primary task of the National Convention would be to discuss openly and thrash out, through a consensus, the major principles which would guide our New Politics and which should inform the new constitutional structure. The public debate would hopefully have continued and by the time of the Convention this would have assisted enormously in identifying the main pointers for major political principles, including such issues as one-party vs. multi-party or no-party; structures of grassroots democracy at village, workplace and neighbourhood levels; levels and hierarchy of accountability.

The Convention, independent of the existing state and Party structures, and representing varied and diverse interests of the civil society, would be the main body to crystallise a National Consensus. Having agreed on main guiding principles, the Convention would then elect a smaller body/committee from among its delegates to draft a new constitution based on those principles. The draft constitution would then be submitted to a constituent assembly for adoption.

The Constituent Assembly

The Constituent Assembly would be elected for the single purpose of discussing and adopting the draft constitution. Its members would be elected from all the constituencies, from both parts of the Union. The election would be based on universal suffrage. The only qualification for standing in such an election would be that one is over 18 years of age and a Tanzanian of sound mind. In our case, all our past constitutions have been adopted by pre-existing national assemblies converted into constituent assemblies. The membership of such
national assemblies-cum-constituent assemblies has been partisan rather than national. Therefore none of our constitutions can honestly claim to derive its authority from the people. The present suggestion makes a total break with that tradition.

After the adoption of the constitution by the constituent assembly, it would still not have the force of law. The constitution will be enacted into law by a referendum conducted separately in the two parts of the Union. And in both cases a specified percentage of votes (majority? two-thirds?) would be needed for the constitution to be enacted into law. This procedure is somewhat analogous to the existing legislative process whereby a Bill becomes an Act when passed through the National Assembly but does not become law until assented to by the President. Enacting of a constitution through a referendum was done by, for example, the Irish people in 1937 who wanted to make a complete break with their colonial past.

The political and legal process suggested here is somewhat novel and may sound laborious. Let me therefore elaborate on the significance of some of the measures suggested here. In general if we are at all serious about this debate being a great democratic opening then we should take the historical opportunity to lay sound and firm foundations for future democratic politics.

Second, we need to make a clear break with our past politics of unanimity and lay a basis for national consensus. Indeed, we also need to make a legal break in constitutional terms with the past. The historical ancestry of our current Union Constitution is two-fold: the colonially-given Independence Constitution of 1961 and the Articles of Union of 1964. Both of these have had legal/constitutional problems. But even more important, they have had problems in terms of political legitimacy. The only way to make a legal and political break with the politically dubious past is to root the new constitution in the people themselves through a referendum. The Constitution would then derive its authority directly from the People and not from some pre-existing partisan body. Only such a constitution can truly proclaim to the whole world that 'We the People of Tanzania do hereby adopt, enact and give to ourselves this Constitution'.

This matter is not simply symbolic. Our legal history is full of events and incidents which show that state functionaries and political figures at the highest level have little respect for the constitution. Popular, charismatic leaders often feel and act as if they were above the constitution. Therefore it is important that the constitution not only has political legitimacy but is bestowed with a sanctity that cannot be easily defiled. In matters of religion, sanctity is derived from the authority of God; in matters of politics sanctity is derived from the authority of the People.

Finally, in our case, there is an additional reason why the constitution be adopted and enacted in the way suggested here. This is the recurrent uncertainty on the union between Tanganyika and Zanzibar. If the process suggested here is adopted, the form of the union that is finally embodied in the new constitution will be
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firmly grounded in the wishes of the peoples of Tanganyika and Zanzibar and thus have far greater legitimacy than the existing arrangement partly derived from, but in the main contrary to, the Articles of Union.

In short, what I have suggested can be summed up on two major levels: political and legal. The National Convention is essentially to crystallise a National Consensus on New Politics. The Constituent Assembly and the Referendum are essentially a legislative process to put in place a New Constitution solemnly embodying these 'New Politics'. The whole process will bestow on the New Democratic Constitution an unimpeachable legal authority as well as largely unquestionable political legitimacy. Such a new constitution will not again be a simple piece of legislation to be changed and amended to suit individual leaders. Rather it will be a solemn social contract between the state and the citizen to endure as long as that social contract (national consensus) lasts.

Democratic politics must have a legally sound and politically legitimate constitution. For it is through the constitution that the people both assert their sovereignty as well as cede part of it to the state. What is ceded to the state has to be clearly defined and its limits have to be clearly demarcated. And the processes of definition and demarcation must have gone through, and be seen to have gone through, intense and extensive debate in which all interests and forces have been given an opportunity to participate. That is the difference between an absolutist state and a representative one. That is the difference we have to establish in Africa between an authoritarian state of the post-independence era and the democratic state of the era of Second Independence.

The question before us is: Will the current debate be a beginning and an opening towards a new era or will it turn into just another gimmick of authoritarian rulers to keep themselves in power?

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No Shortcuts to Democracy: the Long March towards Modernity

Jean Copans

Fundamental theoretical and practical issues are raised by the present commitment to democracy. A realistic democratic programme will require intellectual prerequisites, essentially in the form of a shared political language in which debate between conflicting interests and forces can be conducted without resort to violence or repression, just as much as new institutional forms of multi-partyism. One requirement, slowly being initiated in a dialogue between historians and social actors, is to cast off the extra-African mechanisms for dictating social thought and the dead hand of the state on independent thinking so as to generate theories about Africa, its history and its prospects; to develop an African image of modernity that goes beyond the narrow mechanical process of 'modernisation'.

One specific task of social theorising would be to articulate a method for thinking about democracy appropriate for Africa, and which therefore must be rooted in the processes whereby actual political 'communities' beyond the state are constituted - which have to be recognised for what they are, often based on age, gender, ethnicity, religion - and the images and languages through which they express themselves. These two prerequisites will in turn depend on the active role and involvement with popular forces of African Intellectuals, who face difficult and deteriorating conditions in the availability of education, publishing outlets and the media. Nevertheless, African professional associations and journals are beginning now to set the terms of the debate on the meaning of democracy, human rights and modernity in Africa. This process will require a new social definition, a new mode of practice by intellectuals and a new kind of dialogue with the people.

Introduction

The failure of so-called socialism in Eastern Europe has been a shock to many; but for some of us the failure of socialist intellectuals to come to terms with the onslaught of 'the West' (Coca-Cola and Helmut Kohl; McDonalds and Francois Mitterand) has been particularly shocking. Is the decade of the 1990s to mark the end of ideology and demise of political radicalism?
At the ROAPE Conference on Democracy in September 1989 we were asked to take democracy seriously. My response was: 'No shortcuts to democracy'! Many thought then, and perhaps would still think now, that I was simply imitating Goren Hyden from a political perspective. Not at all. In fact, since that time I have written and published a substantial essay, 'The Long March of African Modernity: Knowledge, Intellectuals, Democracy', which explores in detail the basic issues presently facing African intellectuals and European Africanists. Of course, social and political analysis is not restricted to intellectuals and political activists; far from it. But we should surely be able to assess the theoretical and practical issues raised by a commitment to 'democracy' at this time and identify the intellectual prerequisites for any realistic democratic programme?

My major concern here is to contribute to the development of a genuine African political theory of social change capable of recognising the relationship between knowledge and democracy. I see three major areas for initial consideration: the relationship between the making of history and modernity in Africa; the possibility of an anthropological approach to the conception of democracy; and the present and future role of African intellectuals.

**History, Modernity and Development**

African Studies are clearly dominated today by History. This contributes very positively to our understanding of the present, of the ways in which this present was produced, and of the methods by which it could be modified and changed. Increasingly, history is seen as a dialectical process involving the more or less conscious creation of social and cultural history by social actors and by professional historians alike. Let me quote, at some length, from a few of the professional historians who have contributed to this new conception of history. The first quotation reveals the extent to which the historian has to incorporate the histories constructed by the social actors themselves:

*Here, we are primarily intrigued by the way in which these subjects are discussed, turned over, and debated among the Luo. We sense that this dynamic edge of discourse is, first, older than the twentieth century; second, more than a product of modern schooling; and third, other than simply a response to the depictions of outside observers. After all, for the Luo, more than for the outside observers of the Luo, what constitutes culture, what is correct behaviour, what is history, are questions that are heavily fought over. And, crucially, these struggles constitute essential pieces of the past and of the present of Luo society and culture; they are intellectual debates that power the process and shape the structure of Luo culture and society . . . we attempt a perspective both removed and intimate: removed so that one can gain control of the sociology and intellectual history of the ethnographic literature itself; yet intimate so that one can come to terms with the ways in which people - in ordinary, commonplace activities - have produced society and culture not only through social practice but also through the formation of histories and anthropologies (Cohen & Atieno-Odhiambo 1989).*

Another historian, Jewsiewicki, comments indirectly on this subject:
The past is given back its value (Fanon, 1967:170) because the struggle between con-
tending pasts is one of the most important social and political issues. Societies in Africa 
no longer need to deliver only one story (organized by the social science model) repro-
duced in many voices and filled with local names and events in order to prove their 
historicity. Since history today responds to internal conflict and struggle, our role is 
not to take it for granted and to subscribe to it, but to confront it in scholarly debate 
(Jewsiewicki 1989:37).

But the interaction between the people and the scholars is best illuminated in 
the work of Lonsdale:

My initial assumptions, from which all else follows, are that free political argument is 
essential to the formulation of alternative societal futures and that without such argu-
ment there is no sure means of mobilising active consent to present authority. But po-
litical argument demands self-awareness in its protagonists, a public acceptance of the 
moral autonomy of political actors and, perhaps above all, a usable political language.

By that I mean a commonly understood set of symbols which sum up, by allegory, myth 
and metaphor, the core values which ought to (but seldom do) govern the always disput-
able relationships between individuals and any society in their provision for the future, 
which is implicit in the way they reproduce the present out of the past. A political 
language unites people over what to argue about, it provides the images on which they 
can base their ideologies. Ideologies mobilise political support around social division 
and can be used in attempts to suppress debate, but they can neither enlarge under-
standing nor fire enthusiasm unless they accentuate, recreate, or manipulate the com-
mon symbols of the language. Agreement on symbolic values is thus a necessary precon-
dition for constructive debate about the distribution of their societal costs and benefits.

Unless they share a political language, people can pursue their conflicting interests 
only by coercion or evasion - both denials of the possibility of a shared and productive, if 
still disputed, future. A common political language and its inventive usage by the di-
vided members of a political community can be produced in only one way - by historical 
process. Historical awareness is the only form of self-knowledge (Lonsdale 1989:27-8).

My hypothesis is therefore the following: the production and reproduction of 
a society and the elaboration of knowledge concerning this same society, in-
tended for its own usage, are related in a specific way. The process of the 
making of modernity is the result of a certain type of formalisation of this 
relationship. In fact it is a double formalisation: legal and ideological on the 
one hand, and intellectual and scientific on the other. This formalisation then 
allows for a political synthesis. The autonomy of political thinking becomes 
the essence of modernity. The numerous theoretical, cultural and practical 
inventions of democracy since the French Revolution constitute ample histori-
ical proof of this phenomenon.

In Africa, modernity has taken the form of mere modernisation, of an im-
posed acquisition of various disorganised and disembodied traits of moder-
nity. It is not a *sui generis* process. Of course one could imagine modernisation 
without modernity; but it is a fact that in the western world the two phenom-
ena were concomitant from the 18th century onwards. In Africa today, how-
ever, it is quite the contrary: the two are totally separated and until now mod-
ernity remains more an imitation than anything else. Modernisation has pre-
ceded modernity; and this is a trap, because modernisation is a permanent
process to abort modernity. The process is even an intentional one: in contemporary Africa, the dominant and so-called hegemonic groups act very vigorously to crush any action or especially any thinking which might promote the double process that constitutes modernity.

We are not suggesting that Africa is still in a kind of mediaeval or renaissance phase. The logic of domination and power in Africa does not need, it seems, a formalisation of the social and scientific domains; this is still to some extent the realm of the west. African power-holders have been dispossessed (and have accepted this dispossession) of their own thinking about development, about their own development. This stems from the fact that development is not a mere economic and sociological transition: it is a procedure for maintaining the status quo on an international scale and it is the means (and, no longer the end) of development that are the true objective of political power.

Most intellectuals are integrated into the state bureaucracy. They have generally failed to develop any kind of ‘autonomous’ thinking. My conclusions are quite straightforward: the long and slow path of African history, the predominance of extra-African mechanisms for the production of social theoretical thought, and the absence of any kind of positive and dialectical relation between the groups in power and the ‘modern’ producers of such thinking have together impeded the making of modernity, as we have defined it. This is in no way a pseudo-evolutionist or racist appreciation of contemporary African social history. The situation is not a crisis, although it might become one if the actual form of development is not put into question. To conduct such an enquiry one should try and define an analytical method to help and map out the building blocks and the concepts for the development of democratic demands.

An Anthropological Method for Thinking Democracy

We must begin with the process whereby the various political communities are formed. Anthropo-logics, as George Balandier would put it, are the substance of all political messages and actions. ‘Natural communities’ do not exist any more; political communities are always historically constituted.

Age and gender are significant in all contemporary communities. And it is true that youth and women can be organised as such. Youth could become a political danger and maybe a political asset but it is yet far from clear that it can experience a common identification as such. Though Parpart (1988) has elaborated on this topic I am not sure one could come to the same conclusions with regard to women. There is a contradiction between these global anthropological conditions and the very localised and conjunctural form they are able to take as political forces. Associations, informal committees, and neighbourhood groupings do exist and are all very active for some precise purpose. But their overall scope is quite limited. Of course official and national groups or institutions are made up of patronage and clientele relations but these have in no way been able to condense the diffuse energy of age and gender.
The third social and cultural form, and the most problematic of all, is the ethnic group. Recent research in history and anthropology has generated new understandings and analyses in this respect. Ethnicity is a process, a basic political one, and not a form of false consciousness. The xenophobic nature of ethnic strife, the political condemnation of tribalism, are concrete realities which prove that the ethnic reference does have some capacity for mobilisation and political appeal and that we cannot do without it. The introduction by Leroy Vail to his *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa* concludes explicitly with this very point. Refuting the hypothesis of a modernising petty bourgeoisie creating its political idiom through ethnicity, the historian notes:

> It goes too far in depicting ordinary people as being credulous, blindly accepting the ethnic party line from their devious betters. It fails to explain why, today as in the colonial period, the ethnic message should find such resonance with ordinary people. Why, in short, have ordinary people chosen so often to support ethnic politicians rather than national politicians? What is in the ethnic message that is not in the nationalist message? One must once again guard against the assumption, necessary to this interpretation, that ordinary Africans act either irrationally or sentimentally (1989:5).

We should be careful because Lonsdale goes even further in this line of thought:

> The new historiography of ‘tribe’ could provide a language, not for the avoidance of cultural issues but for the celebration of the central cultural issue, the universal problem at the heart of all our particularities, which is the relationship between the individual and society. Far from being the creature of civic irresponsibility, ‘tribe’ has been one of Africa’s central metaphors of civic virtue. But without doubt, too, they are also among the few historically resonant sources available for the construction of a language of debate about the future, if only the interior perplexities of ‘tribe’ were to assume the same degree of importance in the textbooks as their external cultural pluralism. The familiar problems which people argue about are more important than the strange tongues in which they speak. The history of African political thought which would permit this transcendence of ethnic particularity by human universality has yet to be written, and the delicate statesmanship would still be needed lest it could be eloquent with a locally-constructed political language rather than tongue-tied by the studious avoidance of one (1989:137-138).

Ranger, Lonsdale and other Africanists (see also Bayart and Mbembe for example) mention yet another political community: that of religious organisations and institutions such as churches, brotherhoods and sects. It is as if a conscious cultural form of ethnicity was spread out all over Africa. In fact we have here a new broker between the people and the State. Muslim brotherhoods in Senegal, Christian churches in Kenya, help maintain social cohesion. Of course for a long time churches were direct instruments of the state, voices of authority and to some extent they still are. Mbembe questions the possible radical content of Christianity today; no model for a theology of liberation is in the making, unfortunately.

One last community or rather non-community should be mentioned: that of refugees. Over five million people are considered refugees in Africa. Statistically this is just one per cent of Africa’s population, but almost half of all the
world's refugees. Refugees are both a negation of nationalism and a prey to international domination and control. Refugees prove again that internal conflict and external intervention cannot be separated. Transnational bantustans are being established 'on a temporary basis'. What a paradox if this takes place just as the more permanent ones of South Africa may be about to disappear!

Let us now turn to the making of democracy itself. I shall distinguish three different processes: those of formation, those of realisation and those of political modernity. It seems impossible for me to think about democracy without referring to the written word. Oral traditions, and even more so modern 'oral traditions' (through radio and TV), are continually reinterpreted and transmitted. Cultural and political traditions are such that equality in the accumulation and distribution of information and knowledge seems impossible. Liberty of thought, of opinion and of expression can be experienced at an oral level but the true learning and sharing of political experience can only be discussed and valued objectively through the written form. Unfortunately many, many African languages are not being taught and read. The breaking down of the educational system, of academic research and teaching, is also a severe hindrance to democratic experience. Senegal is one of the very rare countries where a real plural and professional press (mainly weeklies and monthlies) can be found. But one should remember that it took years for this press to get rid of its very ideological tone and to promote a genuine political debate.

It is the very process of political representation and accountability that is thereby put into question. The experience of contradictory programmes or the report of a political mandate, the semantics of politics (what 'national' language, what conceptual and practical terms?) have never been the object of public scrutiny and debate. Even if other equivalent processes should be invented, the importance of an open relationship between political communities and their means of thinking and expression has to be acknowledged (refer to J.F. Bayart's theory of enunciation). But one must remember, at the same time, that we are thinking in terms of citizenship and not just of academic political actors. Our hypotheses have to be put into practice and into question through the daily creation of African political life.

Finally one comes to the concept of political modernity and to the process of formalisation I mentioned earlier. Here, it is impossible to suppress the influence of the west. Whatever the tragic outcome of Stalinism, whatever the melancholy reality of (western) democracy (see Bruckner 1990), those models were never applied in practice. But one has to know if some of its symbolic content can be used to facilitate the adoption of 'democratic' principles. Political symbols of western origin are volatile - both at the same time hypocritical ideologies when related to genuine and ordinary day to day values and practical efficient means of power, whether involving 'nationalist' rhetoric or repression and political silence. This explains why political modernity is being now defined through the symbol of human rights.
Human rights must be related in some ways to social reality. The current atmosphere of denunciation and witch-hunting, of ideological conformism, is more disturbing than simply the fate of political prisoners in Kenya. The 'Big Brother' perception of politics is a human rights problem; the scale and extent of domestic and civil violence is truly very depressing. But to speak of human rights is to raise also the question of the supervision and control of those rights by the State itself. Recent African history does not allow us to have confidence in the State for any legal, ideological or political matter. Multi-partism can always be reinvented by astute heads of State (like Bongo or Mobutu); and it is always possible to change semantics and symbols. But how can we propose new programmes, or rather new methods if 'the experts' do not carry out their job? (especially if they are also part of the problem, and therefore of the solution!). In my understanding 'the experts' are the African creators of culture and of ideas: writers, academics and intellectual brokers of all persuasions.

The Prospects for African Intellectuals

The material and the spiritual condition of African intellectuals today is quite bleak. Primary and secondary schools, universities and research institutes are overcrowded. The teaching is dogmatic and the contents are outdated. The diplomas are subject to marketing practices and qualifications can be invented when necessary. On the other hand, anti-intellectualism is strong and the brain drain severe, while repression (whether soft or violent, physical or moral) discourages many. With some exceptions (Nigeria, Senegal, Kenya or Zimbabwe), local publishers do not exist. Inter-African exchanges are limited and Africa's ignorance of itself is abysmal! I have experienced this very strongly during my four years in eastern and southern Africa.

This is a true cultural trauma. The historical and political conditions which have given rise to this situation have also created ambiguous and devious reactions and compensations. The ideological content of Pan-Africanism has very little to do with Africa. It is so far removed from any basic social need and demand that it is just another form of State ideology. Over-ideologisation, verbalism, and rhetoric are other stylistic forms of this reaction. In French-speaking Africa ethno-philosophy and the quest for authenticity were popular for a time up to the 1970s. Finally, international co-operation is effective only in the realms of 'expertise', music or providing sheer labour force!

The crisis at the institutional level determines to some extent the nature and the content of the crisis of African social thought. Quite a good example is the fate of marxism in academic, political and official thinking. I am particularly aware of the case of eastern and southern Africa as well as that of South Africa; but the analysis applies more widely. There is a strong disenchantment among African scholars; African studies are still dominated by the West. The critical traditions of the 1960s are still present in some ways; but the West itself is no longer the primary problem. The most important constraints seem to come in fact from within the group of intellectuals itself.
Nevertheless, an active and lively debate has taken place in several Pan-African and professional associations like CODESRIA (Dakar) or journals like SAPEM (Harare). Perspectives can be very self-critical (Shivji) or, on the contrary, quite nationalist in tone (Mandaza). A series of proposals have been suggested to revamp academic credentials among academics themselves and in society at large. In Senegal another debate has taken place. Journalists have been portrayed as playing the role of academics and the social constraints of the African way of life (how to preserve a personal space for the undertaking of ‘private’ intellectual activities) have been discussed in theweeklies. Some writers have suggested a critical view of their trade and propose to go back to African language (as does Ngugi) or to languages spoken by the people (as does Omotoso). So, slowly but surely, a critical and self-critical African appreciation of the role of intellectuals is being given voice. Whatever the causes of this phenomenon, whatever the solutions (and each national and professional group might have a different solution in mind), it is now possible for us, external and western academics, to participate openly in a debate initiated by African intellectuals, whether in Harare, Dar es Salaam or Dakar.

Conclusion

A social history, a social anthropology of knowledge seems therefore possible and might provide an efficient preface to a more direct political rethinking on the matter of modernity. We cannot by-pass this experiment because it enables us to cope with the demands of the day. First and foremost, abstract ideologies such as Pan-Africanism, ethno-authenticity or nationalism should be discarded. Genuine African thinking is not just a matter of semantics and self-congratulations. It can be original on all counts and develop in unprecedented fashion.

The question is: how should we understand Africa’s social cultural, political, reality and how can we share it, discuss it, transmit it in local vernacular ‘languages’ as well as in a conceptual and international form? Cultural and intellectual productions may be related in various ways and come to constitute a complex web of interacting components. But in Africa this is not yet the case. Popular novels, the concerns of the modernised elite and academic works are like isolated islands and reciprocal influences are few. There is a de facto parochialism which is both consolidated and undermined, in a negative perspective, by international cooptation and the brain drain.

There is a need to create a more dynamic interaction. This exists to some extent in Nigeria or Senegal. In some countries those isolated islands can be very popular or powerful but the division of labour and of social functions inhibits, through social stratification, intimate experiences and contacts. What is necessary is the creation of a new category of intellectual and cultural brokers and synthesizers. The popular intelligentsia, whether from ‘traditional’, rural backgrounds or from local level civil servants (teachers, health workers and extension agents), should be given more respect and status. The elite fraction of the
Intelligentsia should begin to acknowledge its existence and try to produce and diffuse popularised forms of knowledge and information in collaboration. I would even go so far as to say that literacy in maternal and vernacular languages should be openly tackled so that reciprocal dissemination of cultural and intellectual artefacts can be made possible.

Such a pragmatic project was undertaken by radicals and populists in the West during the 19th century (with unions and working class organisations and institutions) and the 20th century (with migrant populations). The intelligentsia should be made up of social reporters (like Jack London), cultural translators and brokers (like Emile Zola or even Charles Dickens) and of course of social thinkers of different kinds.

The project to which I refer needs pragmatic and empirical instruments of enquiry. Lenin told the revolutionary activist in *What is to be done?* to go and work in all classes of society. The idea is a good one if we relinquish the clandestine and subversive model of the Bolshevik party. Because this is the other side of the coin: we are in dire need of political theorising. This idea has to be put into practice for political theorising is a fundamental and historical task. Since there is no Pan-African, national or ethnic solution it must involve many people. That is why a transitional period of social and cultural experimentation has to be accepted. Social movements, political groupings and intellectuals must all change their way of thinking. It is a truly surgical job. I am not reverting to Amilcar Cabral’s theory of social suicide of the petty bourgeoisie. I am just saying: to produce modernity and therefore a transition towards a more ‘democratic’ form of society (not a purely political and institutional democracy), one has to acknowledge the role of intellectuals. But a new social definition has to be suggested and a new type of practice, both more down to earth and populist on the one hand and more theoretical on the other, has to be invented and elaborated.

Intellectuals should share their knowledge and find material ways to do so. But how will these changes come about? Massive demands do exist, at the educational level and in the information sector. The potentialities of the popular intelligentsia are tremendous. But how is it that academics seem to be removed from that very concrete world? I suggest, because the theories, even the radical ones, and the western models they associate with, have educated them not to do so! Is it not possible to invent languages and semantics, images and ideas, which can be grasped and shared throughout each society. The prophetic solitude of the intellectual has to disappear. This is the true paradox of African modernity: it has to begin again at the beginning! A beginning which has nothing to do with the European experience; a beginning that has surmounted the disastrous effects of imitating an aged and too ethnocentric model.

We western Africanists should collaborate as well because we too know all too well that the old approach is also an antiquated one, even for us.

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Bibliographic Note


A Critique of Marxism-Leninism as Theory and Praxis

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A systematic reconsideration of Marxism in theory and practice reveals the inadequacy, indeed the unacceptability, as far as democratic socialists are concerned of Marxism-Leninism. This article is, in essence, a critique of Marxism-Leninism and a plea for a less doctrinaire approach to both theory and practice. The point is not simply that Leninism flies in the face of all that makes Marxism desirable, nor simply that Leninism is immoral (as if this were not enough). It is that, although Leninism may be one of the logical consequences of Marxism, it contradicts the Marxist premise and the point of Marx's own work. This may lead us to ask whether Marx's texts display the required internal coherence for a scientific theory. It also considers the approaches within the Marxist-Leninist traditions which can be identified as deterministic Marxism and voluntarist Marxism neither of which is theoretically or ethically satisfactory. The general argument is related to Marxism and Marxism-Leninism in Africa.

Introduction

I am speaking of a ruthless criticism of everything existing, ruthless in two senses: the criticism must not be afraid of its own conclusions, nor of conflict with the powers that be.

Marx's theory of history, in its broad outline, is a theory of transcendence. The process of change involves the development of new stages out of earlier ones, each earlier stage containing the seeds of the new society which will emerge from and transcend it.

The final stage of development is the highest in which the greatest degree of human productive forces is released and history as we know it comes to an end. The end of history brings about the simultaneous fruition of the possibilities of social organisation and individual human creative talents: the two are interdependent. The central puzzle for Marxist activists, then, is to understand the relationship between this 'end of history' and their own role in actively attempting to bring it about.

Agency and False Consciousness

There is a general problem about action and 'consciousness'. It is traditional to
believe that human actions are causally related to prior beliefs and that it is this conscious or cognitive aspect of agency which distinguishes rational from irrational action. In order, therefore, for people to act in certain ways, they must believe certain things. No satisfactory answer has been found as to how the relationship between the cognitive and the purely physical aspect of agency can be conceptualized. This problem exists for all theorists of agency. But Marxist theory adds a more complex twist. Marx says that 'all thought is a product of and reflects the social conditions of one’s class position; that is, it has a social and material base' (Marx in Tucher 1978:13).

When (as in ‘past history’), these social relationships are distorted our notions about social relations and humanity in general are similarly distorted. For example, it is during the division of labour when social activities are fixed and consolidated, that we experience a ‘contradiction’ between our own individual interest and the interest of the community. This contradiction is real in one sense, because it captures current empirical reality. But it is ultimately false if we believe that there is always a conflict between the individual and the group’s interest (Marx 1976:49-50).

The social basis of all thought gives rise to the theory of false consciousness. In ordinary, everyday action, we may hold false beliefs about our own interests and may be deluded into acting on these beliefs or illusory desires. But the problem of false consciousness is particularly acute for Marxists. It is an essential part of the theory itself that, in all past history, social thinking in general is necessarily false. In Marxism, consciousness is a product of social relationships and institutional arrangements themselves. Our thoughts and beliefs reflect, pattern or copy those arrangements (Elster 1985:468-76). As my beliefs are a product of my social - and my class - situation, then my (individual) interests reflect of my class interests. Any actions I take to further my interests will advance those class interests.

However, just as the economic mode of production is controlled by the owners of production, for Marxists, so are the ‘ideological’ products controlled by the ruling classes. The beliefs we hold that justify institutions such as the class, the educational and the legal system and the existence of the armed forces positively support the status quo. The ruling class does not rule merely by force: it rules because those beliefs which further its rule are distributed throughout all social classes. To hold such beliefs is unwittingly to maintain these social relationships. Even the working class has social beliefs (which stimulate or retard actions) that are more likely to reflect the interests of the ruling class than its own. This aspect of Marxist theory is very handy, since it helps to explain all kinds of historical phenomena, including factory, rather than class, consciousness; the existence of a conservative working class; working-class nationalism instead of internationalist; reformist, rather than radical, trade unions and the fact that the working classes have not achieved an anti-capitalist revolution, either nationally or internationally.
Consciousness & Change: the Revolutionary Proletariat

There is a difference between the belief that revolutionary change can be imposed upon the people from above and the belief that change can and must be brought about by the people themselves who, desiring and willing change, take steps to effect it. In the latter case the willing and the acts intended to bring about change are produced by the same persons. There are good general psychological reasons why change should be effected by the very people who stand to benefit from it. Agents are less likely, for example, to be misled about their own interests than others and are also less likely to demand change that serves the interests of others.

In Marxist theory the necessary unity between the agents of revolutionary change and the interests which are fulfilled by such action is even more tightly drawn. Mankind as a whole is the author and agent, the subject of history. The object of historical change is also mankind: but a perfected mankind which recognises and realises its own species-being - its human, social, potential. For Marx, the subject of history is mankind - not something abstracted from human agency, such as the Hegelian 'spirit', or the Christian 'God' and not self-perpetuating social forces. One of the conditions of revolutionary change is that people are intellectually and emotionally prepared for and in harmony with the technological, cultural and economic implications of revolution. This means that the people must be more than the mere objects of revolutionary change: they must themselves be agents of transformation. Marx recognized that to act correctly we have to be able correctly to perceive reality. The 'reform of consciousness' is therefore indicated (Marx in Tucher 1978:15).

The transcendence of 'past history' involves the transcendence of the division of labour and all it implies. In particular, the final revolution brings about the end of a situation where people are merely the objects of others' actions, instruments used by others to achieve their goals. The end of history marks the end of human disunity, of the opposition between people and the fragmentation of persons within themselves. This can come about only when people cease to see themselves, or others, as the passive objects of history, or as the instruments of other peoples' desires.

The importance of the proletariat now becomes clear. As a universal class, it is universally oppressed and therefore has a common, objective interest in change. It is a universal class because it is the last and largest group to be brought into being and socialized into a common relation in the division of labour. There can be no other group, according to Marx, more numerous, more united in oppression and more 'modern' than the proletariat. More importantly, it is a universal class because it has the role of overthrowing capitalism and thus bringing about a classless (a universal) society. Its universality lies in the fact that both its actual fate and the inevitable result of its future actions will be to bring about a universally united mankind - to fulfil, that is, to actualize the human species being. This cannot be done on its behalf by a third party, for what is required is a coincidence of the objective social conditions with the
subjectively-felt needs of the proletariat which will engender the revolution, bringing together humanity as the subject and object of history. Institutions cannot be transformed until humans are transformed, and vice versa. The process of change takes in everything, for all are interdependent.

There are problems with this model of agency. It would be useful if we could simply say, 'the people want this, they know they want it and they know how to bring it about'. But it is not always rational to do this; for it is well known that a group, just like any individual agent, may be tricked or bribed into action and that its demands do not necessarily reflect its actual wants. Even worse, people’s perceived needs may not reflect their actual, true, interests. The people’s subjectively-felt needs may not coincide with their objectively true wants. Such is the problem of populism. Since not everything that people want is good for them, their actions may not always be rational. But Marx’s theory demands that the larger course of historical change be rational.

Consciousness & Change: the Revolutionary Party

In the case of change imposed from above - from the government, for example - the converse problem emerges. How can we trust a government to know what is in the people’s best interests, to will what is in the people’s best interest and to attempt to bring about the conditions for fulfilling those interests? No-one has greater reason to be suspicious of governments, whether they call themselves revolutionary or not, than a Marxist. For there to be a State at all - for there to be instruments of force in the hands of a few, for governments to be able to enact laws which the people must obey, for the de-politicisation of civil society, a division must exist between the rulers and the ruled. This is a political division, based on an unequal distribution of power in which the interests of the ruling class are, at the most minimal, to promote the status quo. It is also, according to Marx, an economic division, for political power needs economic support. State power can be maintained only against the interests of the working class.

For these reasons, the Marxist theorist is faced with two questions: how, if at all, the universal working class can perform its revolutionary role, and how to understand its failure to do so. Before I discuss the orthodox solution, however, it is necessary to consider the beliefs justifying the socialist revolution itself. I am not concerned here with the social class origin of socialist belief, but with the reasons why it is so compelling.

The Desirability of Socialism: Bourgeois Liberties

If socialism means anything, it must mean that the proletariat, in acting on its own immediate interests but in the long-term interests of humanity, rises against bourgeois democracy in order to smash the relations upon which bourgeois society rests but also to transcend by enlarging those aspects of bourgeois society which set it above feudalism, primitive accumulation and slavery.
Socialism must replace and destroy bourgeois society without returning to a situation where the group exercises total control on the productive and creative life of the individual. Marx conceived socialism as a state in which the liberties and values which had developed over the generations (freedom of speech) would not only continue to obtain but have, for the first time, real significance. The fact that in capitalist societies such freedoms are exercised only on behalf of capital does not entail that they can somehow be superseded under socialism. In criticizing these capitalist 'freedoms' Marx says:

*thus man was not liberated from religion: he received religious liberty. He was not liberated from property: he received the liberty to own property. He was not liberated from the egoism of business; he received the liberty to engage in business (Marx in Tucher 1978:45).*

But religious liberty, the liberty to own property and to engaged in business are, all the same, liberties of a sort and to be preferred to religious intolerance and landlessness. Marx continues:

*Human emancipation will only be complete when the real, individual man has absorbed into himself the abstract citizen; when, as an individual man, in his everyday life, in his work, and in his relationships, he has become a 'species being'; and when he has recognised and organised his own powers as 'social powers' so that he no longer separates this social power from himself as 'political power' (Marx in Tucher 1978:46).*

This is the final stage of liberation: social nature must not blind us to the fact that the point of the analysis is that liberation is desirable. Rosa Luxemburg believed that, although democratic institutions were not perfect, to abolish them would be much worse, as this would paralyse the political life of the masses. Socialism is not and cannot be the perfection of the subordination of the individual to the social whole. It is the Leninist version of Marxism which propagated this belief and perfected the instrument for achieving it.

**The Desirability of Socialism: Human Perfectibility**

The attraction of Marxism rests on its claim to show the inevitability and desirability of human potential and development. Its inevitability is guaranteed by the theory of history which purports to have uncovered the laws leading societies from one form of development into other, higher forms. Its desirability lies in its demonstration that in each higher form of social organization, human beings increasingly discover or actualize themselves and their true nature. Self-discovery entails the recovery of humanity's truly social nature.

The freedom of the individual to express their own tastes and personality, explore her own interests, and thus develop her human potential is a central goal of Marxist theory. Under socialism, human beings are emancipated from false consciousness and from delusions about their true nature as well as from socially-derived beliefs which conceal this truth. They are in harmony with themselves. This entails they are in harmony with others and with the social institutions, for it is characteristic of humans that they are social producers.
Marx criticizes capitalism, not because it is inegalitarian but because of its divisive and dehumanizing characteristics, from which inequality flow. He remarks contemptuously:

'Equality' is nothing but a translation of the German 'ich = ich' into the French, political form. Equality as the 'groundwork' of communism is its 'political' justification, and it is the same when the German justifies it by conceiving man as 'universal self-consciousness' (Marx in Tucher 1978:99).

To understand Marx's critique of capitalism it is necessary to comprehend that it was the dehumanisation of capitalism which originally appalled him. Under capitalism, the human being is alienated from his/her true nature. The fruits of human labour are alienated from her/him both during the work process and afterwards, for they become the property of the capitalist. They stand above and beyond the labourer as commodities, just as the labour power which is sold in unequal return for a wage becomes an alienated commodity. The labourer is alienated from others and from the productive process. Alienation means that what belongs to a person is taken away - leaving impoverishment. Humans are stripped of humanity. It is this which is wrong with capitalism.

**Inevitability - Version I: Deterministic Marxism**

Let us examine historical materialism as a deterministic scientific theory without any of the 'voluntarist' elements which scientific socialists, from Kautsky onwards, were to discover in Marxism. I shall deal here only with the broad outline of the theory since it is well enough known not to need detailed exposition. Historical materialism offers a theory of history as the unfolding of iron laws generated in the 'economic' base of a mode of production. Contradictions in this base lead to conflicts in the social relations of production which, themselves, lead to intolerable social stress (pauperization and polarization) ending in revolution. Consciousness, in this model, has a direct and simple causal relationship with material conditions. As material conditions change, human consciousness spontaneously ignites. The revolutionary group establishes a new form of society based on its own interests which absorbs all the developments of the previous form, so that each new mode of society is higher than the last.

This process happens throughout history, gradually drawing together more and more individuals into productive relations at once cooperative in form and conflictful in nature. At the end of history there is a world revolution during which people realise themselves as social beings at the same time as they realise the social institutions which permit and express the power and creative energy of cooperative nature. All other forms of institution which rely upon conflict and the control of one set of humans by another are destroyed as their material base disappears.

In this scenario the final revolution cannot be hastened, for its development can happen only when the seeds for the destruction of capitalism are ripe. It is
only history itself which can show us, retrospectively, when that time has 
come. Human agents have little conscious role to play in hastening or initiat-
ing the revolution because any revolution brought into being before its time 
will either wither or become incorporated into capitalism. The iron laws of ne-
cessity determine the development of material conditions.

In every revolution human needs and interests area also transformed. During 
'past history' oppressed groups fight for reforms or adjustments within the 
existing framework and under the current laws. They seek their own interests 
and it is only those interests which are met in the new order. In the communist 
revolution, however, the workers become conscious of their historic role as a 
universal class and their subjectively-felt needs coincide for the first time with 
objectively-true necessities: necessities which are true for all people, not just 
for the proletariat. The development of true consciousness, and the shattering 
of false consciousness are, however, events determined by the development of 
social and economic forces rather than the result of spontaneous reasoning or 
original thought. It is important to emphasise that in this scenario no amount 
of activity by revolutionary vanguards, by political parties, by charismatic 
leaders or by the workers themselves can either hasten the revolution or, in-
deed, deflect it from its path.

What is wrong with Determinism?

In this version we are spared the political manoeuvering of a Lenin or Stalin, 
or a vanguard Communist Party. We see Marxism as a theory of history which 
is, on the one hand, unattractively determinist, but as attractively non-coer-
cive, on the other. Deterministic Marxism, however, is theoretically unsound. 
It lacks crucial elements of full-blown Marxism, the distinction between true 
and false consciousness. This distinction cannot do any work, for it is irrele-
vant to a determinist whether people know the truth or not. When the time is 
ripe, consciousness mechanically coincides with the objectively true and nec-
essary conditions for the fulfilment of history. This is, quite simply, bad soci-
ology. Our experience shows that mind is not linked to material conditions in 
this fashion: if it were, prediction would be a sociological possibility, and it is 
not. In moral terms, determinism forbids the allocation of responsibility for 
actions, since the agent is a chain in a series of causal events which he/she 
does not generate. It is incredible that Marx's critique of the inhumanity of 
capitalism could generate a theory of a historical process which simply omits 
humans as conscious agents of change.

The most obvious practical advantage of this form of Marxism however, is 
that, as an impoverished theory of the relationship between consciousness 
and action, it paradoxically allows us to respect and cherish the actual, con-
crete consciousness of actual, living human beings in both moral and in ana-
lytical terms. This respect for concretely existing individuals cannot be thought 
of as a 'bourgeois' addition to Marxism for it is centrally in keeping with the 
general Marxist critique of capital and methodology.
[we set] out from real, active men, on the basis of their real life process demonstrating the development of the ideological reflexes and echoes of this life process . . . This method is not devoid of premises . . . its premises are men, not in any fantastic isolation and rigidity, but in their actual empirically perceptible process of development (Marx 1976).

It also conforms to the Marxist approach to sociology and history in which individuals must be respected in their own right as agents subjected to social and historical forces.

**Inevitability - Version II: Voluntarist Marxism**

One paradox of determinist Marxism then is that it protects the (flawed but authentic) subjectivity of the proletariat against the interests of any third party - by definition, determinists have no interest in consciousness. Leninist instrumentalism and utilitarianism - while also producing a theory in which proletarian consciousness is the central concern. For Lenin, the very subject and object of history, the very beneficiary of eons of historical development - the proletariat, must be treated as the tool of history and the instrument of the Party. Leninism is predicated upon the belief that action requires consciousness and that if the 'right' agents will not take necessary action, they must be manipulated - for force. In moral terms, then, instrumentalist Marxism is the obverse of determinist Marxism. Leninism utilizes the two-tier theory of true and false consciousness to legitimate the use of all humanity as instruments for the development and protection of state power.

In Leninism, creative agency is the prerogative of the Party. The Party is the revolutionary vanguard acting on behalf of an ignorant proletariat. Only Party and the State are truly revolutionary because only they have a clear grasp of the scientific theory of history (Marxism-Leninism). In Leninism, the proletariat is the instrument of the struggle, rather than the agent or goal of transformation. Whatever forms of social organisation it evolves that do not correspond with received Party doctrine can be ruthlessly overturned and replaced.

It is hard to understand, of Leninism, why Marxism actually needs a working class at all, since it appears that the only thing standing between the world and socialism is the comparatively small size of the Party, which makes it difficult for it to seize and maintain force. For Lenin a spontaneous working-class uprising could not initiate revolution, for the working-class character is indelibly bourgeois. According to Lenin there are only two kinds of thinking: socialist and bourgeois. Workers do not necessarily possess socialist consciousness (for to do so is to be armed with the correct theory). They must then possess bourgeois consciousness; Kolakowski comments:

*This is supplemented by a second inference: the working-class movement in the true sense of the term, a political revolutionary movement, is defined not by being a movement of workers but by possessing the right ideology, the Marxist one, which is 'proletarian' by definition. In other words, the class composition of a revolutionary party has no significance in determining its class character* (1978, 387-90).
Leninism is best understood as a species of instrumental and utilitarian thought, where the immediate and long-term needs and interests of living people are subordinated to the supposed future interests of humanity. Leninism, seen in this light, is merely another ideology of control: one which has a strongly Durkheimian and functionalist character. There is no substantial difference between the aims of Durkheim as social reformer and Lenin as revolutionary in this respect, except, of course, that for Lenin all and every means to achieve this goal is permissible, while for Durkheim the means of achieving social control is rather more innocuous.

Lenin’s solution to alienation is to destroy from above the existing order, including the proletariat, all morality and all bourgeois liberties. His very real admiration for capitalism is restricted to its efficiency, the work discipline of labour, particularly Taylorism, as a method of increasing productivity, its order and organisation.

*Socialism is inconceivable without large-scale capitalist engineering based on the latest discoveries of modern science. It is inconceivable without planned state organisation which keeps tens of millions of people to the strictest observance of a unified standard in production and distribution* (Lenin 1968:19).

Capitalism is seen in purely utilitarian terms as a solution to under-productivity. It can thus be emulated by socialists desiring economic development. Socialist state capitalism is preferable to ordinary state capitalism only because, according to Lenin, the former represents the dictatorship of the proletariat. But, as we have already seen, this does not mean the real dictatorship of the real proletariat, but the dictatorship of the Party acting in the (supposed) interests of the proletariat.

While instrumentalism does not necessarily lead to these authoritarian conclusions, the possibility always exist that it will, unless restrictions are placed on Marxism-Leninism to prevent the immorality and the glorification of State brutality and violence that Leninism permits. One such restraint might emerge from recognising the initially moral character of Marxism, with a commitment to people as ends in themselves rather than as means to a further end. Another might be to see that Marx’s critique of capitalism also appeals (covertly) to a notion of the psychological damage to human nature inflicted by capitalism. The terms ‘alienation’, ‘oppression’, ‘exploitation’, after all, refer to the actual psychic damage suffered by real individuals as a result of inhuman social arrangements. A third might be to assert that Marx-Leninism, although claiming to be scientific, is not. This could lead us to examine other developments of Marx’s own thought, like the Luxemburg variant, which has impeccable credentials but lacks the catastrophic consequences of Marx-Leninism.

Yet another strategy could take the form of carefully limiting the holist framework within which the Marxist system takes shape. Marx’s view is usually interpreted as implying that, as the individual is embedded in (and is thus the product of) social relationships, it is justifiable to protect the social whole (the
State, the Party), in its present and its future genesis, at the expense of the individuals who compose it. Part of the holist premise could be preserved (for Marx himself asserted that there is no dichotomy between individual and society) while outlawing some of the conclusions which flow from it; that we are therefore entitled to kill individuals to further the revolution.

What is wrong with Leninism?

By denying the importance of the subjectivity of the proletariat, Lenin undermines the whole point of Marxist theory. The flowering of human nature which is meant both to produce and to be a product of the revolution is replaced by Lenin with mere economic development of the nation state (which is one of Marx's central targets for attack). Leninism fails to grasp that the unity of subjectivity and objectivity in the revolutionary act is not a poetic afterthought of Marx's. It is central to his whole theory of revolution. Without this unity there could be no guarantee of real change, for without it the people would not have changed sufficiently for real revolution to take place. Without this unity, the State must continue to oppress, and society must continue to be divided. Indeed, without this unity there can be no communism for, essentially, nothing has changed except that power has changed hands.

A second, major, theoretical flaw of Leninism is that it advances an unacceptable and unwarranted theory of knowledge. Only certain people have access to the truth. Those who cannot, or do not wish to, read the works of Marx, Engels and Lenin, are by definition the victims of false consciousness. This doctrine would be considered absurd were it not so pernicious in its consequences. As a doctrine of revelation masquerading as science it deserves to be treated with contempt. It gives no grounds for the proletariat to trust the Party. Those of us who have suffered under the guidance of a ruling party (socialist or otherwise) may have remarked on the similarity between socialist parties and their non-socialist counterparts in Africa. They may remember Weber's insistence that bureaucratic organisation, not 'ideology' is the single major feature of political success; and that it is bureaucratic organisation which is the overriding characteristic of all contemporary societies, socialist and capitalist alike. Those of us who have had this experience may doubt the capacity of any party to prescribe for us our needs, let alone meet them.

What about the purely practical advantages of Leninism? It is often stated that the USSR has experienced astonishing economic development. But economic development on its own cannot be a distinguishing mark of communism. Marxists cannot justify political oppression by appealing to economic development, for it is emancipation which is the aim of Marxism. Yet Leninism justifies present oppression, authoritarianism and terror. Are these 'political goods' an improvement on the flawed bourgeois liberties of which Marx is so rightly critical? Can they be considered a suitable basis for future liberties?
Marxism in Africa

What is sad about Marxist intellectuals in Africa is that they refuse to look dispassionately at actually existing Marxism and thus to recognize its flaws. Such recognition is required if we can begin to save Marxism or to transcend it by developing an indigenous post-Marxist theory. One reason for the lack of internal criticism of Marxism is that it is, above all, a philosophical theory before it is a theory of historical development and long before it is a theory of praxis. In Africa, philosophy is not introduced at school, not taught in all universities: the necessary tools of critique and/or reconstruction are lacking.

Instead of being considered as theory, Marxism-Leninism is used dogmatically and unphilosophically as a simple and singularly blunt-edged instrument for criticizing former colonial and current neo-colonial powers. In internal politics, it becomes an instrument of control wielded by ruling classes in their own interests, thus giving the lie in a very practical way to Lenin's notion that the party of scientific-socialism is by definition revolutionary. We should note that the Russian Revolution itself by no means followed the pattern predicted by Marx:

*It [the Russian Revolution] was a communist revolution in the sense that it transferred state power to the Communist Party, but not in the sense of confirming Marxist predictions as to the fate of capitalist society* (Kolakowski 1978:481).

For African Marxists, Marxism-Leninism tends to replace the Bible as dogma. It has become a set of moral and practical rules to be learned and uncritically applied as a recipe for action to all situations. Marxists believe that baking Marxism-Leninism will produce a socialist cake: that any other mixture is a contemptible capitalist *kachasu* (brew). Seduced by the moral content of Marxism and its supposedly practical consequences, intellectuals take up an attitude which represents a simple-minded and anti-intellectual reflex to all socialism. This is unworthy of the African people. The fact that we in Africa are opposed to imperialism and regard self-determination as one of our highest goals is perfectly compatible with careful critique of Marxism itself and a recognition of its fatal flaws.

These flaws should be a matter of debate, out of which genuine theorizing can emerge. The debate needs to be placed in a wider and more philosophical context than a display of our bleeding hearts. Our politicians may choose to use Marxism-Leninism in their rallies as an arsenal for identifying and labelling the enemies of the people and for displaying their self-described revolutionary credentials. Such tactics are unworthy of intellectuals engaged in theoretical work.

Can we not raise the level of debate? One way would be to return to Marx, rather than remaining fixated on the vulgarized filter of Leninist tracts. It would be worth understanding why many Western Marxists and critical theorists have dissented from the Marxist-Leninist tradition. This may require a certain amount of philosophical training, particularly in epistemology, which deals
with questions of truth and knowledge. Theories purporting to be scientific do not derive their truth from the fact that they coincide without desires or moral intuitions and dogmatism is no substitute for thought.

But Marxism is not merely a claim to truth. There is, in addition, a constant ambivalence among Marxists about the status of the moral basis of the critique and its self-proclaimed scientificity. This ambivalence must be addressed. The justification of Marx’s critique of capitalism lies, not in the fact that he believed that it made people politically and economically worse off than some other system, but because of its damaging effects on actual living individuals. Marx himself is, at least in a large part of his writings, anti-utilitarian. He does not suggest that actual living people should be sacrificed for the good of future generations, even for the good of man. His determinism makes such sacrifices unnecessary. His humanism makes such sacrifices abhorrent. It is therefore contradictory for Marxists to criticise the dehumanizing effects of capitalism but advocate the institution of a far more inhuman type of ‘socialism’ which is self-avowedly, triumphantly, openly instrumental in its approach to human beings and whose sole aim appears to be the perpetuation of the State.

Conclusion

I have tried to show the flaws of both determinist and voluntarist Marxism in the above pages. Many have been seduced by the elements of truth and the grandeur of Marx’s critique of capitalism both in its moral and its analytical aspect. They have attempted to tailor the unacceptable aspects of Marxism so that a coherent theory can be salvaged by an adroit manipulation of these two distinct elements. Perhaps Marxism can be salvaged in some way - though not by determinists or voluntarists. It is perfectly possible that a Marxist type of socialism or communism will one day emerge, as predicted, and that the laws of history which Marx believed he expressed will be vindicated. But, as this century draws to a close - nearly 100 years after the death of Marx - it may be right to say boldly that his great vision is irremediably flawed. As a revolutionary theory, the flaws are only too sadly obvious. As a political programme, there is little currently in it to distinguish it from contemporary capitalism. As science, its status is in doubt.

There are of course intellectuals so blinded by the self-proclaimed ‘scientificity’ of Marxism-Leninism that they are prepared to mistrust the ability of ordinary folk to engage rationally in the political process, to decide wisely about themselves and their own future, and to work for a better future without throwing away the gains of the past. It is to such people that this essay is addressed. Leninism is a doctrine lacking in philosophical content and in common humanity. It undermines the premises of Marxism in two ways: first, by removing revolutionary agency from the actual proletariat and placing it in the hands of the Party. Second, by negating the original premise of socialism: that it is actual human beings in their daily lives who count in the real world. The use of force against the people negates this principle and renders socialism
empty. More than this, it renders socialism immoral. Socialism cannot be predi-
cated upon such violence. As a body of belief socialism is empty of meaning
unless it proclaims its allegiance first and foremost to people, not to scientific
socialism and, far less, to that anomaly - 'the socialist state'.

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**Bibliographic Note**


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The Future of Southern Africa: What Prospects After Majority Rule?

William G. Martin

In the debates about a post-apartheid future, the prospects for the region as a whole have been ignored. They depend first on the position of southern and South Africa in the global division of labour: this has worsened more than most areas since 1950 - even South Africa is more dependent today on exporting primary products; and regional trade, despite the Southern African Conference on Coordination and Development (SADCC), is declining. This deterioration could continue under the redefinition of economic activities now occurring in the world economy. These prospects also reflect the inherited realities: over and above the modest efforts of SADCC, southern Africa’s long relations with the South African economy make it into a whole that is more than just a geographically specific set of peripheral states.

Three possible scenarios are explored: the region’s renewed and enhanced subordination to an apartheid-free South African economy; the break-up of regional ties and the subordination of each of the countries as separate ‘peripheries’ of one section or other of the developed core, as it itself is being redefined between the North Atlantic and Pacific; an alternative, equitable, cooperative regional association, embracing SADCC and South Africa. In the light of historical experience in southern Africa and elsewhere, this latter will face severe odds, cannot be left to dominant interests, and is only possible with regional alliances of anti-systemic forces.

The Lessons of History: Region Formation and the World Economy

In both good times and bad, the lure of a regional approach to economic development has remained strong across the African continent. The 1980s, opening with such hope and closing with despair, were no exception. If at the beginning of the decade the OAU called for accelerated development based on regional and continental alliances, by the end of the decade even the World Bank accepted the importance of regional associations for development in the 1990s. Set atop the wreckage of past regional bodies, and faltering contemporary constructions, such pronouncements remain for the large part calls for future action.
At first glance southern Africa would appear to be no exception. If one searches the literature of the last decade this issue is usually discussed in terms of three differing political projects: those of the SADCC states, those of the Western powers, and those of the apartheid regime. Yet each of these projects operates upon a pre-existing regional economic network. Few recognize how distinctive this phenomenon is in terms of the capitalist world-economy. Far from seeking to forge regional ties, as is the case for almost all other regional projects in Africa and the Third World, southern Africa presents an area where accumulation has long operated within and through deeply entrenched regional capital, labour, and commodity networks.

These historical legacies make it difficult to cast development in this area as a process contained within national borders, or even regional development as the simple coordination of national economies. Yet in the absence of any sustained study of long-term regional patterns of accumulation, most recent discussions of southern Africa fall back upon the direct application of core-periphery stereotypes. The lessons drawn from such sources are mixed, as few regional formations have been long sustained, much less successful. Many critics, such as Dan Nabudere (1985:113-34), have come to the conclusion that regional associations can only serve the interests of the imperialist powers. Here the record of failure to promote more self-reliant patterns of growth, either in Africa or elsewhere in the Third World, figures most predominantly. It is not difficult, furthermore, to extend such conclusions to SADCC, dependent as it is upon extra-regional political and economic powers for its planning decisions, financial resources, and technical means to carry out its projects.

More common, however, are studies which present SADCC as the counter-example, the case of a planning body that has asserted regional initiatives in the face of countervailing demands by imperialist forces operating through and on the behalf of the South African regime. As Stoneman (1988a:14) has acerbically observed in a review of the literature, 'Why is writing about SADCC usually so worthy and tedious? The question of course is rhetorical, because everyone (well almost everyone) thinks that SADCC is a 'Good Thing, a Unique Initiative', the best way of escaping from dependence on South Africa and so forth'. Evidence in support of such claims is drawn from the very endurance of SADCC, the serious commitment of regional leaders to it, and its success in implementing a variety of projects. While not overstating the argument, such views present SADCC as a bold attempt to counter imperialism.

Fulcrum for imperialist penetration or self-reliant development? Such opposing conclusions regarding SADCC and regional associations are debated by the analysis of political manoeuvres on the part of dominant political forces, seeking to determine whether the interests of powerful core states and multinational capital are being served by SADCC, or an alliance with South African capital's project for regional hegemony, or direct bilateral ties to the Northern hemisphere. It could be asserted that such conflicting evidence and arguments express the effects of the struggle against apartheid. And it is indeed true that
foreign capital and core powers have scrambled, in the face of unprecedented mass pressure, to sever themselves from overt alliances with apartheid in order to safeguard their long-term interests. Against this background, what might appear contradictory, such as outside powers' simultaneous pursuit of the maintenance of their interests in South Africa and support for surrounding states and SADCC, becomes understandable. Yet this observation sheds little light on the region-wide structures of accumulation that engender and constrain dominant and subordinate classes. It is here that much of the current analysis falters, for the situation in southern Africa does not match the standard expectations derived from models of core or peripheral areas, or the relationships between them.

But southern Africa is not simply a geographically-specific collection of peripheral states relating to various core powers, but a region of the world-economy marked by internal centre-hinterland relationships as well. At the heart of the networks that comprise this region stands of course apartheid South Africa. Yet to place South Africa at the centre of the region does not immediately disentangle the puzzle of centre-hinterland relationships within and beyond the region. Has apartheid South Africa been an intrinsic 'expression of peripheral capitalism' in the words of Samir Amin (1987:2) or an 'imperialist state' in its own right as argued by Derek Chitala (1987:17-18)? From these two different positions flow divergent analyses of the history of the formation of the region, its present structure, and its future.

We have argued elsewhere (Martin:1990a) that South Africa has throughout the post-1945 period maintained a distinctively semi-peripheral position in the global division of labour. The achievement of this position occurred, moreover, during the inter-war period and was made possible by the regional and world conditions of that imperialist epoch: a great depression, the breakup of the world market and the last vestiges of the British free trade system, and a 30-year war for hegemonic succession (Martin: 1990b; 1990c). Quite contrary to views which assert South Africa was the direct creation of imperialism, there is little evidence that South Africa's inter-war advance was propelled by either overseas imperialist designs or even by local (monopoly) capital.

This last point demonstrates that capitalist states and capitalist actors within and without southern Africa can differ in their intents and actions regarding regional formation, for they too confront two, often contradictory, factors: they must deal with relationships that fall beyond any pattern of straightforward core-peripheral relationships. Such difficulties are further compounded by world and regional economic conditions which have had decisive effects on regional initiatives and even the most advanced state, South Africa.

The parallels between the post-war and inter-war periods should not be overdrawn. Under the conditions of US hegemony the South African state forged strong alliances with overseas capital and leading core powers. Despite this, there is little evidence of any significant advancement in the strength of the
country's accumulation processes within the world division of labour throughout the post-war period. To be sure, South African and foreign capital benefited financially, as did the apartheid regime. Yet today the country is more dependent than ever before upon exporting primary products to an increasingly hostile world market. Since the mid-1970s all the states of the region have been hard hit by falling returns from their structural role in the global division of labour, including South Africa. South Africa, no less than other states in the region, has witnessed in the 1970s and 1980s an ever-growing dependence upon export markets, falling terms of trade, and a rising international debt burden.

In this light, what is one to make of the counter-posed realities of entrenched regional economic relationships and the prospects of regional planning? One important conclusion may be found in the lesson that the regional economy was formed and maintained through inter-state political initiatives, and that these depended heavily upon the state of the world-economy. The post-war alliance against decolonisation and majority rule on the part of settler and colonial power thus built upon inter-war achievements, forging in the process an even tighter regional structure. Although conditions of global expansion facilitated this process, political power in this instance operated as a delaying if not countervailing force to the reopening of the world market, which elsewhere on the continent established intensified North-South, core-peripheral relationships.

This was especially evident in the degree to which independence in the northern rim of southern Africa was followed by increasing strains upon the cohesion and reach of regional economic relationships, and an orientation away from the South African market, but rarely towards other regional powers. As the political structuring of southern Africa was decisively shattered in the 1970s as a result of wars of national liberation, and the world-economic crisis was unleashed, the dissolution of regional relationships followed in their wake. If one were to measure regional interdependence by factors such as commodity trade, one would conclude that the extra-region orientation of production accelerated in the 1970s, long before SADCC was formed (Martin, 1990d). The same would be true as well for labour flows, where South African mining capital in the mid-1970s pre-emptively scrambled to lessen its dependence upon foreign sources of labour, prior to the application of the apartheid regime's policies of destabilisation.

On the basis of the above one can begin to frame a series of critical questions. If the regional socio-economic formation of southern Africa is being eroded in the current period of global crisis, what possible paths may emerge out of the present? Towards what ends have differing political actors, both within the region and beyond its borders, been aiming in the most recent period? Is the future one of enhanced subordination to South Africa, overseas powers, or both? Or is it possible to perceive a route towards more cooperative and equitable growth based upon regional initiatives?
Regional Prospects in the Current Economic Crisis

For some the answer to such questions is simply given: short of a wholesale revolutionary transformation, southern Africa will remain captive to the dictates of international capital and core powers. This conclusion is further buttressed by the collapse of socialist states in the north and the region's deep economic crisis which has weakened local states and governing elites.

Such a conclusion finds little support in either the history of the area or present initiatives as a democratic South Africa looms. One needs to recall both the inter-war and the post-war trajectories, which indicate that states and mass struggles can indeed shape the orientation and character of the regional relationships and economic growth. Nor is capital of one mind: as in earlier periods, business interests based in different states have contends, and continue to do so, over the allocation of regional and not just international reward. Such was the case with South Africa in the inter-war period, or the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland's closure of its markets to South Africa, or the current struggle among European, North American, East Asian and South African powers for the trade and investment opportunities existing in the region.

Such examples raise the question of the impact of the current great depression and the accompanying rivalry among core powers. For a few select semi-peripheral states this has opened up possibility of advance within the global division of labour. For reasons elaborated below, the most common development path derived from such conditions can in our view be ruled out: none of the individual states of southern Africa are likely to follow the examples of the 'newly industrializing countries' such as South Korea, or even Mexico or Brazil. Majority rule might change these conditions for South Africa somewhat, but only to a limited degree, and only in the short-run.

These realities have directed attention away from either national or world market development scenarios towards regional alternatives. While almost all actors utilise a formal language of commitment to regional development, beneath such language lie quite divergent interests, actions, and future possibilities. Given the matrix of regional and international actors and the structure of centre-hinterland relationships, one may discern a momentum in the recent past and the current conjuncture behind at least three major possibilities. Each is composed and complicated by shifting alliances as the struggle against apartheid continues under present world-economic conditions.

Path One: Regional Restabilisation

One path returns to the central tendencies of the 1945-1975 period. Here a reliance upon South African-centred relationships would apply, from enhanced dependence upon financial, investment, and commodity markets to transport and communication services. Such a path would require the termination of warfare and destabilisation across the region in order to allow for peaceful reconstruction of relationships with South Africa. Under such conditions a
considerable reopening of regional trade, transport, and labour flows would be possible. Reflecting changes in the region over the last two decades, one would not expect an exact replication of the patterns of the 1950s and 1960s. On the one hand, reduced contract labour flows to South African mines since the mid-1970s would be unlikely to be reversed significantly, while on the other the revival across the region by South African capital could be expected.

Path Two: Regional Breakup and Peripheralisation

A second possible path could follow the outlines suggested by those who stress the unmitigated domination by core economic and political powers. Here core-peripheral relationships as known throughout the world-economy would emerge to demarcate southern Africa as simply another peripheral zone of the world-economy, an area fully open to the polarizing effects of the operation of the global division of labour. Direct bilateral relationships between overseas core areas and the individual states and primary producers of the region would be strengthened considerably. Stabilisation programmes and falling levels of industrialisation, GNP per capita, terms of trade, exchange rates, indicate pregnant possibilities in the current conjuncture. Even South Africa, as noted above, has not escaped such phenomena during the present global crisis. Continued warfare would enhance the chances of such a path.

The outcome of such processes would be a considerable weakening of centre-hinterland ties within the region and an increasing reliance upon overseas areas. The abandonment of any prospects for accelerated development in future decades, as recently posed for sub-Saharan Africa by the World Bank (1989), would directly apply to South and southern Africa as well leaving a poor, peripheral zone emerging in its wake.

Path Three: Neo-Regionalism Alternatives

A third variety of future prospects revolves around the continuation of centre-hinterland relationships, but without South Africa as the dominating pivot. Such a development would entail the replacement of South African products and services by sourcing from other regional states. Zimbabwe, based on an alliance of national capital and its governing petit-bourgeoisie (Stoneman and Cliffe, 1989:194), would become a major supplier of industrial goods. The continued resuscitation of transport links through Mozambique and Angola could be enhanced by the enlargement of transport workshops and services in Zimbabwe and other states. The possibility of such a scenario would be strengthened to the extent that the transition to majority rule in South Africa is deepened and prolonged, and entails a disrupted South African economy, a weak state, and continuing political or ethnic conflict. These are large assumptions, but if they held SADCC could re-emerge as a body consulting with, but without the membership of, its powerful neighbour to the south.

Far more than other alternatives, such a path requires the creation of new networks, something achievable only through the expenditure of considerable
political effort on the part of ruling elites across the region. This is particularly the case since such rising levels of interdependence would undoubtedly exacerbate regional inequalities. As with other paths, the question of the alignment of classes, states, and movements is critical.

Propelling and Checking Forces

It is tempting to simply label these paths as the expression of three distinct political groups: core powers (Breakup and Peripheralisation); the South African regime and monopoly capital seeking regional hegemony (Restabilisation); and the SADCC states seeking development of a more self-reliant, non-South African-centred region (neo-regionalism). Yet despite such appearances, it would be a mistake to align such paths directly with any single regional actor or even regional project/institution, for they reflect both the hard realities of regional and world-economic accumulation patterns and the multiple choices they offer any single actor or group. Examining the present or looking toward the future, key political and economic forces either bridge across several projects or have yet to align themselves with any single regional thrust.

It is nevertheless possible to locate the main beneficiaries and forces behind each possibility, as well as the configuration of political and class forces whose support would be crucial but is not yet committed. Of the three paths, the clearest case of correspondence may be found in restabilisation and the project of those who have long benefited from apartheid as a regional construct. One must begin by noting that even reformed versions of the apartheid state's Constellation of States project have long been rejected. Indeed it was the recognition of the obstacles to reformed apartheid that led to the move in 1988-89 towards a negotiated transition in South Africa.

To the extent that such a process is not constrained prior to majority rule, it lays the basis for increasing economic interpenetration under conditions of peace, a process clearly desired by South African firms. For such to occur in the near future, however, the apartheid regime would have to move forcefully towards negotiation both internally and with surrounding states - and curtail both public and private right-wing support for the forces of destabilisation it created in the 1980s. Accelerating contacts and agreements between South African economic actors (including private capital, trade officials, and parastatals) and surrounding states, constrained to date for obvious political reasons, would underpin this process. Core states and multinationals would also find benefits in such a development, hoping to safeguard simultaneously their economic and political interests in the Frontline states and South Africa.

The proponents of restabilisation herald its potential by predicting the benefits that would accrue from the unleashed energies of private enterprise. Yet it remains most uncertain that under these conditions increased investment flows into the region would occur. There are clear signs that multinational capital - both foreign and South African - views the prospect for profitable returns
from both South Africa and the region with considerable scepticism. This has resulted in the termination of new investment in southern Africa and capital flight from South Africa itself (including by South African firms such as Anglo American and Rembrandt). It is possible, of course, that the resistance to South African firms' attempts to invest in the US and Europe (the defeat of Minorco's latest bid for Consgold) may spur South African investments in the region. South African firms' purchase of foreign operations as a result of disinvestment has however led to neither new investments nor any apparent lessening of dependence upon foreign multinationals for technology and capital goods. To the extent new investments in the region may take place they would most likely occur in the fields of finance, commerce, tourism, and raw material extraction. Such a development would entail seizing existing opportunities, marking a resuscitation of past patterns of accumulation. This might revive war-shattered assets from hotels to mines (especially in Angola, Mozambique, and Namibia) and thus recoup lost jobs and revenues. But it would not propel - indeed over the medium- and long-term it would tend to forestall - any advance towards more advanced production processes.

The breakup of southern Africa as a region and its decline to a purely peripheral position in the world-economy matches the interests of few of the dominant actors who are based in and operate across the region. Politically such a development would considerably weaken regional states and the governing petit-bourgeoisie. Local financial and especially manufacturing capital, particularly South African but also Zimbabwean, would lose sheltered markets as well as confront competitive drives on the part of foreign producers - including now East Asian and Latin American NICs. Those engaged in export-oriented, primary production would however find advantages in access to world markets and therefore foreign exchange. This might well hold for mineral producers as well as cotton, tea, tobacco - but not for example maize - producers. And what would be true for primary producers might also apply to the weaker states of the region, which lack an industrial base and rely on overseas export incomes and a heavy degree of imports to fill basic needs.

Such a path's strongest propelling force is however the straightforward, unhindered operation of the forces of the world-economy during the current global crisis. Here the operation of international institutions such as the World Bank, the IMF, and GATT play a more direct role. The general stance of key overseas powers and groups towards the Third World (from the US to the European Community) would, if applied to southern African states, further promote this path. By coalescing the interests of regional states SADCC has operated to check such tendencies. Yet it is evident that overseas powers have also seen SADCC as an avenue to retain or reopen access to regional markets closed by war, sanctions, and restrictive state policies.

As this last example suggests, SADCC as an organisation has encompassed quite contradictory interests and possibilities. Different partners to the SADCC project can, for example, be seen to bridge both the peripheralisation and neo-
regional paths. If neo-regionalism is to have any prospect of success, however, it would have to be propelled through alliances such as those contained in the SADCC project. As currently composed SADCC, has gained adherents among regional states and ruling classes due to its ability to deliver enhanced levels of aid, investment funds, and relief from South Africa's destabilization attacks. Industrial capital within the SADCC states, particularly of regional origin, quite clearly would benefit as well from more open access to regional markets. The drive to reverse past domination by South Africa could accentuate this process. Joseph Hanlon (1987:441) has pressed this point by arguing that

\[ \text{it is highly unlikely that South Africa will be asked to join SADCC. Precisely because of its size and economic power, it would dominate SADCC. Rather neighbouring states are more likely to see SADCC as a vehicle which gives them equal bargaining power with a more sympathetic South Africa.} \]

The Lessons and Contributions of Regional Institutions

If each of the three paths outlined above lead to quite different regional patterns, they nevertheless share one common feature: none promises to lead to more cooperative and potentially equitable development of the region as a whole. To point towards such an alternative requires initially two assumptions: one, a minimally destructive transition in South Africa, and two, a politically-driven forging of alliances across the region, for such developments would prioritise the design of new regional agreements, institutions and planning bodies. The resolution of the region's endemic economic crisis can only be obtained through a framework which acts to check both the strongly polarizing forces of the world-economy and contains or reduces such effects within the region itself. To what degree can alliances and institutions such as SADCC or the Preferential Trade Area for Eastern and Southern African States (PTA) be utilized to counter relationships of underdevelopment with core areas of the world-economy, and retain and accelerate the fruits of expanded accumulation within the region?

SADCC has not yet been successful in raising the low level of internal trade which still represents only about 5 per cent of total imports and exports (SADCC 1986, 1988; Maphanyane, 1990). This is less than other regional groupings on the continent. Indeed if projected towards the future SADCC may in fact reorient trade away from South Africa only to connect more firmly with overseas areas. In part such outcomes reflect SADCC's explicit position that production must come first, with higher levels of commodity trade across the boundaries of the SADCC states following only as production capacities develop.

While increased levels of intra-SADCC trade will certainly depend upon the growth of an industrial base, it bears repeating that unregulated trade with overseas core areas will severely restrict the ability to nurture new sites of industrial production and inter-industry and inter-sectoral linkages - within or across national boundaries. Examining the origins and development of South
Africa's industrialisation process indicates this all too well (Martin 1990b, 1990c). Furthermore, SADCC has proven far less successful in eliciting funding for industrial projects than for projects related to transport and communications with overseas areas. Indeed one might well ask: has SADCC's effort to improve transport systems served intra-SADCC relations, or resuscitated channels of trade and commerce with overseas areas? Probing further, one finds considerable underlying tension between SADCC states and national capitals, which finds expression in a variety of trade restrictions in the defence of national production and markets. As a SADCC economist has noted,

*unfortunately, in the main national planners have remained totally parochial in approach and have not provided the necessary information to influence the political trade-offs that are necessary in regional integration* (Maphanyane 1990:4).

None of these phenomena augur well for enhanced levels of inter-industry and inter-territorial linkages and regional self-reliance. Indeed an acceleration of the last fifteen years' trends, namely an exchange of lessened dependence on South Africa for an increased dependence on overseas core areas, would seem a more likely outcome.

An important lesson here is that any further regional development will require confronting the hard reality of dominant class interests and their determinant role in state policies. These latter forces cross-cut the boundaries of individual states of southern African and the region, reflecting the chains of uneven development across and within this distinctive region of the world-economy. If one recognizes this, it is no longer becomes possible to assume that benefits directly follow from simply the creation of a larger regional market or controlling extra-regional forces. Here the example of the alternative regional framework provided by the PTA, which includes SADCC member states, is instructive.

The PTA aims to move towards a free trade area, a common customs union, a common market, and eventually an economic community. As others such as Yash Tandon (1985: 113-33) have argued, the PTA has been structured to a greater extent than SADCC as a mechanism to check multinational penetration of a regional community. Central here is Article 15 of the PTA treaty, which denies the benefits of lowered tariff barriers to the products of foreign-owned enterprises located within the PTA community. In relation to trade, the PTA forms an alternative to SADCC structures, and one that is much more clearly designed to counter movements toward either the peripheralisation or restabilisation paths. Even the PTA, however, has found it difficult to retain the principles set forth in Article 15, as much of the industrial production of stronger states such as Kenya and Zimbabwe would be precluded due to foreign ownership.

The strength of the forces diluting Article 15 serves to indicate the great difficulties entailed in any programme designed to restrict the forces of uneven development. The examples above indicate that it is not a matter of how to
design regional institutions. Attempts to promote wider economic exchanges based on notions of comparative advantage immediately exacerbate uneven patterns of accumulation, and thus trigger struggles between nationally-based dominant classes. It is precisely these pressures that have torn apart regional bodies elsewhere in Africa. The end result has been the buttressing of core-periphery relationships between African states and core states overseas.

For southern Africa these observations are considerably complicated by the pattern of centre-hinterland relationships constructed under the longer history of colonial and settler rule. While the very limitations of SADCC’s structure and its programme have thus contained overt conflict between governing classes and national capital(s), it has of necessity failed to confront patterns of uneven development within the SADCC region. In large part these conditions reflect the very real constraints imposed by the current global depression, the existence of the apartheid regime, and the related power of overseas capital, states, and financial institutions. Under such constraints, SADCC has aimed at, and succeeded in, preventing more overt support for the apartheid regime and its attacks upon the Frontline states. While of critical importance, this is a quite different matter than establishing more self-reliant, inter-industry development on a regional basis.

With the end of the formal political structures of apartheid the central condition for even SADCC’s limited political successes, a common front against the apartheid state, would disappear. However, a more rapid and equitable regional development would require a stronger anti-systemic thrust, one capable of restructuring relations within and among regional states, as well as between the region and the rest of the world-economy. The question thus emerges: what are the prospects and possibilities for such developments, with or without a transition to global economic expansion?

The Prospects of a Co-operative Agenda

This question is hardly broached. Some expect regional inequalities and the protection of national privileges to prevent a fully co-operative project, others assert that majority rule will directly usher in a revolutionary transformation of the region, Africa, and even the world economy. As negotiations for majority rule proceed, such statements have begun to disappear, supported by more concrete analyses of a ‘post-apartheid’ South Africa (Suckling and White 1988), as well as studies of the lessons of Zimbabwe (Mandaza 1986; Stoneman and Cliffe 1989) and to a lesser extent Mozambique (Hanlon 1984, 1991). Here the constraints and implications of a negotiated settlement, a post-settler/colonial state and economic endowment, and an ascendant African/Black petit-bourgeoisie figure predominantly. Even under the best of conditions the entrenched structures of apartheid will hardly disappear overnight with majority rule; in this sense the term ‘post-apartheid’ is highly misleading, as it implies not only a quick and radical transition in governmental but also in wider socio-economic structures. Little of the growing literature on a ‘post-apartheid’ era,
compartimented as it is by states and especially the South African dimension, even broaches the regional dimension. Neither the assumption that the region is of little importance, nor that a majority-rulled South African state will immediately equalize and lessen tensions arising from regional economic relationships, seems viable to us.

At the heart of these discussions lies the fate of South Africa’s giant conglomerates and the power and apparatuses of a new South African state. Capital and liberal analysts have mounted a strong campaign designed to show that economic growth and prosperity will require the continuation of unfettered private enterprise, both foreign and local (Sunter 1987, Green and Lascaris 1988, Berger and Godsel 1988). For obvious reasons these discussions centre around the political character of the immediate transfer of state power and the creation of constitutional limits upon state activity. The concentration upon black entrepreneurs and managers, the separation of the state from the market, continuing privatisation, and the development of an alliance between de Klerk and monopoly capital make this transparently evident. Within these discussions the task is how to shape the arrival at majority rule, and at the same time protect the concentration of wealth created during 40 years of apartheid. Proponents of a more radical transformation debate by contrast the manner by which majority rule can lead to rooting out the structures of apartheid, so deeply embedded as they are in the social and economic landscape of the country (Suckling and White 1988; ANC 1990).

Even if one assumes a relatively non-destructive transition to a non-racial democratic South Africa and an intact South African state, the prospects for South Africa remain subject to considerable debate and uncertainty. Indeed, most analysts would envisage a long phase of struggle rather than a sharp separation. Such a transition would be marked at the outset by mixed economy within which monopoly capital is partially dismembered and loses its overwhelming control and supervision of economic life. A majority-rulled South Africa could inherit a debilitated economy and rising demands for economic justice calling for state intervention and expenditures.

Under such conditions it is often proposed that accelerated employment, production, and the creation of surpluses to fund social programmes could best be met by populist and technical means. These would entail reviving under-utilised productive capacity and raising employment levels through stimulating an increase in domestic demand via redistributive measures. The fiscal, monetary, and associated state policies straightforwardly follow: establishing a minimum wage/raising wage rates; expanding state expenditures on housing, social security, educational, and health services; the imposition of a progressive tax structure; land reform; controls on capital outflows (which are already proceeding, prior to the transfer of power) and commodity imports; the control if not dismemberment of monopoly conglomerates; and greater overall economic management and planning.
The lessons from comparative situations, both in Latin America and neighbouring Zimbabwe (Moll, 1988; Fransman 1988; Mandaza 1986; Stoneman and Cliffe 1989) are not particularly encouraging. On the one hand the separate national markets of southern Africa are far too small to sustain either the development and production of durable consumer and capital goods, or truly effective bargaining with overseas capital seeking sites of direct investment in industrial production - not simply in population size, but, more importantly, from the distribution of income and the skewed demand for industrial products. On the other hand the widely-touted example of accelerated industrialisation through export promotion seems beyond the current capability of any state of the region, including South Africa.

Discussion of the economic obstacles that have short-circuited such attempts points up the shortcomings of a developmentalist perspective focused upon economic management within national boundaries. And this in two senses: first, we far too often see the analysis of economic variables without an understanding of inherited and deeply entrenched political and class structures, and second, rarely is an understanding generated of world-economic structures and constraints. It should hardly surprise us therefore that forces from these two arenas (settler and foreign capital, the World Bank, IMF, declining terms of trade and exports, etc.) are most often introduced ex post facto as explanations of failure, when they should have formed framing principles behind the construction of transitional state strategy.

To move beyond these failures requires no less than a calculation of the class and political alliances that may obstruct or propel a cooperative regional project, and a situation of these factors within the structural position of the region within interstate system and the global division of labour. A few exceptional studies have explored these factors for single states. None however have posed the problem comprehensively for the region, while much of the geo-strategic analysis currently available misreads evolving world trends.

The Region in the World Economy

At a most fundamental level one must recall that South and southern Africa’s position in the global division of labour has steadily declined in the last four decades. The effects of the current global depression have only served to confirm this; southern and South Africa have been particularly hard hit, despite the relatively successful diplomatic efforts of SADCC and the Frontline states, or the weight and power of South African capital.

A transition to a world-wide economic upswing might mitigate these trends; it is unlikely in our view to reverse them. The region has remained primarily an exporter of primary or semi-processed raw materials, has become increasingly dependent upon the importation of advanced industrial goods, and remains highly dependent upon external financial resources. Yet we are witnessing, in the depths of the current depression, another redistribution of activities across
the core-periphery divide. As core areas turn to more technologically advanced products and services (bio-technology, information and data systems, etc.), standardized and highly competitive industrial production is being relocated out of core areas. This signifies the declining profits accruing to such production processes and products. While latecomers to industrialisation, such as East Asian NICs, symbolize most dramatically the pursuit of the opportunities this redivision of labour offers, older semi-peripheral countries such as Brazil and Mexico have also been able to manage the transition to a high degree of manufactured goods exports. The result has been in many instances higher levels of industrial activity and employment than prevail even in core countries. Yet high rates of manufacturing production and employment no longer guarantee high wages and oligopolistic profits. An even more desperate situation is faced by those who remain one step behind, exporting raw materials and tropical foodstuffs. Unless present trends within the region are reversed, southern Africa may fall even lower in the global division of labour.

This would rebound in turn upon the geo-strategic importance of the region. Here many analyses continue to assert a continuation of the basic interstate patterns of the 1950-1970s: US hegemony, an East-West polarisation, and a state-led socialist agenda following the victory of the national liberation movements. Until quite recently such assumptions have provided the basis for claiming the importance of the region to the West in general and the US in particular and, accordingly, the ability of regional states to bargain strongly with the West, utilizing continuing, if not accelerated, appeals to assistance from the East (Stoneman 1988b; Magubane and Mandaza 1988).

Political leaders of southern Africa will clearly confront a different global configuration. Socialist states and their successor regimes have themselves sought to respond to the world-wide economic crisis by further flinging open their doors to core areas. The political effects are sharply etched in these states' relations with Europe, the US, and the South - including southern Africa.

At the same time even West-West relations are being reconstructed in light of the now undeniable evidence of the displacement of the US from a position of unrivalled hegemony. Under these conditions it is extremely unlikely that the interstate relations of the 1960s and 1970s, which underpin so much analysis of international relations in southern Africa, can be retained much less recomposed. One might more likely posit the emergence of a Pacific Rim bloc (linking North America, Japan, Northeast Asia, and, tentatively, China) and an European bloc (comprised of the EC, the EFTA countries, and Eastern Europe - the 'House of Europe' of Pope Paul and Mikhail Gorbachev). Whether and to what extent such configurations solidify is not critical for us here. What is essential is to abandon the assumption that an East-West division provides a stable framework for analyzing the geo-strategic constraints and opportunities for the peoples and states and southern Africa.

Such parallel developments in the global division of labour and the interstate system would seem to place daunting obstacles in the path of a radical trans-
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formation of the region. They might well augur sharper declines, for example, in the region’s share of world surplus and income, a narrowing of strategic allies in the interstate system and, despite claims to the contrary (Mandaza 1988: 120ff), the importance of the region to core powers and capital.

Behind such tendencies, however, may well lie greater room for manoeuvre on the part of the states of the region. While core powers will remain no less interested in assuring an open door to southern Africa, their pursuit of this end may be less forceful than in the days when apartheid was bolstered economically and politically as an ally in the Cold War. Moreover, as noted earlier, transitions in regional relationships and the region’s position in the global division of labour have occurred at discretely defined moments. These took place when political transformations at the regional level overlapped and drew upon two world-historical conditions: (1) a period of rivalry in the interstate system, and (2) a period of world-economic crisis and a redivisioning of core and peripheral activities on a world scale. It is clear that along all of these dimensions considerable struggle and transformation has emerged in the last decade. The question remains: can political forces within the region seize the long-term opportunities the transition in South Africa might offer?

Radical Restructuring: What Prospects?

It would be folly to presume that an unfettered hand for local or international capital could advance the region economically. Because of the conditions of global investment and production indicated above, there is little likelihood that multinational capital will flow into advanced industrial investments in the region and generate regional prosperity - even given the necessary aggressively pro-capitalist and authoritarian states.

South African capital deserves an even a harsher judgement having historically failed to develop the innovative production processes upon which the oligopolistic profits of core capital and high-wage jobs have rested (as argued elsewhere, see Martin 1990a).

If one seeks a more equitable and cooperative path forward one is thus forced to turn towards political restructuring of the region. Such a project taking place, moreover, in a conjuncture of transitions in interstate relations and the global division of labour, outlined above, rules out several common scenarios. Purely state-led, autarchic delinking matched to an alliance with states pursuing a similar agenda seems most improbable. Technical programmes calling for state fiscal and monetary planning can at best alleviate inequality for a short period; they are unlikely over the long-run to address the deep structural crisis in the region’s position in the global division of labour.

Such a conjuncture also works heavily against any long-term development of two of the short-term paths sketched above. The neo-regional reconstruction of past patterns would only occur if struggles for democratic participation and control in South Africa and the region were to be comprehensively de-
feated. For similar reasons the emergence of antagonistic SADCC and South African regions is unlikely.

The pursuit of neo-colonial solutions would remain a strong tendency and the retention of some degree of regional cohesion should benefit South African, Zimbabwean and foreign capital. Yet equally possible is a break-up of the region. Clearly the colonial and settler forces which have served to forge the region historically will either be absent from the scene or stripped of their politically dominant positions and under these conditions the forces of regional cohesion will lessen, particularly if world economic trends follow the trajectories sketched above.

Nevertheless the regional states will retain an interest in a SADCC-type body with South Africa as a member. As SADCC illustrates, bargaining with overseas core states and capital is more effective with a united regional front. Reconstruction of basic economic infrastructures across the region will also entail regional agreements and cooperation, and the much-heralded possibilities of a larger regional market will attract both regional and foreign investors.

Such formal institutional imperatives and advantages do not, however, assure more than a low level of regional association. Assertions by nationally-based capitals that their interest is the ‘national interest’, and the defensive reactions of state elites and petit bourgeoisie guarding their own prerogatives and privileges, all work towards preventing initiatives that would restructure unequal regional patterns of accumulation and exchange. As has been apparent throughout the continent, international institutions, agreements, and capital will also continuously operate to divide any strong regional initiative. If regional planning does not challenge bilateral relationships with core areas it may be tolerated or even welcomed. Indeed the most recent World Bank report (1989:148-62) supports such regional associations. The limits of such support are clear however: to facilitate the operation of ‘free markets’ and competitiveness, and thus a diminished capacity for even the most democratic of local states to exert power over its people’s economic destiny. More substantive initiatives vis-à-vis the polarising forces of the world-economy, would however be seriously challenged. One need not even raise direct political much less military retaliation: one needs only to refer to the hostility of commercial and international lenders, the withdrawal or denial of direct investment and aid, and limited access to foreign export markets among other actions.

In the face of such centrifugal forces, the path of least resistance for states and their leaderships may thus be to forsake any regional initiatives that challenge the dominant forces on both the regional and global plane, and imply an abandonment of any long-term growth prospects for the people of the region.

Anti-systemic Forces and Regional Restructuring

In one respect the future follows the past: even to sustain, much less advance regional relationships will require a considerable degree of political interven-
tion. Little will flow directly from the dominant classes and economic forces. A radical response to the economic crisis, and one that necessarily rests on regional political alliances, is however possible to perceive. Unfortunately scholars have provided us with little material to differentiate the regional, as opposed to national, dimensions of opportunities or political constraints arising from anti-systemic forces. Nor has the ANC developed concrete proposals on regional development, beyond this explicit statement from a recent ANC-COSATU workshop on future economic policy (ANC 1990):

The non-racial democratic state would actively seek to promote regional economic co-operation along new lines, in ways that would not be exploitative and will correct imbalances in current relationships. The state must be prepared to enter into negotiations with its neighbours to promote a dynamic and non-exploitative and mutually beneficial form of regional cooperation and development. This may involve making concessions to our neighbouring states.

This leaves open however what policies a post-apartheid government would actually pursue. Initial steps might include assuring the rights and wages of foreign, contract migrant workers and a willingness to assist in the rebuilding of neighbouring transport systems at the expense of the destabilisation-induced reliance upon South African systems (Rob Davies, 1989). To move beyond such preliminary steps towards a long-term transformation on a regional basis would confront far more intractable obstacles. Any cooperative regional project would need to grapple with the inherently uneven process of capital accumulation that has generated and will continue to produce centre-hinterland relationships across the region as well as with core areas of the capitalist world economy.

How pre-existing relationships might be transformed in the service of advanced accumulation across the region, and benefit all partners in the process, can be briefly broached to open up such discussion. In the face of fierce competition on the world market, the attraction of a broader regional market is considerable for regional manufacturers. The current share of manufactured goods in total exports is, even for South Africa with its significant industrial sector, only approximately 10 per cent (Business Day, 15 November 1989). South African manufacturers have long found that southern Africa forms its only natural and assured export market. As Table 1 illustrates, a high proportion of manufacturing exports have been taken by African countries since the early 1970s. Access to the much larger South African market could hold forth similar attractions for non-South African producers, whose output would be but a fraction of South African production and meet but a small proportion of South African demand.

A simple free trade area, privileging regional at the expense of overseas producers, would most likely lead, however, to the swamping by South African producers of manufacturers elsewhere in the region. The other states will require bilateral provisions as in existing trade agreements to protect their manufacturing industries, to co-ordinate investment and to control labour flow. These
examples indicate that the realities of existing regional networks and inequalities will raise the possibility of both regional conflicts and cooperation. The full potential of regional development will require not only effective political alliances, but also substantive political regulation to mitigate the polarizing effects of internal and external exchange relationships in the region.

Shifting Regional and World Regimes

Studies of the NICs indicate regulation of the domains of national and multinational capital has been essential to advancing more technologically advanced industrial products, research and development centres, and expanded employment. For southern Africa such an aggressive process is in our view only practical on a regional scale. It would entail, moreover, not an autarchic 'delinking', but a long process of struggle on several fronts: with international capital and core states, local and particularly South African capital (after a degree of expected de-monopolisation), and intra-regional inequalities due to the historic structuring of the region and the unequal distribution of the benefits of expanded accumulation across the region. A regionalisation of more advanced industrial production would be more feasible if a phase of expansion in the world-economy should occur.

Major political struggles will be needed in order to initiate and sustain such a path on a cooperative, regional agenda. In this uncertain terrain, two issues, both subject to continuing struggle and thus indeterminate in their implications, intrude. First, to what extent will states and movements of the region retain and forge the capacity to transform the central structures of production and accumulation forged over the course of the last 40 years? As discussed above, strong forces are already in place to constrain any majority ruled South African state. For surrounding countries, the imperatives of stabilisation programmes, endemic economic crisis, and destabilisation have already severely debilitated state structures and autonomy.

Second, will the political and ideological basis for cooperative regional alliances exist in coming decades? The struggle against colonial and settler rule has been sustained by strong alliances between national liberation movements and, later, the independent states of the region. But the post-colonial/settler regimes, and movements that led the drive to independence, are now collapsing. Part of this process is trumpeted as the victory of liberal capitalism and pro-Western diplomatic initiatives. The past assumption that radical movements led by a progressive petit bourgeoisie would naturally lead to socialist states, and socialist states to regional alliances, now hardly seems plausible.

At the same time these phenomena may well offer new opportunities, as old political regimes and alliances fall and new ones emerge. To understand this requires moving beyond the focus upon state policies and governing classes to an analysis of the increasingly volatile, and spatially segmented, processes of class and ethnic formation and struggle. Underneath the calls for greater
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Democracy, for example, lie a surging demand for greater participation, accountability, and a more equitable distribution of productive resources and wealth. Such trends are most sharply etched in the burgeoning anti-capitalist sentiment within South Africa’s mass democratic organizations, particularly in trade unions. But widespread protests are occurring across the region against entrenched parties’ implementation of stabilization programmes and ‘free enterprise’ policies. Even in rural areas, it is apparent that the forced opening of the market has and will continue to rebound upon the majority of rural producers across the region. As private farming expands, poverty in rural and urban areas is becoming a stark phenomenon.

Multi-party systems will not, moreover, eliminate such conditions. Indeed they may serve to facilitate wider and broader anti-systemic protest. There are dangers here as well, for as states and political parties are weakened, the door is opened wide for increasing fragmentation along the social and communal fault lines created by colonialism and apartheid. As is well-known, the architects of destabilisation used these to full advantage within, as well as beyond, the borders of South Africa.

Southern Africa is hardly alone in facing such developments: they are evident across all non-core zones of the world-economy, and especially in areas that, like southern Africa, have achieved a degree of industrial development. Dominated by industrial capital, but unable to sustain the high wage structures that underpin the quiescence of labour in core zones, we are witnessing a surging wave of resistance to the dictates of the world economy. In countries such as Brazil and South Korea it is apparent that formal parliamentary democracy is unable to meet the demands of, much less contain, oppositional forces. It is equally apparent, despite all the rhetorical flourishes, that the peoples and states of Eastern Europe express a very similar condition.

In this respect the struggle against apartheid shares key characteristics with other movements in and out of power. To a growing degree it is evident that capitalism has brought not prosperity and progress, but institutionalized poverty and underdevelopment. It is therefore difficult to foresee the emergence of stable states, in either the semi-periphery or periphery, allied to core areas of the world economy. In this sense, at least, the future promises not only the demise of the post-independence regimes, but the demise of the post-independence alliance of dominant classes that provided the basis for a relatively stable relationship between the region and the core.

Under these conditions the best prospects for stability and progress clearly lie in the struggle to forge new political alliances. Southern Africa, by virtue of the historical depth of these forces across state boundaries, is a particularly striking locus of such struggles. Standing in the wings are bleak historical possibilities: it is not hard to imagine the possibility of a future downward spiral into poverty, subjugation to core areas, and increasing levels of national and ethno-national division and conflict. This only adds to the imperative to probe an alternative prospect: how far can the peoples and movements of the
region transcend the boundaries of national and capitalist frameworks, draw upon anti-systemic forces and initiate a restructuring of the region? It is upon this terrain, and not simply the formulation of institutional frameworks, that the future of southern Africa will depend.

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Bibliographic Note

The US and the War in Angola

William Minter

Since South Africa's withdrawal from Namibia in 1989, the US has become the primary patron of Angola's UNITA contras. US resentment about the defeat of their joint intervention into Angola with South Africa in 1975-76 fed into right-wing cold war calculations in the Reagan period. Covert aid increased greatly from 1986 despite liberal pressures to be realistic and recognise Luanda partly as a result of influential lobbying in Washington on behalf of UNITA, with which the Angolan government found it hard to compete. But 'global managers' who were more pragmatic than ideological manage to promote the 1988 accords with the Soviet Union, Cuba, Angola and South Africa which lead to the two former withdrawing from Angola and Namibian independence, although Washington failed to follow through with an internal peace plan for Angola and stepped up arms supplies to UNITA which lead to renewed fighting. However, there are some signs that the UNITA lobby may be on the wane.

In January 1991 it seemed that the long war in Angola might finally be coming to an end. Both Angolan government officials and representatives of UNITA were expressing optimism about cease-fire prospects and a broader settlement. The United States, the Soviet Union and Portugal were reportedly working closely to promote compromise and flexibility. But working out the details still provided ample opportunity for mistrust to resurface, and the post-war political landscape was unpredictable.

Among the key factors in the post-war period, as in the last phase of the war, will be the US role as the primary patron of Jonas Savimbi's UNITA, since the New York accords and then Namibian independence moved South African sponsorship of UNITA to secondary importance. The good relations of US companies and banks with the Angolan government contrasted with the impassioned Reagan Doctrine backing for Savimbi's contra army. Future US-Angolan relations will be played out in a vastly different world context. But whether or not the US persists with efforts to install Savimbi in power, the history of hostility will continue to weigh heavily.

The History of US Involvement: Cold War Connections

Although the US was involved in Angola through its military alliance with Portugal and investment in Angolan oil, US concern with internal Angolan
matters stemmed primarily from the first major US intervention in Africa: the Congo crisis. In the early 1960s, as the US took charge of the ex-Belgian Congo (now Zaire), the CIA also became involved in supporting the Congo-based National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA), not in order to challenge Portuguese colonialism but to counter the leftist Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA).

This early Cold War legacy fed into the conflict in Angola in the mid-1970s, as the Portuguese empire collapsed. At Kissinger’s initiative, and against the advice of Africa specialists and oil executives, the US took the lead in an anti-MPLA coalition, involving the FNLA, Zaire, UNITA and South Africa. It was the failure of this initiative, in a highly symbolic Cold War context, that made continued US hostility to the MPLA-ruled People’s Republic of Angola such a potent internal US political issue. For the right-wing, and for much of the foreign policy establishment, the US ‘lost Angola’ to ‘Soviet-Cuban adventurism’, a humiliation attributable to the liberal ‘Vietnam syndrome’ and Cuba, the revolutionary thorn Washington had never been able to accommodate. Whatever the pragmatic reasons for US/Angolan accommodation, the drive for vengeance for this defeat in 1975 remains an unacknowledged backdrop to US policy even after the presumed demise of the Cold War.

Despite the congressional Clark Amendment of late 1975 which barred US military intervention in Angola, US hostility to Luanda continued. Post-Vietnam anti-interventionist sentiment in the US did not disappear, but had only a momentary political dominance. The Carter administration was divided. Efforts at detente with Angola were countered by the Cold War line of national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski, who breached the spirit if not the letter of the Clark Amendment by lobbying third countries to aid UNITA. The Reagan administration was an open advocate of UNITA, and undoubtedly violated the Clark Amendment by aiding UNITA indirectly before it was repealed in 1985. Even more important was the administration’s encouragement of stepped-up South African involvement, which rebuilt UNITA into a significant military machine in the 1980s with both supplies and direct intervention.

From 1986, officially acknowledged covert aid from the US began to flow to UNITA, through Zaire, increasing from an estimated $15 million a year at first to $50 million or more annually in recent years. After 1988, and most definitively with the independence of Namibia in early 1990, the continuing flow of support to UNITA from South Africa took second place to the US military involvement.

US policy towards Angola was less a fully consistent plan, than several distinct policy lines, contending both within the administration and within the Congress. One perspective, with significant support in the administration only in the early Carter years, can be labeled accommodationist. Including people with pragmatic business perspectives as well as those sympathetic to African liberation, this camp saw no logic in US refusal to recognize the Angolan government or in efforts to destabilize it.
A second perspective, with a strong political base both in Congress and in the administration during the Reagan years, has been the far-right ideology of the anti-marxist crusaders, for whom Savimbi became a high-profile symbolic hero. This group derived political force not only from true believers among the Reaganauts, but also from important sectors of the Democratic party seeking convenient ways to prove their anti-communist credentials. This was particularly important among the congressional delegation from Florida, which included the Democratic chairman of the House Foreign Relations Committee, Representative Dante Fascell. The fanatical anti-Castro Cuban vote in Florida, and the more broadly based anti-Cuban prejudice in US policy circles, were major assets for the pro-UNITA lobby.

That lobby added political and financial clout to its ideological advantages. From 1985 UNITA lobbying efforts took on a massive scale, with the employment of the well-connected public relations firm, Black, Manafort, Stone and Kelly as well as a shifting array of other smaller firms. By the end of the 1980s the total UNITA public relations budget was running at over $2 million a year. Black, Manafort and Stone were all key officials in Bush’s presidential campaign, while a former partner in the firm, Lee Atwater, directed Bush’s campaign and then moved to head the Republican National Committee. One of the people working on the UNITA account was Christopher Lehman, a former National Security Council official and brother of the former Secretary of the Navy. The fourth partner in the firm, Peter Kelly, was a former finance chairman of the Democratic party, with involvement in fundraising for Democratic senators and for the Dukakis presidential bid. UNITA hired other firms who focused on splitting black opposition to US intervention, failing to attract many prominent blacks but succeeding in confusing the issue. They also organized close coordination with anti-Castro and pro-Israeli lobby groups.

In comparison, the Angolan government had a minimal Washington presence, and strong opposition to UNITA aid in Congress was confined to the Black Caucus and a handful of representatives with particular interest in Africa. After 1986, the Angolan government for the first time began serious lobbying in Washington. But even then it was hampered by having little knowledge of the US political scene and by lobbying efforts that were clumsy and uncoordinated in contrast with UNITA’s. Given the political lineup, the contest between pro-UNITA and anti-intervention forces was unequal to start with. But the lack of an effective Angolan government voice accentuated the gap.

There was a third perspective as well, however, conservative but not unconditionally pro-UNITA. This global managerialist perspective was most strongly represented on the Africa Desk of the State Department. With general sympathies for right-wing positions, and willingness even to exaggerate those sympathies for opportunistic reasons, these officials still regarded themselves as professionals rather than crusaders. They aimed at negotiated solutions, which might achieve some of the right-wing aims but might also require sacrificing others for the sake of a settlement. Thus the State Department was repeatedly
accused of being willing to betray Savimbi, and constantly had to defend itself against the true believers. In the mid-1980s, for example, these officials reportedly opposed military aid, despite their diplomatic backing for his cause.

The New York agreements on the independence of Namibia and the phased withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola represented a triumph for the global managers, although critics noted that such external factors as the South African military setbacks in Angola in 1987-88 and the international sanctions the Reagan administration had opposed were responsible for South Africa’s shift to accepting Namibian independence. But the issue of the conflict in Angola, and the future of UNITA, was not included in the agreements. Angola failed to win a US pledge to stop military aid to UNITA, but the loss of South African ground support over the Namibian border was a heavy blow to UNITA’s military prospects. Some on the far right accused the State Department and even the South Africans of betraying the anti-communist cause, permitting a SWAPO victory and abandoning UNITA.

From New York to Gbadolite

In early 1989, immediately following the New York agreements, the Angolan government launched a series of diplomatic contacts with proposals for an internal peace settlement, including informal contacts with UNITA. Although the full content of back-corridor communications has not become public, the public proposals focused on full amnesty for UNITA members and leaders and their incorporation into government structures. According to some reports, this power-sharing approach included tacit agreement on allocation of several ministries and provincial governorships to individuals from UNITA. It also included the ‘temporary and voluntary retirement’ (not exile as often reported) of Savimbi from Angolan political life. The Angolan approach would have ensured a dominant role for the existing government, but conceded an important role for UNITA supporters.

The diplomatic strategy for promoting this plan was to build up pressure from African heads of state, including Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire, whose country was becoming the key military rear base for UNITA as Namibia ceased to serve that function. The first part of 1989 saw a complex African tug-of-war as Angola sought to construct a coalition of African states to support its plan, while UNITA and its supporters sought to block this and win support for negotiations placing UNITA and the Angolan government (or more precisely, the ruling MPLA-PT as a party, since UNITA refused to recognize the Angolan government’s legitimacy) on an equal footing.

The State Department’s Africa Desk was at this point in transition from eight year veteran Chester Crocker’s leadership to that of Herman Cohen, with UNITA’s lobbyists and congressional allies watching closely for any sign of disloyalty to the UNITA crusade. Crocker’s 1988 hints that Angola would be rewarded for its flexibility in signing the New York accord were not fulfilled, as
the US refused to follow through with plans for a US interest section in Luanda and an Angolan interest section in Washington. Angola reportedly rejected as unfair a US suggestion that the US open a liaison office in Luanda, while offering the Angolans only the option of strengthening their diplomatic mission to the United Nations. At the same time the CIA’s budget for UNITA aid increased from an estimated $30 to $45 million in 1988 to $50 to $60 million in 1989.

In June 1989, President Mobutu hosted a meeting in Gbadolite, Zaire, including 18 African heads of state, and with both President dos Santos and a UNITA delegation headed by Jonas Savimbi. According to most of the heads of state present, and the declaration of a later summit in Harare, Savimbi agreed to a cease-fire and settlement which largely corresponded to the Angolan government plan. Dos Santos and Savimbi embraced in the presence of the heads of state, and the cease-fire was scheduled to take effect within days. But the key details were agreed only in oral understandings (or misunderstandings). Savimbi, whether on his own initiative or with encouragement from the US, denied that he had agreed to anything more than the general communique and continued discussions.

While ordinary Angolans on both sides rejoiced, the cease-fire lasted only a few days. The UNITA troops received orders to resume guerilla attacks. President dos Santos and the Angolan military came under internal criticism for having accepted Savimbi’s word and let down their guard. Mobutu’s mediator role was fatally discredited. The war continued, and formal negotiating efforts did not resume until after the independence of Namibia in March 1990. Throughout this period US and Angolan officials met, along with South African and Cuban delegations, in regular working discussions on the implementation of the New York accords. But there was no diplomatic progress on internal Angolan issues.

From Gbadolite to Namibian Independence

The immediate aftermath of the Gbadolite fiasco saw public recriminations between Savimbi and Mobutu. Mobutu reportedly even delayed some shipments of US arms to UNITA. African leaders sought to continue the Mobutu-mediated peace process. The US State Department also supported continuing talks, urging Savimbi to attend a new summit in Zaire in September, as well as leaning on Mobutu to maintain the military supply link to UNITA. The State Department’s position was to continue the war while pressing UNITA’s case within the African diplomatic context. But Savimbi, with the support of far-right backers in Washington, refused to show up at the September summit. He also seemed to win official support from the US.

In July the US voted alone to reject Angola’s application for membership in the World Bank and the IMF, despite State Department hints in the press that the US might abandon its opposition. The Department issued a statement in September supporting UNITA’s negotiating stand as a result of aggressive lobbying led by Christopher Lehman of Black, Manafort, Stone and Kelly.
Both Savimbi and Mobutu visited Washington in October. In actions reflecting a compromise between the hard-right and the diplomatic position, Bush pressed Savimbi to return to negotiations, while telling Mobutu to make up with Savimbi and resume the free flow of arms.

In Angola during the second half of 1989 UNITA continued its guerilla campaign, with stockpiles from previous South African supplies, an ongoing flow of US weaponry, and continued (if reduced) flows through Namibia. A CIA transport plane crashed in Angola in November while ferrying arms from Zaïre to UNITA's headquarters in southeastern Angola. Conservatives criticized the CIA for not supplying sufficient weapons to replace lost South African supplies, but to the Angolan government the resupply operation indicated a clear US commitment to continuing the war.

In late 1989, after the Namibian elections, the Angolan army launched a new conventional offensive against Mavinga, the UNITA outpost which served as a transit point for weapons moving to UNITA guerillas in the more densely populated centre of the country. At the same time, the Angolan government prepared a new peace initiative, which offered the possibility of UNITA participation in future elections. But the US and UNITA paid little attention to the offer, and an Angolan delegation visiting Washington in early 1990 was told that President Mobutu, still formally the mediator, had not even passed on the Angolan proposal.

Instead, the focus from late 1989 through much of 1990 was on the war. The Angolan offensive succeeded in taking Mavinga, but US supplies enabled UNITA to fight back. And there was little prospect of Angolan troops moving on from Mavinga to the heart of UNITA-controlled territory in southern Cuando Cubango, where the logistics base of Licua and the Jamba headquarters were located. More significantly, the US and UNITA reoriented their primary military initiative to the north, stepping up infiltration and attacks south of the Zaïre border and directly threatening the Luanda area by cutting off electricity and water supplies to the city. Although there was no major damage to oil facilities, UNITA did kidnap or kill a number of foreign oil workers and increased its terrorist bombings in Luanda itself. This reduced the relative importance of the southeastern front. The government was forced to withdraw its best commanders and troops from there to step up defences in the north, allowing UNITA to move into Mavinga again.

The overall result was a new military stalemate. As long as Zaïre was available to UNITA, and the US kept up a steady flow of arms, there was no possibility of a comprehensive defence against UNITA attacks. US analysts misleadingly pointed out that Soviet arms flows to the government were much larger than US aid, neglecting to note that defence against guerrilla attack necessarily required much greater resources. The Soviet supplies, however, did allow Angola to maintain its conventional military superiority.
Halting Momentum for Peace

With the war stalemated again, negotiations resumed, this time with Portugal as the host for direct talks between the government and UNITA. From April through November 1990 there were five rounds of talks in Portugal. During the year, influenced by developments in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union and by internal pressures for reform as well as by the need to end the war, President dos Santos led the Angolan government towards a more and more explicit acceptance of political pluralism and market-oriented economic policies, culminating in a December party congress which formally renounced Marxism-Leninism, accepted a multi-party system and declared the MPLA a social democratic party.

There was little substantive progress in the peace talks, however. While UNITA in May formally recognized President dos Santos as Angolan head of state, UNITA and its US backers gave little ground on other issues, apparently hoping that the continued guerrilla attacks, the withdrawal of Cuban troops and erosion of Soviet support would eventually pave the way for a UNITA victory. After the Sandinista electoral defeat in Nicaragua in February 1990, their goal appeared to be a variant of that scenario: elections under conditions favourable to UNITA, with the UNITA army in place serving as an implicit threat to the electorate that the war would continue if the US-backed candidate failed to win.

Thus the US rejected mid-year Soviet and Angolan proposals for an end to arms supplies to both sides in Angola, together with a cease-fire, followed by continuing talks on a political settlement. 'UNITA and Washington scent victory', headlined an article in Africa Confidential in late June. US officials cooperated with the Soviets in pressuring both sides to accept corridors for relief supplies to alleviate famine due to drought and war in both government and UNITA controlled areas, while State Department officials sought to portray themselves as brokers of a peaceful solution. But they simultaneously blamed the Angolan government for the impasse, and did little to allay Angolan fears that the US and UNITA would not settle for anything less than total victory.

Nevertheless, outside support for UNITA was eroding during 1990. After Namibian independence, South Africa had neither the logistical base nor the strategic need for strong support for UNITA. The air bridge between southeastern Angola and Pretoria continued to function, but was hardly sufficient to defend UNITA territory or sustain an insurgency. Despite loyalty to an old ally, no one in South Africa could realistically argue that UNITA was of vital importance for South African interests. The South African ultra-right and its overseas supporters focused their attentions on internal South African matters.

In Washington, the scheduled departure of Cuban troops weakened the Cold War logic for continued war, even among true believers. So did the shift in superpower relations and the celebration of the end of the Cold War. Congress was becoming more sceptical about Reagan Doctrine covert aid in general, whether in Cambodia, Afghanistan or in Angola. Soviet willingness to coop-
ate with the US on international issues was an attractive lure both for diplomats and for congressional representatives. Declining interest in Africa affected all parts of the political spectrum, including Savimbi's backers. Mobutu's regime came under increasing criticism in Washington for internal corruption and repression and saw all US aid except that through non-governmental organizations cut in 1990.

Despite the ongoing distance between Luanda and Washington, contacts were increasing, including non-governmental and religious organizations, congressional delegations, and US government-supported evaluations of relief needs. Angolan membership in the IMF and World Bank, both headquartered in Washington, also increased the flow of information. Famine in Angola, derived both from war and drought, increased the urgency of a cease-fire. Angola's willingness to make new concessions in negotiations underlined UNITA's responsibility for holding up the talks.

Savimbi's aura had begun to fade as well. Revelations in mid-1988 of alleged internal killings of Savimbi's rivals, including Savimbi's public use of 'witchburnings' against dissidents, did not make it into the national US press until March 1989. Even then they were consistently dismissed as 'unconfirmed' by the CIA and other UNITA backers. But the fact that one of the accusers was Savimbi's British biographer Fred Bridgeland planted seeds of doubt. A critical article in the prominent conservative magazine National Review in August 1989 indicated some questioning even on the far-right.

This created the context in 1990 for a new campaign by critics of UNITA aid in Congress to stop or at least limit the covert military aid. In the House of Representatives, Democratic members of the Black Caucus and the House Africa sub-committee took the lead; in the Senate, Senator Edward Kennedy spoke out strongly. Groups such as TransAfrica, the Washington Office on Africa and others mobilized support. Most critical was support from the Democratic leadership in the House of Representatives, despite the pro-UNITA stance of Foreign Relations Committee chairman Fascell. Critics of UNITA aid were also well represented in the Intelligence Committees which had direct authority over the matter.

A vote to limit aid failed to pass the House Intelligence Committee, but opponents succeeded in getting an open debate on the House floor in October. A bill sponsored by Representative Ronald Dellums which would effectively have cut off aid failed by 246 to 175, but the debate set the stage for a compromise measure introduced by Representative Steven Solarz. This amendment proposed holding half the Fiscal Year 1991 aid for further discussion in March 1991, and allowed suspension of aid if a series of complex conditions were met. Most important were requirements that the Angolan government accept a cease-fire and a reasonable election timetable, and that the Soviet Union agree to stop military aid to Luanda. The Solarz amendment passed in two close votes on 17 October, with Speaker of the House Thomas Foley casting his vote to break a tie
on the second vote. A somewhat weakened version of the Solarz amendment was approved by the House-Senate conference. But even this failed to go into law as President Bush vetoed the intelligence bill in December over separate general provisions requiring reports to congress on US covert aid through third countries (a result of the Iran/Contra controversy).

Even if it had become law, the Solarz measure would not have forced the president to suspend aid, since the interpretation of ‘reasonable’ Angolan concessions was left to his determination. But its political significance was that for the first time the UNITA lobby, and the administration which had fought hard against the Solarz as well as Dellums amendment, lost a key congressional vote in the House. Moreover, the more conservative Senate accepted the substance of the House version. Several conditions specified in the bill had already been accepted by Angola, such as a cease-fire and suspension of Soviet military aid, as had the principle of an election if not the precise timetable. Thus the UNITA proponents were put in a position of opposing reasonable negotiations and supporting continued war for the sake of what critics called a ‘Cold War anachronism’.

Another indicator of fading support for UNITA was an article by Leon Dash in the Washington Post just before the vote, again confirming the allegations of Savimbi’s execution of internal opponents. Since the Post had long provided favourable publicity for UNITA, and Dash himself had helped make Savimbi’s reputation with long reports of his visits with UNITA in 1973 and 1977, the defection was particularly notable.

The result showed that the UNITA lobby’s clout was waning, as key centrist Democratic votes went for the Solarz amendment.

Democratic Senator Dennis Deconcini, one of UNITA’s most energetic backers, may have been distracted by his defence against ethics violations in the Savings and Loan scandals. But a more important reason for the failure to defend UNITA in the Senate was opposition by the moderate Democratic Senator Boren, chair of the Intelligence Committee, one of a number of indicators that congressional patience for Cold War crusades was running out.

This congressional action was one of the factors paving the way for new flexibility in US policy in the next stage. US-Soviet talks resulted in a coordinated stand in favour of a compromise settlement, and representatives of Portugal, the US, the Soviet Union, the Angolan government and UNITA met in Washington in mid-December, agreeing on a set of general principles for a settlement. In the immediate aftermath of the talks, all sides expressed optimism about the results.

The principles included:

• On a cease-fire coming into effect, all Angolan citizens will have the right to participate politically in accordance with a revised constitution
to create a multi-party democracy, with an election date being agreed at the same time as the cease-fire signing.

- The Angolan government will work with all parties in revising the constitution and preparing electoral laws.
- After the cease-fire the supply of lethal material from the US, the Soviet Union and other countries will stop.
- The cease-fire will be monitored by an international group selected by the Angolan parties.
- The process of forming a national army independent of political parties will begin after the cease-fire and be completed before the elections.
- The elections will be monitored by international observers to certify that they are free and fair.

It was expected that in January 1991 further details would be agreed in meetings between the Angolan government and UNITA in the sixth round of negotiations in Portugal. Outstanding areas of disagreement included the election date and the possible role of foreign advisers in formation of a national army. But a UNITA communique after a late December conference in Jamba, while affirming support for the Washington principles, consistently refused to mention the Angolan government, instead repeatedly referring to the MPLA.

This, together with other nuances in the statement and reports of UNITA meetings with right-wing supporters in South Africa, revived government fears that UNITA might yet again not follow through. But US Assistant Secretary of State for Africa Herman Cohen said he thought two years between cease-fire and election’s was reasonable, suggesting a period closer to the three-year initial Luanda proposal than to UNITA’s demand that elections take place in 1991. In practice the election timetable will probably be less contentious than the formation of a national army, since the loyalty and conduct of such an army would be a key determinant of any future election.

Despite the diplomatic interest in a settlement, the US stance remains subject to influence from far-right lobbyists. Even if peace comes, US overt support for UNITA through such agencies as the National Endowment for Democracy is likely, quite possibly accompanied by covert dirty tricks. But the US political climate is not likely to support large investments in intervention, and it is probable that such efforts at influence will have less effect in the long run than the internal capacity of diverse political forces in Angola.

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From Thaw to Flood: The end of the Cold War in Southern Africa

John S. Saul

A cause for celebrations? Who can feel any nostalgia for the palsied regimes of Eastern Europe, even though one may have legitimate fears for the future of such countries as they advance all too heedlessly into the maw of international capitalism? The implications for southern Africa at the 'end of the Cold War' is a little more complicated. How is one to assess the costs and benefits of the virtual disappearance of both a Soviet presence and of a 'Soviet model' from the lists in that region of the world?

The Disappearing Soviets

Disappearance? A bit of an overstatement perhaps, although it is true, quite literally, of the German Democratic Republic, until recently so important a presence in various crucial sectors (education, police) of a country like Mozambique. Yet even the Soviet Union seems well on the way to becoming a very minor player while apparently actively bent on rationalizing just such a minor role for itself. Thus, as the Soviets prepare to cut and run from southern Africa, their line of argument - one aspect of their 'new political thinking' - is becoming depressingly familiar. Notions of international class struggle and the clash of global systems, once the stock in trade of Soviet ideologists, are now muted in the extreme while, in the words of one Soviet historian of Africa, the new approach takes as its thrust

that humanity and human values should take precedence over national and class interests in international relations. Ideological differences between East and West would thus play a secondary role to concerns such as the need to avoid nuclear war and famine and environmental issues. The Soviets want to reduce their military presence all over the world and seek political resolutions to the major theatres of conflict. In essence foreign policy now seeks to achieve stability in areas in which the Soviet Union is involved, particularly those in which there are - or could be - regional conflicts (Friedman and Narsoo, 1989:5-6).

But do Soviet thinkers and policy-makers genuinely believe that 'humanity and human interests' have taken precedence, in southern Africa or elsewhere, over the hard-edged pursuit of 'business as usual' in western policy-making? Surely the primary function of such an insipid formulation must be that of putting the best face possible on the Soviet Union's own global retreat. It represents one
kind of ideological fall-out from the Eastern bloc's economic collapse and from the fact that the communist movement's attempt

to erect an alternative, more desirable and viable, that would replace the anarchy and viciousness of capitalism with a more humane and rationally directed form of economic activity... has foundered

with the communist societies themselves having 'succumbed to a mode of production and a political system far stronger than them' (Halliday, 1990:22-3). Nor has the ideological rot come to a halt with formulations of the 'humanity and human interests' variety. Even as any positive commitment to socialist solutions slips away in Eastern Europe, so too is the case for such solutions in a region like southern Africa actively downgraded by Soviet observers. As Soviet deputy foreign minister Anatoly Adamishin put the point speaking to reporters after the 1989 signing of the Angola peace accord, 'I personally don't think they are going to build socialism in this part of the world' (Koch, 1989).

True, the Soviets have never been entirely enthusiastic about socialist endeavours in southern Africa, consigning them as being, at best, mere 'states of socialist orientation': the class prerequisites for genuine socialism not quite right, the precise nature of the commitment to Marxism-Leninism not quite sound. The extended debate around this issue, in which Mozambican leaders launched vigorous protests against such formulations, appears particularly surreal in retrospect. The Eastern European countries which chose to judge their Third World counterparts now admit to have been shallow of socialist purpose themselves. But the studied scepticism exemplified by Adamishin operates on a new premise. Partly what is in play is the rankest sort of opportunism: baulked of global purpose, an economically-straitened Soviet Union now seeks, first and foremost, to escape from costly overseas entanglements. It also seeks - through its pragmatic acceptance of western hegemony on the periphery of the world system - to curry favour with the (capitalist) centres of finance and technology that it increasingly looks to for its own economic salvation.

But such opportunism/pragmatism does appear, increasingly, to be accompanied by an ever deeper recasting of basic ideological guide-lines as well. If, in the Soviet Union, although not in the rest of Eastern Europe, there remains some creative tension between marxist/socialist premise (however deformed) and capitalist/liberal premise, it is the latter that, increasingly, seems to be carrying the day - especially in approaching the global scene. Thus, following Adamishin's lead, Soviet analyst Vladimir Kokorev has curtly dismissed the Frontline states as merely indulging in 'a complex intellectual game' and not taking care of domestic problems: They have real problems of economic development and rebuilding. Mozambique has the problem of hunger. They [Frontline governments] try to use socialist slogans for their own gains'. As for South Africa, Kokorev again seemed to summarize an increasingly commonly-held Soviet position: 'We don't want to see it as an East-West problem or a capitalist-socialist problem but only in terms of a racism problem' (Southscan, 1989:106).
In short, in the words of Kokorev’s colleague at the Soviet Institute for African Studies, Leonid Fituni:

the positions of both the USSR and the US concerning the principle question, the question of apartheid, are basically very close... The principles of the new political thinking, the proclamation of the priority of human values over class values, necessitate the rejection of a dogmatic, sectarian approach in the problem of allies and fellow-travellers in the struggle for a democratic South Africa.

More generally, Fituni affirms that

the Soviet Union has no special interests in southern Africa... Nor does the Soviet Union foster any aspirations hostile to the interests of the West. Aware of Western economic involvement in southern Africa and of its reliance on the region’s raw materials, the USSR has no intention of undermining industrialized countries’ historic trade links with this part of the world (Fituni, 1989:64-5).

Benefits - and Costs

Of course, one should not romanticize the motives lying behind the Soviet Union’s previous ties with southern Africa, compounded as they were of significant dollops of ‘Great Power’ aggrandizement and patronizing self-interest. But it is equally difficult to ignore the positive side. Eastern European military assistance was critical to the success of the armed struggle in Mozambique and Angola, and also helped to sustain at least some credible guerilla presence in South Africa over an extended period (‘it is to Brezhnev, as much as anyone else outside South Africa itself, that credit for cracking the racist bloc should go’, writes Halliday (1990:151). Most dramatically - alongside the even more dramatic involvement of Cuba - the Soviets in Angola have helped turn back South African aggression on more than one occasion.

There has also been the fact of Eastern economic assistance per se, never without strings to be sure and, in the end, never likely to be enough, but far from negligible. True, when Vilas (1990:105) mourns that ‘because of the economic and political crises in the USSR and Eastern Europe, abundant and cheap socialist support for progressive governments overseas no longer exists’, he mourns a day that never did exist - not in southern Africa and least of all, over the years, in a badly-beleaguered Mozambique. The Soviet Union always acted to keep the southern African socialisms at arm’s length from COMECON. And the fact remains, more clearly revealed now than ever, that the ‘socialist bloc’ was always too weak and too compromised to have readily provided a viable alternative economic orbit for countries seeking to realize genuine development in Third World settings.

Moreover, the question of the quality of communist aid to southern Africa is at least as important as the question of its quantity. Focusing on the price paid for Soviet prominence by the movement for liberation (broadly defined) in southern Africa, some will argue that there has been little attempt to construct socialism in the region; others, that any attempts to do so have been thus far (in
the words of South African Communist Party Secretary Joe Slovo) 'both premature and wrong' (Saul, 1991a). These are misleading perspectives, although socialism in southern Africa has indeed been blighted by the cruel drag of 'objective conditions' and dogged by inadequacies of conceptualization and implementation. It is all too tempting, as well, to push forward to a rather abstract evaluation of socialist endeavour in countries like Mozambique and Angola without giving real (rather than merely notional) weight to the most important brake on their creativity of all: externally-imposed, imperially-crafted wars of destabilization.

But, 'the price paid for Soviet prominence'? It bears emphasizing, in the present context, how much the participation of southern African socialist leaderships in the discourse of 'actually-existing socialisms' blighted their initiatives. True, up to a point one could argue that 'official Marxism-Leninism' merely reinforced weaknesses already inherent in the Mozambican and Angolan projects. Thus, the ideological premise of 'vanguardism' can be seen as feeding the familiar arrogances of militarism and triumphant African nationalism, the fetishizing of the 'forces of production' and of 'proletarianization' as comfortably intersecting with classic syndromes of 'big projectitis' and suspicion of the peasantry. Yet the fact remains that other socialist paths were possible and might have been followed while the Eastern European factor weighed negatively in the balance that produced far too little democracy and far too much inflexibility in socio-economic policies in southern African socialist circles.

In part this sprang from the allure of the then still apparently successful 'Soviet model', in part from the international economics and geo-politics of the situation. A senior Frelimo leader, when taxed about embracing the particularly lifeless brand of Marxism on offer from the Soviets as the ideological instrument for codifying its radical intentions agreed that this was at great cost to Frelimo; 'of course', he said, 'you didn't have in your briefcase the military hardware that we felt was needed'?

In assessing some possible implications of removing the incubus of 'the Soviet model' from within the socialist camp in southern Africa, another, more broadly geo-political question suggests itself: is one possible benefit of the downgrading of the Cold War factor in southern Africa to lift the weight of western hostility to progressive socio-economic experimentation? Not likely, it coming as no great surprise that western countries have proven to be far from gracious winners in this respect. After all, though the Cold War may have taken on a certain life of its own in explaining 'Great Power' behaviour, it was the meeting of challenges (mounted under whatever rubric, national capitalist or socialist - as Gabriel Kolko has recently demonstrated so convincingly [Kolko, 1988]) to the dictates of global capitalism underlying US interventionism since the Second World War.

The new positioning of 'the dependent third world' will probably render it 'even more subordinate to the North' than previously. 'By contributing to the demise
of the third world challenge to post-war North-South relations and by privileg-
ing institutions of international civil society that encourage market discipline on
third world development policies, the Reagan administration began to confront
the challenge of reconstructing the North-South historical bloc; relieved of ‘the
threat that third world states will join the Soviet camp’, this process can continue
in an even more unchecked manner (Murphy, 1990:39,41). The collapse, in
the face of the rawest kind of liberal economics (read ‘global neo-conservatism’),
of such modest bows in the direction of global Keynesianism as the ‘New
International Economic Order’ can be seen as a case in point (Langley, 1990).
Moreover, ‘the coercive institutions of the old North-South bloc have, if
anything, been strengthened by the thaw in East-West relations’, not least in
those cases where Northern intervention against Third World ‘anarchy’ is being
most ostentatiously ‘multilateralized’ via the United Nations (Murphy, 1990:41).
In tandem, the US military also ‘faces South’:

there is no question that both the President’s public statements and the Pentagon’s formal
planning envision a more active US military role in the Third World (Klare, 1990: 861).

The Mozambican Case

This, then, is the kind of world that confronts southern Africa, whether (pace ‘the
new thinking) the Soviet Union were to remain a protagonist of ‘socialism’ in
the region or not. The unashamed and ever-increasing aggressiveness of the
IMF/World Bank vis-a-vis the states of the region is merely the most graphic
case in point here. Through these years I passed close enough to the flame of
Mozambique’s revolutionary process to see how real was the sense of humane
purpose that came to motivate so many Frelimo’s cadres, how sincere, too, their
grasping for a Marxist methodology that would help further to codify the
radical thrust of their undertakings. I had seen enough, in any case, to insulate
me from both the ultra-left abstractions of a Michel Cahen (1990) and the crass
 cynicism of a Heribert Adam with his suggestion that recent developments have
‘reduced Frelimo’s ... versions of freedom ideology to rhetorical socialism ...
In a crunch, the elite therefore adjusts ideological interpretations as arbitrarily
as they adopted them. No conversion is involved, as is frequently assumed,
because a collective ideological commitment hardly existed in the first place’
(Adam and Uys, 1985).

Yet my own visits of the mid-1980s had also revealed the progressive decay of
Frelimo’s high promise, a decay by now self-evident to all observers, but one
that has been particularly well documented, over the past few years in articles
back to Mozambique since 1986 when, in mid-1990, I travelled there to attend
a conference. It quickly became apparent that even the instructive contributions
of Marshall and the others had not quite prepared me for what I was about to
witness.

The conference itself was a revelation. Officially convened by the Frelimo party
and the Ministry of International Relations, it was entitled ‘Rethinking Strate-
gies for Mozambique and Southern Africa'. The number of delegates invited from western establishment circles was remarkable. Even more remarkable was the strong pitch in favour of adopting quite unalloyed 'free market' policies to deal with Mozambique's development problems that was formally presented by each of the three senior governmental ministers who addressed various sessions: Pascoal Mocumbi, Jacinto Veloso and Armando Guebuza.

Guebuza was particularly hard-boiled in this respect, acknowledging the hardships that the structural adjustment programme has brought to many in Mozambique with the matter-of-fact assertion that the market economy solution does in fact make the rich richer and the poor poorer, bringing with it more social injustice as 'the price of progress'. Indeed, it was the World Bank's own representative in Mozambique who sounded more of a warning note. He suggested that the Mozambique government had become rather too naive in its dealings with international capital, not being willing or able enough to drive the kind of hard bargain with firms and western agencies that might actually defend the country's interests. Not that this representative himself queried the premise that a wide range of benefits could flow from more or less total immersion in the international marketplace. But it was rather disconcerting (as I said in my own address to the conference) to find the World Bank standing marginally to the left of spokespersons from the Mozambican government. Equally disconcerting, I continued, was the small inclination on the part of any of the Ministers to take seriously the fact that, even if a certain kind of socialism could be said to have 'failed', there was still good reason for measured scepticism as to whether capitalism could succeed under the conditions in Mozambique.

Most remarkable of all, however, was a briefing given exclusively to conference delegates by Mozambique's President, Joaquim Chissano. Chissano seemed to be addressing himself most directly to the more establishment-style delegates from Germany and the United States. In doing so, however, he also starkly revealed just how supine Mozambique has been forced to become vis-a-vis western dictates:

*The* US said, 'open yourself to . . . the World Bank, and IMF'. What happened? . . . we are told now: 'Marxism! You are devils, change this policy'. OK. Marxism is gone. 'Open market economy'. OK, Frelimo is trying to create capitalism. We have the task of building socialism and capitalism here.

*We* went to Reagan and I said, 'I want money for the private sector to boost people who want to develop a bourgeoisie. Answer: $10 million, then $15 million more, then another $15 million. You tell me to do away with Marxism, the Soviet Union and the GDR and give me [only] $40 million. OK, we have changed. Now they say, 'if you don't go to a multiparty system, don't expect help from us'.

Chissano noted that the structural adjustment programme being followed by the Frelimo government has deepened the hardships of Mozambican people at least as much as it has produced economic advance. He warned that 'the readjustment programme must start showing results or we must take other directions'. But what 'other directions'? Chissano said rather forlornly, capping
this threat, ‘we don’t see which other way. We are totally dependent on inputs from outside. If they are not forthcoming in the correct manner it is no use’.

The debate will continue about what has brought Mozambique to its current sorry pass. We have mentioned the dead hand laid on the Mozambican experiment by Soviet-style socialism. But attention must also be paid to the hurtful combination of an unpromising historical starting-point inherited from Portuguese colonialism, a relentless siege imposed upon the country by outside forces and a Frelimo development project marred by significant failings of its own. Old Frelimo friends, people of genuinely left instinct and intent, were in a reflective mood, prepared to discuss more openly than had sometimes been the case the party’s failings. Not that anything I heard or saw caused me to revise my earlier opinion: first and foremost amongst the causes of Mozambique’s so-called ‘failure of socialism’ has been the ruthlessness of the aggression launched against it and the destruction, quite literally, of a society that has been attendant upon that aggression (Saul, 1990a, ch.3).

Indeed, I came to feel that I had, if anything, underestimated the broader imperialist underpinning’s of the grim destabilization of Mozambique. At the seminar itself, as well as in other discussions, a pithy epigram about Mozambique attributed to the Caribbean social scientist Horace Campbell took on ever increasing resonance: ‘The IMF is the economic wing of the armed bandits!’ There have been many indications, over the years, that South Africa’s destabilization tactics dovetailed neatly with the Reagan doctrine of Third World ‘rollback’. After all, these tactics had been applied in earnest only upon Reagan’s entry into the White House. Now private discussions with Frelimo’s veterans underscored the extent to which Samora Machel had premised his own tactics in the early 1980s on his grasp of the fact of US/South African connivance in destabilization. The neutralization of American hostility was thus front and centre in the calculations that underlay the signing of the Nkomati Accord.

As things turned out, Machel had underestimated the extent to which South Africa was an independent actor. South African and American policies as to the best methods of dealing with Mozambique diverged after the Nkomati Accord; the Americans apparently accepting it as rather more of a supine Mozambican surrender to the reality of force majeure and the logic of the international marketplace than the South Africans were prepared to do. As a result, destabilization continued. Yet Chissano’s words, quoted above, give some further measure of the ruthlessness with which the Americans (alongside other western powers) have been prepared to follow up economically the advantage bequeathed them by South Africa’s direct physical weakening of an ‘enemy regime’.

At the same time, some Frelimo veterans were also prepared to discuss, more frankly than ever, the weaknesses of their own project. Perhaps, as of them said, the mistake was in going for the vanguard party structure in the first place. Certainly, he continued, we were wrong, all of us at the top, in fostering a cult of personality around Samora, whatever his undoubted virtues and the particu-
lar strength of his dedication to a popularly-based development strategy; this personality cult my informant saw as being the biggest change, politically, in the transition from the Mondlane period to the Machel period and the most questionable one. Mention was also made of Samora’s failure, in the breathing space provided by the end of the Zimbabwe war, to do something about the military. In particular, this might have involved moving out the dead-wood amongst the army’s commanders, both those who were not up to meeting the novel demands of the independence period (so different from the days of the liberation struggle) and those who had failed to resist the temptations to corruption. Did Samora feel too close, from guerilla days, to members of this leadership cadre to take the necessary steps? Yet a transformed army could have made a great difference in containing South African-backed Renamo.

Then, as the war escalated, Samora seemed himself to lose his nerve and his self-possession. The period from 1983 to 1985 revealed particularly graphically Frelimo friends argued, some of the costs of excessively centralized and personalized rule. True, a vibrant and critically focused meeting of the Central Committee in 1986 saw the beginnings of a revitalization of Frelimo - and of Samora. Moreover, it seems quite plausible that it was precisely as Machel now began to move to transform the situation, giving promise, for example, of at last shaking-up the army, that the South Africans determined to kill him.

To be sure, despite the frankness displayed regarding such questions, one was still tempted to cavil at times about what was being said - and about what was being left unsaid. Were even my most reflective Frelimo friends sufficiently self-critical about the extent to which party/state directives and controls had tended (with whatever good intentions) to strait-jacket initiatives from below and failed, in consequence, to facilitate vitalization of unions, women’s organizations, ‘civic associations’ or the media? Was enough being learned not only from the shortfalls of Mozambique’s own efforts at socialist construction but also from the now ever more starkly revealed shabbiness of Eastern European practices? Still, it was refreshing to find that for some Mozambicans - though perhaps not yet enough of them - work has begun on a task that stands as essential to the left the world over: that of studying, self-critically and with more effective tools than have been available in the past, socialism’s set-back.

**Mozambique, Angola - and the West**

Of course, the situation has not always been quite so one-sidedly amenable to western command as the quotations from Chissano and the published views of Chester Crocker (Crocker, 1989:152) might suggest. Witness the complicated politics that have played themselves out around the Angola/Namibia negotiations in the past few years. Thus, it was Eastern-backed military success - at Cuito Cuanavale - that paved the way, in the last round, for progress in those negotiations. At the same time, it has proved all too easy to misinterpret such developments. Take, for example, a recent article by Canadian researcher Michael McFaul (McFaul, 1989-90), significant as the one careful analysis of
recent diplomatic-cum-political developments in southwestern Africa we have
to date. Careful, and eminently 'liberal' in tone - yet the analysis manages to just
miss the point, doing so in a way that is particularly germane to the argument
of the present essay. McFaul's thesis: that the 'Reagan Doctrine failed in Angola
and that the settlement between Angola, Cuba and South Africa was achieved
despite, not because of, the "Reagan Doctrine"."

McFaul emphasizes, instead, the importance to the outcome of 'the diplomatic
efforts of Assistant Secretary of State Chester Crocker'. Among various flaws in
his analysis, McFaul argues (in a footnote), 'It is thus somewhat artificial to
separate Angola's security requirements from its economic dilemmas.' Precisely. Yet McFaul has managed to do just that, arguing, for example, that 'most
economic destabilization in Angola is a result of South African assistance to
UNITA' rather than US assistance and direct South African military interven-
tion. He thus blurs the fact that South Africa, in effect, acted as US proxy in
knocking the economic props out from under the Angolan government - and
thus rendering it more pliable. Nor is South Africa to be interpreted as some
kind of American puppet in such a case; Botha and company also had pressing
local motives for their Angolan (and Mozambican) adventures beyond merely
servicing the US goal of whipping these countries into line. Yet the all-too-
obvious questions constantly need posing in cases like this, I'm afraid: why, for
example, do the regional aggressions of P.W.Botha and Saddam Hussein earn
such different responses from 'the West'? The answer, too, is all-too-obvious.

McFaul also notes, as if to clinch his argument, that 'if the Reagan doctrine aimed
to overthrow the Angolan government, it failed. Although the Angolans
suffered tremendous losses during the last few years on the southern front,
Luanda shows no sign of capitulating.' And yet what is creeping back, cap in
hand, to the World Bank and the IMF if not 'capitulation'? True, the presence of
the Cubans, and the network of linkages established deep within the American
polity by Jonas Savimbi, have lent a supra-economic frenzy to American
involvement in Angola that continues to the present day. Reagan/Bush have
not, therefore, been as ready to accept the (effective) surrender of Angola as they
were to accept - against the contrary policy of South Africa - the 'surrender' of
the Mozambicans after the 1984 Nkomati Accord.

But the underlying logic vis-a-vis Angola is the same and is beginning to take
hold. Indeed, Chester Crocker could as easily as McFaul have written the latter's
conclusion to the Angolan story: 'By seeking to engage these countries with
economic assistance and commerce rather than Stinger missiles, to co-opt
antagonists rather than confront them, American policy makers could protect
US interests more effectively and without the loss of human life'. But this is
merely 'polite-speak'. Surely the lesson of recent southern Africa history is other
than Crocker confesses, or McFaul imagines: it is 'not necessarily war - but war
if necessary'. We underestimate, at our peril, just how successful the 'Reagan
doctrine' has been and just how far 'the West' may still be prepared to go as,
more self-consciously than ever, it 'faces South'.

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As for the Soviet Union, McFaul at least can see that ‘once the “vanguard country” in the “world revolutionary process”, Gorbachev’s Soviet Union is fast becoming a leading force for the status quo’. Yet he fails to draw the obvious corollary: if Gorbachev is not, as McFaul stresses, walking away entirely from Angola, he is certainly quite comfortable to be walking away from the struggle for any kind of socialist Angola. That said, we may still conclude that the destruction of Angolan socialism (such as it was) was a much more important determinant of American accommodation in southwestern Africa than the fading of the Soviet regional presence. Moreover, this is a useful note of caution more generally. We should not overestimate the importance of the single factor of the removal of the Soviet ‘bogey’ from the southern African equation.

The Future: South Africa and Beyond

But neither should we underestimate it. The rapid thaw in the Cold War almost immediately made it far more difficult for hardliners in South Africa itself to justify their intransigence, at home or abroad, as some kind of last-ditch defence against communism. Developments in Eastern Europe have thus simultaneously forced de Klerk’s hand. Democratization was now, dramatically, in the air world-wide while weakening the case of those within his own camp who might oppose any more advanced reform agenda. In addition, the apparent weakening of the Soviet Union (a key ANC ally) on the one hand, and of the ‘idea of socialism’ as a global option on the other, may also have moved the powers-that-be to conceive the ANC as freshly available for various ‘reasonable’ and ‘pragmatic’ compromises. In short, the ‘end of the Cold War’ was one factor suggesting the existence of a new window of opportunity for a successful liberal reformism, one crafted, precisely, to pre-empt revolution.

Whether the increased co-optability of the ANC was indeed a correct lesson to draw is another question. In South Africa, certainly, the Soviet collapse has had an important resonance within the mass movement, but in ways that remain quite difficult to assess in any definitive manner. True, as many South African and western ‘liberals’ now hope, the post-February terrain in South Africa may produce an ANC less dependent on the Soviet Union and/or the South African Communist Party and one more shot through than ever with middle-class elements and middle-class (read: merely national-democratic) aspirations. Not inevitably: the ANC has a left autobiography of its own and a mass constituency that will not readily countenance any backsliding from the attempt to democratize the economy (Saul, 1986). Indeed, to the extent that the Soviet model fades into the background the movement may prove capable of being even more open - less crudely vanguardist - towards that constituency as well as being more subtle in creating the space for economic creativity.

An open question, though there are many who feel these latter possibilities more accurately define the situation of the SACP than that of the ANC itself. Here, after all, is the only Communist party in the world that is still growing - and is doing so by leaps and bounds. In part, it is the party’s tough, militant, even
militaristic image, pure and simple, that attracts young South Africans. But equally marked is the movement into the party of a body of working-class activists and intellectuals from the most democratic and anti-Stalinist centres of the trade union movement (Morris, 1990). They are attracted by the evidence, in Joe Slovo's own writings, for example, of a de-Stalinization of line and a democratization of practice that they feel shows promise in keeping a genuinely democratic socialist impulse on the South African agenda. In part, any evolution the SACP is undergoing stems from the need to respond to the vibrancy of mass action inside South Africa. But Slovo himself has argued that many past rigidities of line reflected imperatives derived from the party's critical dependence on Soviet backing. How thorough will the shedding of Stalinist residues (still frozen, some argue, in the party's own internal practices and beyond mere Soviet influence) prove to be? To what kind of policy thrusts will it give rise (especially in the economic sphere where the constraints, national and international, upon radical innovation are considerable)? How, on new terrain, will the party seek to realize the distinctiveness of its more autonomous 'working-class' line and practice vis-a-vis its ANC ally? These remain tough questions for the post-apartheid, post-Cold War era (Saul, 1991b)

Whatever the prospects in a changing South Africa, it may be the case that 'de-Stalinization' has come too late for the Frontline states, at least this time around. And, in any case, there will be some on the left who will be comfortable with the much freer run of global capitalist dictate in the Frontline states (Politique Africaine, 1990; Saul, 1991a; Bienefeld, 1988). Bienefeld, in reiterating the case for use of a revised 'dependency framework' to identify the very low ceiling placed on African development aspirations by a capitulation to World Bank orthodoxy, has seemed much closer than the 'Chicago Marxists' he criticised to an accurate fix on the immediate prospects for the Frontline.

Still, if underdevelopment and endemic poverty for the vast mass of Frontline populations will not be conjured away by 'more and better capitalism', some of the impulses that have given rise to earlier socialist struggles in southern Africa are also likely to revive themselves. It may well be that the old leaderships (Frelimo, MPLA) can no longer be the most effective midwives of such impulses, of course. The burden of the past (and the ideological oversimplifications of the Cold War era) rests heavily on a leader like Joaquim Chissano, who can now summarize the situation by suggesting that 'marxism was creating problems for us' (Expresso, 12 May 1990) - proceeding to suppress 'marxism' with official Soviet-style 'Marxism-Leninism' in such a way as to leave himself almost no conceptual middle-ground for blunting the charge of the most unadulterated of free-market nostrums.

Of course, one can scarcely argue, from a progressive point of view, that all the recent changes in Mozambique are pure retreat. Indeed, in some instances they seem more a case of too little change too late. Stronger steps towards effective democratization, if that is what is happening in Mozambique, are certainly welcome, capping a lesson socialists have had to take more firmly to heart
everywhere in recent years. And there may be a general kind of wisdom, too, in seeking to let markets do some of the work that has broken the back of the planning apparatus in Mozambique. Regrettably, however, one senses that these changes are not being made in some measured manner, the better to deepen the effectiveness of a popularly-rooted project. Instead they seem more the grasping at straws of a leadership left reeling by the pounding it has taken, a leadership desperate to keep afloat on the turbulent seas of (continuing) destabilization, ever more assertive post-Cold War imperial demands and even deeper reintegration into the global capitalist system.

In some cases, too, it seems that the weakest attributes of many Frelimo leaders have become magnified, benevolent authoritarianism now turned into something much more overtly non-benevolent. Take, for example, the hard version of Mozambique’s present development strategy. It may be no accident that the Minister (Guebuza) who once offered up to the people of Maputo the hardship and high-handedness of ‘Operation Production’ (a programme of forced urban removal in 1983) in the name of socialism, is now prepared to offer the hardship of extreme polarization of incomes to that same people in the name of capitalist development.

Not all in Mozambique were on this wave-length; the most salient division one could discern within the Mozambican leadership lay between those who favour a quite crude and aggressive project of entrepreneurial greed and corruption (a position exemplified most clearly by Guebuza himself and apparently packaged by those around him in crypto-racist terms as exemplifying the best kind of ‘African advancement’) and those who favour a somewhat softer, more technocratic and ‘rational’ version of ‘free market’ strategy. Does there linger within the Frelimo system something of Samora Machel’s left-wing populist sense that Mozambique’s development strategy should benefit, first and foremost, the poorest of the poor?

President Chissano himself may not have lost sight of this bottom line of Frelimo’s historical project entirely, however impossible he is finding it to give meaning to his best instincts. And even the senior leader who commented ruefully that ‘the Samoran project is over’ did suggest that the Mozambican state remains a site of struggle where remnants of Frelimo’s socialism might still be defended. For him, however, the main progressive ‘deposit’ of the first 15 years of Mozambican independence may lie elsewhere: as some kind of positive point of reference for future struggle, as an historical bench-mark lodged ‘in the minds of the people’ and within the folds of a Mozambican culture still in the making. In any case, he suggested, the clearest voice for a Mozambique that could come, eventually, to redeem some of the promise of Frelimo’s original project may actually be that of those Maputo strikers who, early in 1990, sought to resist the inequities of Mozambique’s structural adjustment package. And if this is so - if bottom-up regeneration is so crucial, in Mozambique and elsewhere - the chief contribution of the demise of ‘actually-existing socialism’ may be simply to help undermine the continuing tendency for quasi-socialist dis-
courses to mask authoritarian ones. Simply put, there is now that much less conceptual ground on which to hide for the opportunist leaderships of a Zambia or a Zimbabwe who seek the solace of one-party solutions to political complexity in their countries. In settings where socialism has had some deeper meaning, in Angola and Mozambique, the discourse of democracy is also in the air and, as noted, carries positive promise. Not that this promise is to be measured exclusively in terms of elections or of the advance of ‘multi-partyism’. Indeed, given the kinds of alternative parties (racist, regionalist) that are beginning to emerge in a ‘more pluralist’ Mozambique it is not hard to see Frelimo continuing to be the primary focus of support in any up-and-coming election - for all those who wish Mozambique well.

Far more important than elections could be the opening-up of space for the activity of newly autonomous popular organizations (trade unions, women’s organizations) and independent initiatives in the rural areas (co-operatives). Does this promise an expression of the kind of voice from below from an active ‘civil society’ that could begin to counterbalance all those other more negative pressures that have been pushing Mozambique to conform to global capitalist dictate? If so, the socio-economic terrain that confronts any such popular assertions seems sufficiently forbidding to suggest they may well take on ever more radical (socialist?) overtones. Perhaps we can also predict that if and when such radicalization occurs, something will have been learned from the past decade and a half of experience in the region. Isn’t it likely that both the conceptualization and the practice of any post-Cold War socialism that begins to resurface in southern Africa will represent an advance on what has gone before?

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Bibliographic Note


Review of African Political Economy

Problem' was originally provided by a Soviet delegation to the Canadian Association of African Studies annual conference, Ottawa, 1989; it was subsequently published, in much the same form, as 'A New Era: Soviet Policy in Southern Africa' in Africa Report (New York), 34, 4 (July-August, 1989). Fituni is identified as head of the Department of International Crisis Management Studies of the Institute for African Studies, USSR Academy of Science, in Moscow. See also Mike Morris, 'Why are Ex-Stalinists Joining the SACP?', Southern Africa Report (Toronto), 6, 3 (December, 1990).


Editor's Note:

Particularly relevant to this section on Southern Africa are:

- Terminators, Crusaders and Gladiators: Western (private and public) Support for RENAMO and UNITA by Prexy Nesbitt (ROAPE 42);
- 'Inkatha and Regional Control: Policing Liberation Politics' by Gerhard Mare (ROAPE 45/46).

For background reading see:

ROAPE 7 'Special Issue on South Africa'
ROAPE 11 'Southern Africa'
ROAPE 18 'Special Issue on Zimbabwe'
ROAPE 27/28 'Women, Oppression and Liberation'
ROAPE 29 'Resistance and Resettlement in Southern Africa'
ROAPE 40 'Southern Africa: The Crisis Continues'
ROAPE 45/46 'Militarism, Warlords and the Problems of Democracy'

Please see page 167/168 for back-issues ordering details. Also note that special rates apply to bulk orders - write to the ROAPE office for details.
The Program in Agrarian Studies at Yale is an experimental, interdisciplinary effort to reshape how a new generation of scholars understands rural life and society. The many hands from many disciplines that have shaped this Program share three premises. The first is that any satisfactory analysis of agrarian development must begin with the lived experience, understandings, and values of its historical subjects. The second premise is that the study of the Third World (and what was, until recently, called the Second World) must never be segregated from the historical study of the West, or the humanities from the social sciences. Finally, we are convinced that the only way to loosen the nearly hegemonic grip of the separate disciplines on how questions are framed and answered is to concentrate on themes of signal importance to several disciplines. By building a sustained community of interdisciplinary conversation and by demonstrating what creative trespassing can accomplish, we hope to set a standard of integrative work that will act as a magnet. The Program begins formally with academic year 1991-92 thanks to support from the Rockefeller Foundation, the Ford Foundation, and Yale University.

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Human Rights

Amnesty International, founded in 1961, had its work in Africa in the 1960s dominated by appeals on behalf of Africans opposing colonial rule. Now in the 1990s, the organisation mainly campaigns against human rights violations committed by military regimes and one-party states.

The African continent is dominated by poverty, famine, civil war and violent coups. Human rights violations are rarely in the headlines, unless of the proportions of Amin's slaughter in Uganda, or the brutality of apartheid.

Africa has been, and is still, a continent wracked by the systematic violation of human rights. The struggle against colonial rule, from the 1940s to the mid-1960s, was a struggle for the human rights of the oppressed and exploited. But in the late 1960s and 1970s, Amnesty faced a human rights emergency: the murder by governments of thousands of prisoners, principally in Uganda, but also in Angola, Central Africa, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia and Guinea.

The 1979 slaughter of dozens of school children in Emperor Jean-Bedel Bokassa's Central African Republic triggered an international outcry and fuelled the campaign for a special human rights charter for Africa. When Bokassa was tried and sentenced to death. Amnesty (which opposes the death penalty) appealed against his execution: he is now serving a life sentence.

The military and one-party rule states which replaced the post-independence democracies introduced summary judicial proceedings, particularly in political cases. Many opponents were summarily tried, without legal assistance, and with no right of appeal. This led to swift and unfair trials: in the late 1970s executions took place in Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Zaire within a few hours of trials ending.

At the extreme, the National Assembly of Guinea was transformed into a 'revolutionary' court with confessions broadcast on radio. Defendants in a 1986 trial, were not told of their trials; some others could not have been told: they had been executed in-advance.

The 1980s, countries dogged by war saw massacres, torture and arbitrary detention, often committed by both sides, in conflicts which respected neither the rules of war nor human rights: armed conflicts in Angola, Chad, Ethiopia (particularly Eritrea and Tigre), Mozambique, Namibia, Sudan, Uganda and Zimbabwe produced a floor of human rights violations. In countries untouched by insurgency or war, totalitarian governments punished non-violent government critics or opponents with imprisonment.

As well as campaigning against governments, Amnesty has reported on abuses carried out by armed opposition forces who detain, torture or kill prisoners. Amnesty wrote to the
Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) over reports of killings and other abuses. In Namibia, the UN tried to establish the fate of prisoners held by SWAPO. Amnesty contributed to the search by providing details it had collected, and several hundred prisoners were able to be accounted for. The fate of hundreds remains unknown.

Amnesty’s work in Africa has encountered much hostility: appeals against thousands of extrajudicial executions in Ethiopia was dismissed by the military government as ‘CIA-inspired’; after appeals for clemency after an unfair political trial in 1978, President Mobutu of Zaire responded: ‘I will no longer tolerate actions to stop Zaire punishing criminals in the way they deserve under the pretext of safeguarding human rights’. Thirteen people were subsequently executed, but Amnesty relaunched its appeals for dozens of others, and all were eventually released.

Aggressive responses from some has meant that Amnesty representatives have not been able to travel freely, but information can still be gathered, with the exception of areas affected by armed conflict, currently including Angola, Ethiopia and Sudan. During the 1970s appeals were suspended for individual prisoners in Ethiopia, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea and Uganda for fear of reprisals. In 1974 Life-President Banda of Malawi threatened retaliation against individual prisoners in response to an Amnesty’s campaign. In recent years Amnesty has developed an international network which can respond rapidly to human rights crises, and which has been used recently for South Africa, Liberia and Sudan.

**Urgent Action: Swaziland**

Twelve people have been charged with treason under a 1973 decree which prohibits people from organising or attending meetings of a political nature. The accused are alleged to have conspired to form a political party, the People’s United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO) and to have planned to violently overthrow the government.

The government has responded to pressure for democracy by clamping down on opposition groups and sacking the Minister of Justice, Reginald Dhladhla. In October, all those arrested on treason charges were acquitted; the government responded by ordering a second round of detentions and a crackdown on student opposition.

The government has now (March 1991) renewed, for a third time, the 60-day administrative detention order originally imposed in November on five detainees. This legislation permits detention for an indefinite period, incommunicado and outside the jurisdiction of the courts and is thus in conflict with internationally accepted human rights standards. The five are: Sabelo Dlamini, Boy Magagula, Dominic Mngomezulu, Ray Russon and Mphandlana Shongwe.

Amnesty believes that all the defendants are prisoners of conscience, imprisoned because of the non-violent expression of their political views. Appeals for release should be sent to: The Right Hon.Obed Dlamini, Acting Prime Minister, Office of the Prime Minister, Box 395, Mbabane, Swaziland.
**Book Reviews**


This collection of essays aims to throw light on the origins of crisis in Africa, to examine some of the key policy measures being used to try to bring about adjustment, and to offer a preliminary assessment of the record of adjustment up to about 1987. It consists of an introduction by the editors setting out their view of the key issues arising out of IMF and World Bank sponsored adjustment programmes in Africa; case studies of some aspects of adjustment in Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Madagascar and Morocco; and a case study of the Semry rice project in the Cameroon which it is suggested embodies many of the same problems faced by adjustment programmes. The theoretical perspective of most of the contributors is informed by some version of dependency theory, 'albeit of a more subtle, sophisticated variety than earlier, discredited, "neo-Smithian" approaches' (p.3).

For an up-to-date and comprehensive evaluation of the impact of IMF and World Bank programmes which offers a guide through the mass of competing statistics and methodologies, the reader must look elsewhere. The strength of this book is in its attempts to get behind the 'technical' facade of such programmes, their appeals phrased in seemingly neutral terms such as 'efficiency', 'comparative advantage' and 'fiscal prudence', in order to show how 'economic rationality' is always defined from a particular viewpoint, serving the needs and purposes of some social groups better than those of others. A sustained example of this kind of deconstruction is provided in chapter 2 by Stoneman's critique of World Bank recommendations for industrial adjustment in Zimbabwe, which details the misuse of DRC (domestic resource cost) analysis to support pre-determined and ideologically-loaded policy advice.

A critical approach to IMF and World Bank recommendations does not, however, mean endorsing a simple-minded rejection of all the policy instruments used in IMF and World Bank adjustment programmes. Loxley, in chapter 1, provides a cogent defence of devaluation, arguing that other things have to be taken into account besides the fundamental underlying elasticities of supply and demand stressed by many economists on the left. In circumstances of proliferating parallel markets, one of the main effects of devaluation would be to reduce the huge financial gains being made by those buying at the official rate and selling on the black market, and to switch more transactions from the unofficial to the official markets. It
would also trigger more inflows of foreign exchange which could be used to supply many of the inputs needed to support a favourable supply response. Loxley certainly persuades me that the important question in Tanzania in the early 1980s was not whether to devalue but when, and by how much, and with what supporting measures.

However, there is another important issue about exchange rates which is not discussed in chapter 1 and which is at the root of much opposition to IMF and World Bank devaluation policies in Africa. As Stoneman points out in chapter 2, these agencies wish to see not only changes in the level of exchange rates, but also in the way they are determined, pressing for an end to the setting of official rates and selective allocation by the monetary authority in favour of foreign exchange auctions. Thus rather than seeking to switch more transactions to socially regulated markets through an improvement in the price signals they give, the Bank and the Fund want to replace socially regulated markets with 'free' markets in which foreign exchange goes to the highest bidder irrespective of social priorities.

Loxley does recognise this issue in his essay on Uganda (chapter 3), discussing the way in which 'free market' allocation of foreign exchange in the early 1980s, under the auspices of an IMF adjustment programme, 'deprived industry of raw materials, spare parts and machinery while permitting state functionaries and the merchant class not only to reap profits on imported consumer goods but also to export their capital gains' (p.77). One of the important differences that Loxley highlights between the 1981-84 IMF adjustment programme, and the 1987 Economic Policy Package for Reconstruction and Development drawn up by the NRM government and supported by the IMF and World Bank, is that the latter provides for the direct allocation of foreign exchange according to social priorities.

Throughout the book runs the theme of the class implications of different forms of adjustment. Disappointingly, there is nowhere a direct critique of the World Bank view that its programmes are progressive because they will diminish the power of rich urban 'rent-seekers' and state employees and bring benefits to the peasants. However, the chapters on Uganda, Ghana and Madagascar all contain suggestions that conventional adjustment programmes tend to alter the form in which merchants and functionaries obtain their rents rather than abolish such rents. Thus with respect to Uganda during the 1981-84 IMF programme, Loxley reports:

There are accusations of the foreign exchange auction being dominated by four or five large traders who could afford access to expensive and restricted bank credits for 'local cover'. Merchants are accused of making huge profits on lags between paying for imports and selling them on the local market during which time exchange rates had depreciated and local prices risen significantly (p.76)

In the case of Ghana, Hutchful notes similar tendencies also related to the foreign exchange auction (p.117). For Madagascar, Durufle analyses the liberalisation of the rice market suggesting it led to speculative gains for merchants at the expense of both producers and consumers. He doubts
that such rents will be wiped out by
competition (the implicit assumption
of Fund and Bank economists) because
of material factors like lack of transport,
which keep ‘free’ markets fragmented;
and social factors such as the ability
of existing power holders to restrict
new entrants (p.190).

In contrast with the emphasis on class,
very little attention is paid to gender.
The only contributor to analyse the
gender-differentiated impact of
economic policies is Claude in her
study of the Semry rice project in the
Cameroon (chapter 7). She shows how
a project widely judged to be a success
in terms of yields and rate of return
led to increased demands on women’s
time and their loss of autonomy.

No fully worked out alternative
adjustment strategy is offered in the
book, though Loxley makes tantalising
references to the alternatives proposed
by the Tanzania Advisory Group in
1982 and by the Uganda Study Team
in 1986 that leave one wishing for a
detailed exposition of each. Hutchful
offers an instructive comparison
between the first version of the PNDC’s
Programme for Reconstruction and
Development in Ghana, introduced in
1982, and the Economic Recovery
Programme for 1984-86 which was
designed in conjunction with the IMF
and World Bank. He notes ‘the
deliberate depoliticisation that has
occurred under the ERP, and the
displacement of popular participation
and mobilisation by a narrowly based,
bureaucratic management. One by one
the organs of ‘people’s power’ - the
defence committees and the worker’s
self-management committees - have
either been dismantled or emasculated
(p.123). Since more popular
participation is currently being put
forward by the Bank as a way of
overcoming some of the manifest
inadequacies of its strategies in Africa,
it is useful to recall that in Ghana the
actuality of popular participation was
described by the Bank as ‘the
propensity of workers to engage in
disruptive tactics’ and ‘unnecessary
harassment of enterprises’ (p.106) and
was rooted out.

A helpful starting point may be the
suggestion made by Hutchful that a
sustainable adjustment strategy
requires the constitution of a new
dominant class rooted in production
rather than in dealing and rent-seeking;
a class ‘whose politics is the politics
of production’, in implied contrast to
the politics of distribution which has
dominated Africa since independence.
But his optimism that IMF and World
Bank intervention may create the
conditions necessary for the
consolidation of such a class is quite
unconvincing.

The other contributors are unanimous
in seeing the domination of the policy-
making process in Africa by the
international financial institutions as
part of the problem, not part of the
solution, because it hinders the
formation of a broad political,
consensus around a redefinition of
sustainable national development
objectives. As Durufle shows in his
analysis of the Ivory Coast, an
important factor in the crisis in many
African countries is a vision of
development as the creation of a
‘modern’ urban, foreign-oriented
lifestyle which domestic productive
resources cannot sustain, given the
unfavorable operation of international
trade patterns.
My conclusion would be that in addition to a politics of production, a new politics of consumption is also required. In constructing such a new politics, gender as well as class differences should be taken into account. Women in Africa, as a result of their daily experience in household management, have more knowledge than men of what is required to provide adequate basic consumption levels, and tend to have different priorities in the use of resources as a result. The full incorporation of their voices in the policy process would be likely to lead to a different and more sustainable pattern of development.

However, as the editors remind us in their introduction, all African initiatives for alternative forms of adjustment are severely constrained by the debt burden. The case studies do substantiate their concern with the external pressures on Africa and show that the liberation of market forces offers no satisfactory corrective to the contradictions of the policies pursued in African in the 1960s and 1970s.

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Other Books Received:


The Pillars of Apartheid: Land Tenure, Rural Planning & the Chieftancy by Fred T.Hendricks, Doctoral Dissertation from the Fac. of Social Sciences, Univ. of Uppsala, Sweden, 1990.


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