

Reconceptualizing the State as the Leading Agent of Development in the Context of Globalization in Africa

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Abstract

Despite improvements in some social sectors in some countries, conditions in African countries worsened over the last two decades of the 20th century. As corporate globalization continues to make inroads into national policies and politics, further weakening the ability of African countries to act, there is a need to explore other alternatives for development in Africa. Although this article is essentially an effort to articulate a theoretical deconstruction and reconstruction of the African State, in its content, it is based on numerous empirical case studies and research projects developed by the author over the years on Africa's international relations, political economy, development, and world politics.

Reconceptualizing the African state is a must because, firstly, about four decades of preoccupation with development have yielded only very meager returns. It has proven a mistake to attempt to analyze something that has not yet been seriously on the agenda, dealing mainly with symptoms related to behaviors of the state instead of its substance. Secondly, all the available evidence points to the inescapable conclusion that political conditions in Africa are the greatest impediment to development. Thirdly, despite the explosion of the number of actors in the global system and the deliberate efforts of mega financial, multinational and multilateral institutions to African States, and also despite the fact that the African systems of delivering services or performance at the national level are highly problematic, the African State is still the most visible actor in world politics. Finally, the fate of Africa's peoples and cultures has been historically defined by the dynamics of the state, especially its role in international political economy and in making alliances for its own immortality. Colonial Africa was created essentially as states and not as nations, and neo-

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colonial political élites inherited African States as the central agencies defining the parameters of economy, culture, and the people or citizens.

The typologies used here are shaped by an historical structuralist approach that stipulates that systems, states, corporations or social institutions do not function randomly. The system is not just the sum of its elements. It is more than what is tangible. This holistic approach puts the emphasis on change. The African State in its current form is not an agent of positive social change because this state was created to advance the interests of metropolitan capitalism. Development has not started in Africa for many reasons, despite the good will of many Africans and African social movements. African people need to reinvent new state forms that can effectively address issues related to poverty, gender inequalities, etc. Despite corporate globalization and the struggles to dismantle welfare states, African people can learn a great deal from the policy and politics of such states.

Introduction: Objectives, Issues and Perspectives on Development

The debate on the nature of the African state has re-emerged after the collapse of the African economies in the 1980s, the failures of the global liberal institutions in the 1990s to improve the social conditions of the majority of people through their austerity programs, the systematic marginalization of Africa since the 1970s in the international political economy, and the major neocolonial wars in West Africa, the Great Lakes region, the Horn, and Central Africa at the end of the Cold War era.

On 2 March 2001, the Assembly of the African Heads of State and Government met in an extraordinary summit (the 5th summit) in Sirte, Libya. It made unanimously a Declaration for the Creation of the African Union. There had been about 17 months of discussion from the time that Col. Moammar Kadhafi of Libya had revived the idea of union, at a previous summit in Sirte in September 1999. The process of creating the greater unity of Africa has just started. With this declaration, a major idea or dream is being introduced into the African political lexicon. However, some important questions should start to be posed: What does this declaration mean in the world of the African states? How will this major idea fit into the peripheral, militarized and artificial structure of the weak African State? When will this idea become a political tool for development?

Although this article is essentially an effort to articulate a theoretical deconstruction and reconstruction of the African state, in its content, it is based on numerous empirical case studies and research projects that I have developed over the years on Africa's international relations, political economy, development, and world politics. Despite the fact that African states are different from one another in terms of their size, the nature of their resources, the human or

demographic and cultural compositions of their people, and the internal deterministic forces, all of which have historically shaped their policies, they have, in relationship to world politics and the structures of the international political economy, similar and/or common philosophical and historical roots.

This article has four sections. In the first part, I introduce some major elements of my approaches/perspectives or methodological guidelines and premises. Here, I also raise the issues about the subject matter within the framework of social sciences in general. The second part deals with what I call epistemological questions related to the ontology or phenomenology of being an African state and its characteristics. I also discuss the reasons why I believe that we should continue to promote the discourse on reconceptualizing the African state. In the third section, I briefly discuss some claims, characteristics, and the relevance of welfare states. Finally, in the conclusion, I deal with the question of where to go from here.

Despite the fact that we have been told over and over again at the end of the Cold War that the world is being unified under the victory of global capitalism, comprehensive historical and sociological facts, their ramifications and the dynamics of social movements in various regions or sub-regions of the world system are revealing different stories.

All that should be emphasized is that the world is moving at the same time through a complex and hybrid transition with multiple dimensions. This transition is being defined differently depending on the nature of the actors involved in this redefinition of the global system, where they are geopolitically located, what they are capable of offering, what they actually have both in terms of human and material resources and historical and cultural background and, finally, who they are. In short, on empirical and scientific grounds, the views articulated within the premise of the victory of one system over the rest are not ontologically or historically telling the whole story and, therefore, they should be intellectually challenged and even occasionally categorized as an invalid or unscientific foundation of intellectual debates. It is within this perspective of rejecting the epistemology based on a unilinear perspective of the hermeneutics of world politics that my topic is examined.

The term 'development' has been used, like the concept of national security by the state, to mean, in some cases, everything concerning changes or, in other cases, to mean nothing, depending on who is using it, in which context and/or for what purposes. While, in some cases, it has been used popularly to describe the complex processes and mechanisms of political, social, and economic changes at the individual, local, regional, and international levels, in other cases, it has been utilized to describe the symptoms of social and economic indexes such as GNP, GDP, personal income, life expectancy, infant mortality, the strength of a currency, etc. In most cases in 'undeveloped' countries, these indexes have had very little positive significance beyond the macroeconomic

and political levels. To be able to understand this concept intellectually in its complex dimensions, one needs to contextualize their analysis within the dominant schools of thought. Something that has been consistently missing in studies on development is the epistemological question of its origins, its nature, the power relationships behind it, and how this power relates to the real living conditions of the majority of the people who are trying to better their lives.

In his book, *The African Predicament: A Study of the Pathology of Modernization*, Stanislaw Andreski asks, in Chapter 16, the old question "Is there a Way out?" His controversial point is that the main problem that Africa faces presently "is not how to ensure quick progress but how to prevent, or at least to slow down, the spread of misery and violence under the impact of the population explosion and of the rapid growth of parasitic power groups" (1968: 214). He goes on to state that "What African needs most is the human capital of millions of knowledgeable, hard-working and enterprising small businessmen; and this capital cannot be imported from abroad" (1968: 215). His ahistorical perspective in focusing on birth control and parasitism are symptomatic of neo-modernization theorists in sociology and economics who blame Africans for being partially responsible for their own misery. In this paper, using a dialectical relationship perspective, the same question of 'is there a way out?' is explored structurally.

Since the 1960s, especially between the 1970s and '80s, the concept of development has become intellectually popular and controversial as its advocates, especially elements associated with the modernization school of thought on its so called universalistic assumptions, unilinear basis and economic perspectives of the global market, supported 'non development' policies in the developing world. They have, at the same time, politically promoted militarization of global politics with negative consequences for the efforts to promote so called development up until the end of the Cold War era.

Neo-Marxists, especially theorists of the dependency school, those of the world system and the Third World Forum, demystified the concept in its functionalist and behavioral usages by emphasizing the contradictions in global structures at the production and distribution levels of the global system, as some of their scholars proved how the similar mechanisms and processes that created development in the north have engendered underdevelopment in the south.

In the 1990s, the concept became even more confused as (mainstream) liberal theories of economics became central discourses through which so-called development programs were carried out. The collapse of the Soviet Union and its satellite countries in the south intensified the centrality of the liberal economics, both in domestic policies and international relations.

It should be emphasized that the intellectual debates coming out of passive academic traditions have always influenced, directly or indirectly, decision making and policy in the world. Our efforts as theoreticians are not only intellec-

tual. Yet, it should be noted that these central discourses did not lead to any consistent or systematic developmental changes in Africa. The key questions are the following: What is the origin of the concept of development? Who invented it in the way it is being used today? What is its meaning in Africa? Who controls developmental processes and means? Who should tell Africans what to do to produce development? Who, or what social classes, should be the agents of development? What should the role of Africans themselves be in the struggle for social progress? I will not be able to elaborate on these questions in this article. However, they are posed as part of the ongoing debates on development and globalization in Africa at large.

What are my intellectual premises? The way one perceives, defines, and analyzes a social phenomenon determines not only the nature of the understanding of it but, more importantly, the kind of prescriptions or policy recommendations to be used to solve problems associated with such a phenomenon. That is to say that, philosophically, there may be a correlation between approaches in minds/heads or paradigms, and the forms of questionnaires and policy. This is why it is important to identify and localize the intellectual and philosophical elements that guide my discourse. In addition, in social sciences, despite our efforts at rigorous analysis using quantitative methodologies and Cartesian logic to attempt to create the Weberian ideal types in building theories, there are no such things as ideologically and philosophically neutral social science methodologies and approaches.

In this article, I use the concept of development to include fulfillment of the basic necessities of an everyday life, as Amilcar Cabral, one of the best African theorists of the national liberation movements, quoted by Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja (1999: 68) says, "Remember always that people do not fight in ideas for things that exist only in the minds/heads of individuals. The people fight and accept the necessary sacrifices in order to gain material benefits, to live better and in peace, to experience progress, and to guarantee the future for their children." As quoted by Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja, the phenomenon has been defined by a distinguished Nigerian historian, Professor Jacob Ade Ajayi, as people's expectations that "include improved standards of living in housing and clothing, greater returns for their labor, better transportation for exporting and marketing their surpluses, education as a means to social mobility that would ensure a better life for their children, and an adequate supply of electricity, health-care facilities, and other such amenities" (1999: 69).

For Claude Ake, "Development is not economic growth; it is not a technical project but a process by which people create and recreate themselves and their life circumstances to realize higher levels of civilization in accordance with their own choices and values. Development is something that people must do for themselves. If people are the end of development, they are also necessarily its agents and its means" (1996: 125).

These three scholars perceive development in terms of its characteristics of permanency, futurism, and continuity. Two of them refer to “children” as they refer to futurism and preservation. For my purpose in this article, these perspectives on development should be guided and supported within the framework of rights as defined by the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights adopted by the Organization of the African Unity (OAU) in 1981. They include: political and civil rights; economic and social rights; and the rights of peoples. Peoples’ rights include freedom from discrimination, oppression, and exploitation; and the right to self determination, national and international peace and security and a satisfactory environment for economic and social development.

What kind of state would be able to *promote* this kind of social progress in Africa? Is the existing African state capable of dealing with the above perspectives on social progress comprehensively?

Why am I examining the African state as the leading agent of development? First of all, it should be noted that about four decades of preoccupation with development have yielded only very meager returns. We have made a fallacy of analyzing something that has not yet been seriously on the agenda. That is to say that we have dealt mainly with symptoms related to behaviors of the state instead of its substance. Secondly, all the available evidence points to one inescapable conclusion that “political conditions in Africa are the greatest impediment to development” (Ake, 1996: 1). Thirdly, despite the explosion of a multitude of actors in the global system, and deliberate efforts and policies of the mega financial multinational and multilateral institutions to weaken the African states, and also despite the fact that the African systems of delivering services or performance at the national level are the most problematic of all, the African state is still the most visible actor in world politics. And, fourthly, the fate of Africans as peoples and cultures, has been historically defined by the dynamics of this state, especially its role in the international political economy and in making alliances for its own immortality. Colonial Africa was created essentially as states and not as nations, and the neocolonial political elites inherited African states as the central agencies in defining the parameters of the dynamics of economy, culture, and people or citizens.

Within my intellectual framework, ‘the state’ as a social phenomenon is an historically constructed entity. This construction always embodies an ideology or some belief systems. State, like social class, is neither biology nor physiology. It is a construction that emerges out of social contradictions with specific interests and objectives. Before advancing further with some of the elements of my core arguments, let me briefly cite the premises that shape my thinking.

The first premise is that, despite the good intention of many African political leaders, states and ruling élites in continuously imitating European experience, with its unilinear models of political development, and regardless of the quality of their imitations, Africa will never organically or ontologically develop out of

Europe's history, languages, or metaphysics. However, no society can develop out of autarchy. Africans also can learn or borrow from others, but whatever they borrow from other people's experiences has to be selectively injected into African projects, and appropriated and owned by Africans, before it can positively be part of the African metaphysics, ethos, and experience. Development or social progress is organic.

The second premise is that no people, nation or continent can progress socially without building the foundation of its actions on its own history and culture. This premise stipulates that African political history and culture, and their contradictions, must be critically engaged to avoid the projection of their romantization as a tool for social synthesis. Romantization of a culture and history is as dangerous a phenomenon, with serious damaging social and political effects, as fascism or any kind of biological argument in a nation building plan can be. It should be emphasized that the contradictions should not always be perceived and defined as pathological. Out of contradictions, humans have always made synthetic judgments or assessments on what directions to follow in defining and redefining them. Africa must be re-invented.

And the third premise is about the role of 'social consciousness' toward development efforts. Social consciousness means knowledge of the self. It is a product of dialectic relationships between cognitive knowledge and social awareness. As Karl Marx says: "It is not consciousness of men (sic) which determines their existence, but on the contrary, it is their social existence which determines their consciousness" (1959: 11).

Human beings do not consciously choose to be born in any given place. They do not choose their parents either. But they define themselves as Africans, Asians, Europeans, blacks, whites, yellows, etc., based on complex processes of interactions of physiology, geography, mythology, power, and history. The process of becoming is, firstly, a result of some immanent historical accident. An infant's individual, conscious contribution to this historical determinism at the beginning of its life is zero. However, what is more important in our definition of Africans, Americans, Asians, Europeans, etc., is what people can or should do after they have been projected out there in the context of the jungle or divine forces or historical accident. Individual choices and decisions to shape their destinies, and to create social meanings and define things, including themselves, in a transcendental way are more important than what gods or divinities do on people's behalf, even if humans should respect them.

That is to say that social consciousness of being someone is the most important determining factor in the way one defines and redefines oneself in a given physical and social environment. It is partially related to the notion of sociological nation or what Mwayila Tshiyembe has also called "sociological citizenship" that is founded on "shared language, blood ties, religion, a common history, and an evident desire to live together" (1999). It implies an historical, col-

lective memory of people or an embodiment of the concept of 'social capital'. Without such a social consciousness of systematically making history and recreating the self, human beings would not be very much different from other animals. Consciousness is a critically and objectively defined phenomenon. If we are, we have to act. The question is, act to do what and be what?

From the above premises, my typologies are shaped by an historical structuralist approach that stipulates that systems, states, corporations, and social institutions do not function randomly. They have a certain logic that is related to the role and the nature of each element within them. The system is not just the sum of its elements; it is more than what is tangible. In order to understand why a system behaves the way it does, we have to ask the questions of the origins of its elements, examine the nature of the relationship among those elements and discuss the nature of the interaction between the system itself and other phenomena within its larger environment.

All the elements of the systems or the subsystems interact dynamically with one another. Performing to reach their various objectives, the elements are maintained through a complex process of historical configurations. The behavior of an actor is determined by the dynamics of the subsystems, the systems and the environment where they are located. This thinking assumes the local conditions to be as structurally dynamic as those of the global system. On the basis of my critical theory, which emphasizes the need to combine empirical investigation with a critique of reality, we have to assess the way in which dominant ideologies are constituted and mediated through specific cultural formations. This way of thinking goes beyond cybernetics and the logic of functionalist scholarships.

Methodologically, I argue in this article that the perception of Africa only in terms of negativity and failures or conflicts and crises, as has become part of the dominant scholarship in the west and its African Studies programs, contributes enormously to weakening the foundation of a critical theory about Africa that is emerging in and out of Africa. A methodology to study Africa comprehensively, and to also elevate its achievements, can create the balanced way of thinking needed to objectively redefine the African reality.

My holistic approach emphasizes change. Things do not just happen. Contradictions are not all the time or always pathological. We have to distinguish between primary contradictions and secondary contradictions. If contradictions are carefully studied they can also serve as a foundation for paradigm shifts.

Thus, I argue that the African state, in its current form, is not an agent of positive social change because this state was created essentially to advance the interests of metropolitan capitalism. It has tendencies of monopoly and tyranny. As compared to the notions of security and environmental conservation, the concept of development was never part of the political lexicon of the colonial

state. After the reconstruction of Europe, with United States' public and private capital and that of the newly established institutions such as the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the GATT, the term development started to become the magic concept in social sciences and policy studies. When the concept was introduced and promoted by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), it was set up within the notion of the Rostowian 'catch up' premises and top to bottom approaches as perceived within the dominant Americo-European perspectives. Obviously, these approaches have not worked in Africa.

If we are serious about transforming African conditions, we have to start the debates by reconceptualizing, or structurally rethinking, the African state. This reconceptualization should promote a new role, responsibility, legal body, and social progress agenda for Africa. And this process and its supportive mechanisms should create new African leadership, new definitions of citizenship and new concepts of territoriality in legal, political and economic terms.

I also argue that development has not started in Africa for many reasons, despite the good will of many Africans and social movements. The structures or institutions that could possibly advance development are either absent or, as is mostly the case, too weak to carry out the task. In addition, the executive powers of the states (governments and political leaderships) are confused about creating an agenda for social progress for Africa. This confusion is multidimensional. On one hand, we are being told that the strong state is a malady when it comes to development and globalization and, on the other, this globalization with its so called development schemes means marginalization of Africa. Africa's social progress cannot and will not be engendered from a dysfunctional, incapable, myopic, and confused state. Both concepts of the state and development must be reconceptualized in light of the current struggles between the African States, peripheral capitalists, social movements, and huge multinational corporations. This reconceptualization should take into account the various struggles that are promoting the movement toward multipolarity in international relations and world politics even if, in most cases, its philosophical foundation is still unclear.

Phenomenology of an African State, its Dynamics and its Characteristics

What are the elements that constitute the essence of being an African State? As Ann Kelleher and Laura Klein state:

Europeans used their version of the state to achieve worldwide dominance. Its highly centralized organizational structure was capable of concentrating a large-scale of human and material resources over long periods. During the colonial era European State spread worldwide and became the primary institution for people to interact internationally. Since states have been, and many people think still are, the

most powerful decision makers affecting international events, learning about current world issues begins with analyzing the nature of the modern state (1999: 7).

In general terms and for the purposes of this discussion, four major characteristics of the state are defined. Firstly, a concise territory with determinant boundaries that should be effectively controlled. This is also called land or physical resources. In this confined land, the population has to be defined and classified culturally and economically according to the criteria of the ruling powers. Secondly, a government that is the executive organ of the state. It makes decisions and regulates behaviors of people, makes laws, and enforces them. Historically, it is the most visible phenomenon in international affairs, especially in diplomacy and the world economy. It claims to use force legally. Its legitimacy in terms of forcing or persuading the people to believe in its action is based on its performance. Thirdly, a loyal population. This is what is called 'citizenry'. Citizenry is defined not as a divisible entity. Citizens must speak common language(s) and have common nationalistic and patriotic identity. And, finally, recognition by and of other states. This can be summarized in the notion of sovereignty of the nation state. In principle, this state has the right to make its internal/domestic laws without necessarily asking permission from others or having a consensus with others. It has, in its territoriality, a jurisdiction to act and speak on behalf of the people who inhabit such a space. It has autonomy to conduct its foreign policies according to the aspirations of its citizens or its leaders even if neighbors may not be happy for them.

In Europe, these characteristics were developed through political violence, invasions, and wars. For instance, it was Napoleon Bonaparte of France who redefined and unified Germany in 1806 for the first time in banning the first Reich, as he forced hundreds of principalities into a confederation of 30 states. The contemporary characteristics of the state in Europe are the result and the political evolution of the 1648 Westphalia Peace Accord after the end of the 30 Years War. What is the situation in Africa and how have these characteristics been developed over time in Africa?

African states, including Ethiopia and Liberia, which were not formally colonized by the European powers, are not the products of internal evolutionary and revolutionary processes and struggles. They are the products of colonial and neocolonial configurations of powers. As such, African states, as well as states elsewhere, are, in their behaviors and structure, essentially the reflections of the dynamics of world politics as defined by the European powers and political history.

This form of state was created by the then emerging European powers to foster their interests through global capitalism as viewed and articulated by the European monarchs in the Berlin Conference of 1884–85. So it is an instrument of international capitalism *par excellence*. The colonial powers conceived and

established an Africa that would be politically ruled, militaristically controlled, and economically and culturally exploited by the European invaders. Territory or land was divided arbitrarily. King Leopold II of Belgium, for instance, was given what was known as the Congo Free State as his personal property.

All the boundaries which are part of the definition of the contemporary African state were artificial. In addition, what lay within those boundaries was not accepted by the imperialists as fixed entities that would support the internal evolution of cultures and foster their stability. In most countries, these boundaries were fixed and redrawn several times, depending on the political configurations of the politics in the north and international relations. In many countries, even around the 1950s at the beginning of the Cold War, when colonial experiences had become relatively mature, issues related to boundaries were still being raised by the European authorities. Some African groupings between two or more countries have had experiences of sharing more than two colonial experiences in their social settings, organizations and political economy in various periods. After independence, these groupings were likely to challenge the contemporary state if any political opportunity arose.

However, it should be noted that, despite the artificiality of the state, the boundary question did not lead, until recently, to major wars among different social and ethnic groupings, as has been the case after the political independence. Despite the militaristic character of the colonial power in dealing with the boundary issue generally, the flexibility of African culture and African tolerance were instruments of temporary peace. There were also internal mechanisms to deal with those claims related to the boundary issue. The issue of native citizenship associated with land was not strictly codified or legalized before the second stage of colonization after World War I and the 'great depression'. The British and Germans used so called 'indirect rule'. But many laws in Anglophone Africa, for example, despite reforms, have their origins not in the African traditions but, rather, in the Indian Codes that were developed during the nineteenth century to help resolve disputes on the multi-ethnic Indian sub-continent (Widner, 1999: 186).

The Belgians used an eclectic system with elements of both direct and indirect rule, depending on the period. In these models, colonial powers used and exploited the existing African system of powers as agencies of new governance. This gave the appearance of the colonially constructed or imagined flexibility of various cultures to co-exist and flourish according to their own norms. This appearance of preserving the existing structures, though, did not have any traditional legitimacy in the eyes of native societies and it did not lead to a fundamental questioning of their nationalities, customary laws or ethnic citizenship.

The colonial state, as is still the case in the post colonial period, is militaristic in essence; any territorial boundary question was also met with military forces. As mentioned previously, between the 1920s and 1930s, some state

reforms were introduced to make colonial systems more effective in the exploitation of labor and raw materials. This situation came with new definitions of power systems as either customary authority or civic colonial code. Controls over native systems of governance were instituted. However, in the case of the Belgian model, for instance, each ethnic grouping was governed according to different sets of rules. In the Democratic Republic of Congo (then Zaïre), as well as in Rwanda and Burundi, the introduction of the ethnic identity card did have an impact among groupings but also in the way so called 'indirect rule' was organized.

The European monarchs established states as instruments of mobilization of human and material resources, mainly for the benefit of European political élites and the consolidation of their concept of 'peace'. All the state apparatuses, such as institutions of security, public administration, churches, formal education, etc., despite the differences in the ways they were defined in the colonial setting, were part of the plot to destroy or to weaken Africa. Through so called 'Christianizing' and 'humanizing', the state was deliberately established to produce a docile populace. Despite differences among colonial states, all of them were structurally fashioned as Eurocentrically dominated entities, philosophically and culturally alien to Africa, and economically capitalistic. As Claude Ake says:

Since the colonial state was called upon by the peculiar circumstances of the colonial situation to carry out so many functions – indeed to do everything – it was all-powerful. It needed to be all-powerful not only to carry out its mission but also to survive along with the colonial order in face of the resentment and the hostility of the colonized.... The power of the colonial state was not only absolute but also arbitrary. For instance, the colonial governments made the colonies produce the commodities they needed (1996: 2).

The African state, like any state, has to have a population that should produce labor and be controlled, and from which loyalty is required. This population was essentially perceived and defined as laborer and taxpayer. However, despite the efforts to destroy their cultural identities and their history, people succeeded in making various claims and maintained many loyalties functioning in tandem.

I argue in this article that the new African realities of the fixed physical territory, forms of government, and notion of sovereignty have been more fluid, open and constantly challenged in Africa than in many parts of the world in the contemporary situation. This is why it is important to study the nature of these challenges as we continue to formulate policies of development that do not work at aggregate levels. The challenges have not created any space for genuine debates about development to take place.

The African colonial conditions, despite their internal dynamics, were not intended to create states in which Africans would be citizens. Despite differ-

ences in the ways colonial politics was articulated, from the colonial administration's point of view, all Africans were legally defined as subjects in the colonial systems. The notion of civil citizenship is relatively new within the context of colonization. But Africans, in their regions, localities, and old political divisions, did not perceive and define themselves as subjects. They defined themselves according to the classification that was reflected in their traditions, customs and hierarchy of powers. Despite the efforts of the colonial powers to use or to codify some elements of the traditions and customs, especially via so called indirect rule within imposed western paradigms, the dual citizenship claims and practices have not been totally destroyed up until today. The majority of Africans still define themselves as citizens of their own social groups or nations. Europeans defined Africans using civil laws in relationship to their labor. The exceptions were the very small percentage of Africans who were born in the four communes in Senegal. The full development of the notion of citizenship, as a legal definition or status of people with certain social and political rights, duties, and responsibilities, came only late in the colonial experience as Africans were reclaiming their citizenry through popular movements or various forms of negotiation.

In short, the colonial state was essentially a state of violence, of exploitation, of alienation, and of deconstruction of Africa and reconstruction of the western power systems and their dominant economies. With few exceptions, like these in the four communes in Senegal, (Dakar, Saint Louis, Goree Island, and Rufisque), where the Africans were granted French citizenship by birth, and the later process of assimilation in the Portuguese colonies in the 1950s, the Africans were, in most colonial experiences, the subjects. They developed, legally and politically, the culture of the subject. The subject culture is the one in which people are aware of their social status as laborers or slaves.

After the independence of many countries, gained either by national, popular struggles, armed struggle or political negotiation, the African political élites decided to maintain the geopolitical *status quo*. In most cases, political reforms were not structural in relationship to the world of old states and the international political economy. However, it should be noted that most of the new political leaders produced some elements of the national project, embodied in patriotic language and slogans and universalistic philosophy. Nationalist African leaders believed that their mandate was, first, to continue with the traditions of the strong state approach (in its militaristic sense) in order to build new nations. The state claimed to do everything for everybody and it was everywhere. In most cases, the strong state was associated with a personality or small group of individuals and the vision of individual leaders. We find this tradition also in Medieval Europe. For instance, in France Louis XIV declared that "the state is me" or "I am the state" and the Napoleons operated in a similar manner. The imposition of the French language, as the civilizing language in rural France

was not different from what the French administration claimed or did in the French colonies in Africa.

The actualization of this national project was associated with privatization of the state in the post colonial era, an important dimension in the analysis of the state and its *raison d'être*. It is so because this state has attempted in many ways to render the public domain of social life irrelevant. Privatization is one of the most important dimensions of the state that has impeded any kind of consensus emerging in relation to the dogmas or programs of social progress.

This first form of privatization of the state is, strangely, associated with the early rise of nationalism in Africa. The state as a private domain also meant the law of exclusion of people who were perceived directly or indirectly as anti-nationalists or dangerous to particular ideologies of the new regimes. At the same time, most states, as controlled by heads of states were also partially active in the public sector. It should also be noted that social services, such as education and medical services, were either given free or at low cost. Although multinationals intended to work with states in the areas of laws, labor policy, taxation, etc., they superimposed themselves on the states and have challenged the claims of the states. To protect themselves from possible or potential conflicts with the interests and forces of multinationals, and also to use them as another source of accumulation, many states find refuge in developing a conservative or petty bourgeois type of nationalism, such as the politics of authenticity of Mobutu in Zaïre.

Many of the new leaders were afraid to confront the popular demands for reunification, for articulating pan-Africanism or for reconsideration of new possibilities. Many nationalities in Africa favored reconsideration of frontiers/boundaries as a means of redefining their cultural identities and politics. Despite the cultural and ideological conservatism of some of these movements, for instance, the Pan-Ewe movement in Togo and Ghana, the Bakongo movement in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Congo-Brazzaville, and Angola, and some Akan groups in the southern part of Côte d'Ivoire who made cultural claims to join other Akans in Ghana, they challenged the nature of the post colonial state on its historical and political foundation. Their leaders and members were willing to rethink their affiliations to the state and the world system.

Since the 1960s, African conditions have produced more than 90 incidences of territorial disputes among the African States. And more than 75 of these led to either short term or long term war or warlike situations. For instance, Liberia and Sierra Leone, Burkina Faso and Mali, Cameroon and Nigeria, Togo and Ghana and, recently, Eritrea and Ethiopia went to war on the territorial claim issue. In most cases these disputes or wars tend to reclaim the colonial legacy of frontiers rather than discussing possibilities for challenging them. Contradictions between the historical legacy of the African state and the basis

for its local legitimacy have been the origins of many tensions in the past 115 years. The artificial boundaries and artificial states could but create artificial stability.

While in terms of territorial political affinities, the African state tends to perceive itself as a finite phenomenon, in terms of its legitimacy, the African state is an unfinished business. Like any unfinished business, it embodies many elements of instability but also of promises. As Adedeji Adebayo states:

While Africa is one of the most geographically distinguishable continents in terms of coherent solid mass, it is also sadly one of the most parceled up in terms of the number of separate national units that it contains. While continents like Asia, Europe or America have only a handful of countries, Africa has as many as 52 countries. Worse still, of these 52 countries, 23 have populations of less than 5 million each and ten of these have populations below one million—meaning that there are as many as ten African sovereign countries with a population that is far less than that of the 23 square miles of Manhattan Island (1991: 7).

This first form of privatization that maintained the boundaries of more than 50 states intact transcended the ideological dispositions associated with political choices or orientations of particular leaders. Most of the Marxist, socialist, and nationalist African leaders, like Kwame Nkrumah, Julius Nyerere, Félix Houphouët-Boigny, Léopold Sédar Senghor, Jomo Kenyatta, Milton Obote, Sékou Touré, to cite only a few, believed in the immortality of the state and its strength for becoming an effective merchant force in the global system as an agency of reconciliation and unification. Even the revolutionaries, like Samora Machel of Mozambique and Augustino Neto of Angola, believed in the power of a revolutionary state with a ruling party as its vanguard. With a vanguard party, as its mobilizing and educating force, colonial powers and their apparatuses could be challenged and eventually changed. Most African political leaders, regardless of their ideological and political differences, have claimed to create some elements of a national project.

The national project that was articulated in the form of privatization of the state was intended to produce development programs. In various contexts, this project was produced through the process of national struggles, making alliances or accommodation. In other cases, it embodied some reconciliatory elements internally and externally.

But this national project focused on acquiring political independence as a prerequisite for change. The serious debates on economic issue were not part of the general agenda among most nationalists whether they called themselves Marxist-Leninists, African socialists or Liberals. Later, there were some nationalists who even believed that it was possible to Africanize capitalism, that is to say, to give capitalism an African flavor or symbolism, or to associate capitalism with the African ethos and the African way of life. There were others who thought that it was possible to try the Marxist-socialist model (command econ-

omy, centralization, and high level of planning) without necessarily going through the capitalist stages of development. Others decided to maintain the existing semi-liberal model in the arena of political economy.

Despite some efforts from a few nationalists, the question of what the new role of Africa in the world economy, and of what kind development programs for Africans should be, were not systematically debated in their national project. 'Africa for Africans', for instance, was, in most cases, an empty slogan, a discourse without structural realities. Between the 1960s and 1980s, Africa continued to play the classical role of producer of raw materials and cheap labor and of being eclectic consumerists in the world. As is well known, the nationalist project of the 1960s in Africa was partially a fiasco because political independence was granted or obtained without economic independence. Economic independence cannot be fostered without changing structural relations of production within the continent and the relationship between Africa and the rest of the world.

Another issue that is associated with this nationalism is the question of state security. Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, within his vision of pan-Africanism, believed that Africa needed a continental military arrangement to deter potential or possible invasions. The former French African colonies decided, through their notion of acquiring independence within the French community framework, not to establish their own strong military agency. France agreed to take care of their security in cases of internal political struggles. Thus, in the past, France effectively used its military bases in Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, and Gabon to intervene in any situation where French interests were threatened. The recent *coup d'état* in Côte d'Ivoire in December 1999 would not have succeeded if Matignon and Elisée had not been divided in terms of what course of action should be taken. Thus, both became strangely and strategically silent even after the condemnation of the putsch of Gen. Robert Guéi and his 11 soldiers.

In the 1970s and 1980s, African states justified their military and police behavior and actions on the basis of state security claims and they have been spending millions of dollars annually for that security instead of investing in social and scientific domains. As Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja states:

The ideals of participation and democracy have been subordinated to the security imperatives of those who control the state as well as the economic and strategic interests of their external patrons and allies. Economic development, the most frequently mentioned public policy objective, remains as an elusive goal because the priority tasks of the state revolve around resources extraction, social control, order maintenance, and wealth accumulation by the rulers (1999: 70).

For instance, between the 1970s and the time of his death in 1997, Mobutu of Zaïre/DRC annually spent more than 30 percent of the national revenue on his security; the proportion allocated to education, for instance, decreased from 20 percent in the 1960s to only about 8 percent in the 1980s. One consequence of

this is that, since 1990, formal education has totally collapsed in that country.

Most of the heads of the African States have developed a paranoia vis-à-vis the real or imagined opposition leaders and most of them tend to see their enemies on every corner of cities, towns or villages in their countries and in neighboring countries. Militarism in Africa, though it was far from being professional, created its own institutions, arbitrary and fragmented rules, and bureaucratic structures and behaviors that have survived even after civilians have been elected to state power.

The African state's security arrangements in many countries have been directed against the poor people (and not against the real enemies of the people) and those segments of society which cannot defend themselves. In recent years, women, students, lumpen proletarians, and peasants have been the particular targets of the states' security. Many have been attacked, tortured and even killed in the name of the security of the state. In short, the police and military apparatuses in many African countries have been anti-people and anti-development. The security of the state is an instrument of the ruling classes, generally used to kill and destroy anything that can threaten their interests.

The second form of privatization of the state in the post colonial era is the one associated with multinationals and international financial institutions. Although multinationals have worked with, and through states in the areas of laws, labor policy, tax, etc., in order to accumulate their capital, they superimposed themselves as supra-state agencies with power to challenge the claims of the states. They developed corporate privatization state mechanisms.

'Corporate' in this context is used "not only to the institutional driving force of an increasingly globalized capitalism (multi- and cross-national corporations) but also to what appears to be a more general tendency toward supranational economic and political organization at the expense of the state power and identity" (Lafferty, 1999: 6).

There are differences between the concept of corporate state, like the one developed in Japan that related to the characteristics of European states, where corporations operate legitimately with the state in order to produce policy frameworks, and the corporate private state that is developed in this context. Corporate privatization of the state is not new. It should be noted that, during the colonial period in Europe, the dynamics of corporate privatization of states contributed enormously to dividing the working classes, colonialists, and colonial political élites both in the metropolis and the colonies. In fact, some alliances that occurred between some social classes in Europe and the then emerging African leaders, and which contributed to accelerating the development of political movements, were partially due to the contradictions associated with this phenomenon of corporate privatization of the state. In this case, recently in the name of free market dogmatism and globalization, private companies or multinational corporations have been buying the state apparatuses

and their resources, such as electricity, water, transportation systems, medical services and land, in order to make money. Yet, the contemporary notions of state and citizenship were articulated on the basis of land and the sovereignty issue. In most cases, this privatization has been essentially anti-development and anti-people. Without having land to produce goods and having a control over it, one is not able to claim to be a free citizen. As a result, this expropriation has led to an increased level of poverty and political instability despite the appearance of multi-partyism.

The third form of privatization of the state, which is related to the second form, is associated with the militarization of African politics and power struggles. Militarization is part of the ethos and structure of the global capitalist economy. Colonization, for instance, was essentially a militaristic operation. With the end of the Cold War era, arms are smuggled and sold more easily and cheaply than significant amounts of foods in open markets in most parts of the world. The sale of arms has been intensified as, within the framework of globalization, the market of the arms has become a lucrative business.

The militarization of African politics during the first phases of the adoption of the SAPs in the 1980s in many countries such as Congo-Brazzaville, Central African Republic, Rwanda, Burundi, Zaïre, etc., produced *de facto* private governments, most of which were supported by private military systems which did not accommodate discussion of the SAPS in any public national forum. In addition, militias have created governments in Africa and imposed themselves on the people and international affairs. This is the case in Uganda, Ethiopia, Congo-Brazzaville, Burundi, and Rwanda. Within these systems that were produced by militias, the majority of people, including technocrats, professional military and peasants, were excluded from the security apparatuses of the state and also from the distribution of resources and political schemes. This situation has led to serious violent conflicts in many countries. In the current power struggle in the DRC, for instance, the effort toward privatizing the state has been promoted by the discourses of Congolese intellectuals and lumpen-proletarians who are literally looting the country for their own benefit and that of their foreign supporters. This is not the first time in the history of state and city state formation that private military agencies have emerged.

Despite the differences in their strategies and survival mechanisms, these three forms of privatization of the state have dangerously weakened the governance of African societies.

It should also be added that African states are essentially ideologically conservative political phenomena. That is to say, African leaders and their agencies cannot consciously formulate and advance policies or create institutions that would render them irrelevant or challenge their very existence. Strangely, with the rise of multi-partyism, both the African states and new nationalisms are likely to become more conservative, despite some apparent constitutional

changes and adjustment programs that may be formulated. The question that must be posed is, however, how long will the African states survive in their existing form of complete or partial dependence, political immaturity and instability, and underdevelopment? These states want to see themselves as immortal, yet political history in non industrial countries shows that dictators, and the conditions of underdevelopment they create, do not, cannot, and will not change by themselves. Duvalier of Haïti, Mobutu of Zaïre, Houphouët-Boigny of Côte d'Ivoire, and Eyadema of Togo, among others, used in various periods different approaches and policies to actualize their state and advance their personal objectives. But all of them had one thing in common: they would have preferred, if they had any choice, to remain in power for life because, to them, 'state' means power, privilege, interests, and influence. Houphouët-Boigny died in power in Côte d'Ivoire. Mobutu was forced out of power by Laurent-Désiré Kabila and died in Morocco. Duvalier (the son) has become almost a homeless person in France.

As discussed earlier, with a few exceptions, the African state is essentially élitist. It behaves as a pyramidal institution through which the interests of a few are articulated and secured in a vertical, hierarchical manner from the top down, while the interests of the majority of people are not articulated at all. Thus, Africans are alienated from their own history and labor.

Within the existing global movement toward political liberalization, in most cases, the African state has responded with ruthless asphyxiation of civil society, closure or narrowing of political spaces, and the kind of rapid politicization of nationality and identity platforms that precipitates violent conflicts. This has been a formidable impediment to the goals of development and democratization. Constitution making and development of plural societies have faced serious militaristic challenges from the state. In the absence of real dialogue among the people, states and political élites have used military means, ethnicity, religion and even African traditional medicines to reach their goals. In many cases presidential elections take place without real people's participation in the process and without respect for human and social rights (Ihonvbere, 2000).

Although the African state and political parties have started to see the value of constitution, the debates that take place, out of which constitutions are produced, have been very limited in terms of the involvement of civil society and the masses. It should be mentioned that all the African dictators have had a 'constitution'. The most important question is what kind of constitution would be an instrument for the protection of people's rights and political and social institutions?

The illegitimacy of the majority of constitutions in Africa arises from the fact that they were not set up through a truly open and democratic process that paid attention to the dreams, pains, and aspirations of African people, their communities, and constituencies. In most cases the negotiations, if any, were imposed

by the hegemonic party system. In fact, most of the constitutions were directly imposed or came about as a result of elite driven processes that treated the people and their ideas with disrespect, if not contempt. The hallmark of imposed constitutions is that they are never subjected to popular debates or referendums. If at any point the constitutions were subjected to public debates, these were usually brief, carefully monitored and manipulated (Ihonvbere, 2000).

Mwayila Tshiyembe defines the failure of the African states as follows:

The failure of the post-colonial state reflects a questioning of the will to co-exist and a loss of purpose and direction. Nations (or ethnic groups) are in fundamental disagreement about the community's basic values. How are we to define a free society, authority that is properly conferred and shared, and law that seems to come naturally? State and society seem to have been in conflict ever since Africa's plurinational societies saw their own model destroyed to make way for an enforced Western caricature (1999).

His main argument is that, although colonial domination disrupted the process of state building, African societies remain plurinational in nature and that the solution for the African malady is to revive and promote this multinational state. The illegitimacy of the African State, the nature of its multicultural neocolonial leaders, and its peripheral role in the process of reproduction of global capitalism have been the most important causes of social calamity in Africa. Despite its illegitimacy, the African state is still locally powerful in its physical action, in its appropriation and extraction of resources, and in the arbitrariness of its decisions, but internationally weak in its bargaining power.

Some Arguments Concerning Welfare States, their Essence and their Characteristics

As stated earlier, I am also interested in what we can learn from the contemporary policies of the welfare states. Many regimes, including authoritarian, totalitarian and military forms of government, in various periods of their development, have formulated, produced, and implemented different forms of welfare policies and programs to deal with inclusion, participation, questions related to people's rights, and social distribution of resources. In the contemporary world, especially in the west, the development of welfare programs or policies can be found in the dynamics of the polyarchy, which contains elements of democracy, liberalism, and republicanism, such as competitive elections, freedoms, and rights. But the concept is as old as the idea of a social contract as part of human experience in various societies. For instance, the formal discussion on the welfare state in India goes back to the classical writings of Kautilya in his theory of prince as the safeguard of the social order based on the *Varna* and *Ashrama* system (Kohli, 1995: 36). In many parts of Africa, the philosophical idea of a welfare state can be located in the notion of a 'harmonious' organized or divine cosmology and communal ethos, or in the role of chieftaincy. Despite many

changes that have occurred in the past 500 years in the nature of the structure of Africa's relations with the western world, many dimensions of the communal sense of the family and the society as a whole are still significantly alive and practical.

The concept of the welfare state in its most current popular usage was born out of the liberal philosophy in Europe. It was in the 17th century that the philosophy of liberalism appeared in England and it dominated this area of thought in western civilization throughout the late 19th century and early 20th century. England was the first country to produce a liberal democratic party and traditions. While European nation states were pursuing their interests in Africa and other regions through colonization and other types of mercantilist adventures, in Europe itself the debate on the liberal philosophy taking either the form of power struggle or intellectual discourse, which is the foundation of welfare states, was taking place between the emerging petty bourgeoisie and the ruling élites. As Sankhdher and Cranston state:

In explaining the liberal concept of the welfare state in England during 1889 and 1914, we should begin by a precision of its symbolic representation at the point of culmination in Lloyd George's mind. The Liberal philosophy, which had its origin in John Locke's ideas, was given a new turn by the philosophical Radicals and the Utilitarians. In practical politics, however, liberalism in this period, though rooted in individual liberty, extended the meaning of liberty to incorporate the idea of welfare state (1985: 245).

This is to say that representation, as one of the key characteristics of liberal politics, has been the most important force of welfare state. After the French revolution and the industrial revolution in England, the attributes of liberalism were expanded from the individual quest for freedom to societal struggle against 'undemocratic parliaments' and despotic monarchs. This expansion was not applied without the bourgeois power struggles and proletarian struggles as well. It should be noted that, in an earlier development of European nation state building, both classical liberalism and, later, Marxism were distrustful of the state. The classical state was conceived as an instrument of coercive force and thus was perceived as anti-individualism. In England, such philosophers as Edmund Burke, Herbert Spencer, T. H. Green, William Berridge, J. M. Keynes, and Ludwig von Miesses articulated liberalism. None of them paid sufficient attention, for instance, to the gender issues in the development of rights and capitalism. However, they were against the exercise of unlimited power by the state and the monopolistic law of capitalism. The main characteristics of liberalism include: the ideology of representative democracy, based on the rule of law, limited government, and individual rights to life, liberty and property (Sankhdher and Cranston, 1985: 245). As Mimi Abramovitz says:

Classical liberalism originated in seventeenth-century England, took root in the eighteenth century, and with the rise of industrial capitalism, became the domi-

nant political theory of twentieth century Western societies. Reflecting new views of human nature which placed selfness, egoism, and individualistic self-interest at the center of human psyche, liberalism held competitive pursuit of individual self-interest in a market free of government regulation would maximize personal and societal benefits (1989: 14).

The struggles against the monarchic and strong states in their militaristic and personalized forms produced the welfare states in Europe. Welfare states in the 20th century sought to limit the power of the ruling class. And they promoted space for the intervention of the state on behalf of individuals so as to create the conditions that would allow individuals the ability to maximize, in principle, self interest and to secure liberty, equality, and justice. Most of the welfare programs or packages that were produced in Europe included laissez faire doctrine that restricted the responsibilities of the state without eliminating its regulatory role as protector of capital, property, and national security (Abramovitz: 15). In practical terms, Sankhdher and Cranston describe the welfare functions as:

The key functions of a welfare state were, in addition to police responsibilities, promotion of economic development and social welfare by providing full employment, equal opportunity, social security and insurance of a minimum standard of living for those downmost on the social ladder. Such an idea materialized largely in the Beveridge plan which prescribed, within a liberal democratic framework, provision of basic needs, as also remedies for problems of disease, ignorance, squalor, and idleness. It was the application of collectist methods for the individualistic aims of laissez-faire (1985: 246).

Theoretically, how have the European welfare states perceived and defined social inequality? First of all, it should be emphasized that each country has produced its own welfare programs based on its social, historical and political specificities and needs. And secondly, all, the formulation and implementation of the welfare programs should not be generalized. The success of each welfare program depends on the political culture of each country, the nature of its leadership and that of its state. Thus, the Nordic countries have produced stronger and more elaborated welfare states than the countries in continental Europe.

However, the idea that the government ought to protect minimum standards of income, nutrition, health, housing and education assured to every individual as a political right, not as charity (Abramovitz: 1989:16), can be generalized as the universal claim associated with liberal political thought. Within the Marxist tradition, the welfare state is to use the state power to modify the reproduction of labor power and to shift the costs of socializing and maintaining workers from the private capital to the public sphere (Abramovitz: 1989:17).

The concept of justice that has been the philosophical and social engine in welfare states is summarized in the following statement of John Rawls:

Justice is the first virtue of social institutions, as truth is of systems of thought. A theory however elegant and economical must be rejected or revised if it is untrue;

likewise laws and institutions no matter how efficient and well-arranged must be reformed or abolished if they are unjust. Each person possesses inviolability founded on justice that even the welfare of society as a whole cannot override. For this reason justice denies that the loss of freedom for some is made right by a greater good shared by others. It does not allow the sacrifices imposed on a few are outweighed by the larger sum of advantages enjoyed by many. Therefore in a just society the liberties of equal citizenship are taken as settled; the rights secured by justice are not subject to political bargaining or to the calculus of social interests (1971: 3-4).

In addition to legalism, other related notions developed in the welfare states are those of equal citizenship and equal participation in the political affairs of the states.

Before making my concluding remarks in this section, it is important to mention some differences between the welfare states that were promoted by liberal political thought as described above and those developed out of socialist traditions. The liberal theory of politics allows social changes through legalistic reforms with the focus on individual rights. But not all legalisms can promote social justice as Alan Wolfe has stated in the case of the United States. That is:

America's failure to contemplate, let alone redress, social injustice and inequality is another indication of its impasse, a backhand confession that ills are beyond the reach of human action to remedy them. For a "can do" culture, such an intimation of impotence was found relatively easy to accept (1989: 81).

A selective approach to welfare programs puts the case of the United States neither on the liberal crusade against injustice nor on a path of preference for the *status quo* especially during the new 'deal era' (Wolfe, *Ibid.*). But the social cost in choosing this approach has been heavy with a long term impact that is extremely difficult to deal with for many generations in the era of globalization.

The principle of each according to their merit has retarded the discourse on the pursuit of social equality, including gender relations in the US. As I stated earlier, different states have formulated different policies at various periods to deal with their perceived social development and political issues. The major principle with a distributive capability that the socialists have used is 'each according to their needs'. Whether, in fact, all socialist welfare states, or welfare states within social democracies attempted to transform their social and productive relations can be questioned but their principle of each according to their needs is worth pursuing in Africa, especially given that it is not an alien one.

Conclusion: Where to Go from Here?

There are some writers, like Stanislaw Andreski, who tend to see the African problem as essentially internal and cultural and the solution as lying also in the native enterprise scheme (1968: 215). How this native enterprise can be isolated from the dynamics of the state and the global peripheral African economy is not

clear. The neo-modernization and liberal theorists believe that the major problem that Africa faces is its inability to cope with the growth of its population and the rigidity of its belief systems, and that its inefficient resources management is an impediment towards capital formation. This author agrees with Andreski that industrialization can help only up to a point (1968: 212) and that "reliance on foreign aid amounts to wishful thinking or an ostrich-like attitude firstly because this aid is unlikely ever to become commensurate with the need" (1968: 214). However, the major question is what is internal or cultural in the above logic?

It is argued in this paper that, even if small African businesspeople are given the means to invest and to export what they produce, the imperatives of the global system at the local level and the nature of the political discourses of the major actors are likely to negatively affect the African culture of investment and capital formation. There is a need to promote local capital or local capitalism within the dominant ideological perspective. The goal in this paper is not to explore the perspective on local capital formation but to understand the behavior of the African state within the dynamics of the international political economy.

The African state has to be moved into the public domain. It is the political space where people should meet with their needs, dreams, ideas and resources. However, the African experience shows that there is a struggle among those who are fighting for power to re-create the Leopoldian notion of state as a personal property of certain individuals and their sponsor institutions, and the people.

The African state has to be reconceptualized if it is to meet the challenges of social and popular movements because, despite its claims of legality, sovereignty, and independence, in its current form, it is highly dependent on the capitalist world that is dominated by the north and extremely weak in international relations. It cannot produce a program that could consistently and systematically promote a comprehensive agenda of social progress. It has produced many misleading, weak, or ad hoc projects for so called 'development'. But, by and large, these projects have been parts of peripheral capitalism and its structural contradictions. Until recently, the state has been highly exclusive and militaristic. Compared to certain types of militarism that have occurred between the 1960s and '70s in Southeast Asia, for example, Thailand and South Korea, which had some personalized nationalistic economic projects and industrialization plans, those in Africa were mostly tyrannical and reactionary with no sense of political direction. The African state's involvement in the global economy has proven to be more productive in securing the wealth of capitalists than its involvement in its local and regional base.

Privatization of the state, either by African nationalists, people in uniform bearing guns, or by foreign corporations, is the most devastating process in the

efforts of Africans to identify their priorities, define their agenda for social development with confidence and liberate themselves from the yoke of western domination. People who are poor cannot produce any consistent development project. States that have sold their land and their fresh air, and do not own the means of production cannot conceive any consistent project that will ensure social progress.

As of the year 2000, many African states, which fully adopted the adjustment programs, have become literally slaves of the multilateral financial institutions under global reforms. In practical, political and economic terms, the notion of citizenship and sovereignty cannot be applied any more in these cases.

What to do with this type of state? If Africans consciously decide to remain in the world of the states as it is now, and if they want to make their state functionally relevant and performing, the people must recapture and appropriate it. Appropriating the state means gaining access to the state's resources, managing the states' affairs according to people's objective conditions, owning the state apparatuses, and participating in its decision making.

Within the existing nature of the world system, the African state is basically an instrument of accumulation by the global economy. It is the dynamics of this economy that determines, in a large measure, the behaviors and laws that govern African states. This form of state behaves as an alien to most of its people. Why is it that many people do not see or define themselves as part of the state's apparatuses? There is a need to continue with empirical studies on this question. However, the general observation is that the state does not have any legitimacy because it does not render the expected services to the majority of its citizens. An exclusive and alien state cannot produce a comprehensive development project.

Africans could also reconceptualize the state in owning it through the process of renaming it according to Africa's own objective conditions. 'Renaming' is a cognitive and social process. They should change the rules and structures of the state through social, popular and democratic movements. I am not convinced that through the current form of 'autocratic multi-partyism' or hegemonic party politics, as practiced in many countries, or total liberalism, Africans would be able to own their states. Here I have suggested that we critically and carefully examine another option that is associated with the notion of the welfare state as an alternative form of democracy that can help reconceptualize the state. Given the nature of African society, which is essentially communal, with a high level of tolerance of differences among various people and nations, it is possible to learn more from a social democracy approach to development than from an individualistic capitalist model of development.

Another option for reconceptualizing the African state is through social or popular revolution of radical change of the structures of the African economies within pan-African perspectives, while the last option is to examine it from the

point of view of a revival of Mwalimu Julius Nyerere's African perspective, that is to say from the dynamics of African traditions, culture, ethos, and theories of management and governance.

However, some important initiatives have been taken in Africa and need to be mentioned and critically examined. The most important decision that the 34 African political leaders made was taken on 5 June 1991, at the OAU summit in Abuja, Nigeria. They signed the treaty for the establishment of the African Economic Community (AEC).

The treaty sets out a timetable for the phased removal of barriers to intra-African trade, the strengthening of the existing regional economic groupings and other steps toward African economic cooperation and integration that are expected to culminate in the formation of an African economic community by the year 2025.

This initiative is the most important ideal ever to have been initiated by the OAU and the UN ECA. It came about as a result of the continuous individual failures of most national economic policies to deal with the conditions of underdevelopment. This option is an effort to approach African social and economic problems collectively from an African perspective but within the global capitalist orbit.

The world system produced the merchant state and African forces and conditions have maintained it. The psychology and the power base of such a state have focused on the obsession over what to sell and what to buy. Who really has been benefiting from these selling and buying businesses? *The raison d'être* of this state, as defined by the powerful nations and maintained and articulated by the African ruling élites, has been not development in any comprehensive sense but, rather, to simply and passively react to the imperatives of liberal globalization as a consumerist entity of capitalism. This globalization has not been open and free in Africa. In fact, African commodities have not been able to compete well in the world economy, not just because of the so called 'poor quality' or 'tastes', but because the global market is highly politicized and Africa is at the periphery of world politics. It should be noted, however, that, during the 1980s and '90s, the processes of global marginalization and global economic reforms have seriously challenged even the consumerist dimension. The so called middle class, for instance, is shrinking and, in some cases, even disappearing.

Another new initiative that could produce new definitions of state and development is the project of African renaissance that is being articulated by President Thabo Mbeki in South Africa. 'African renaissance' is essentially a dynamic concept. It involves a processes of critical thinking that has two components: learning and questioning the present order of things as they are in order to project the past into the processes of remaking and renaming the future of Africa. These two components of requesting knowledge should provide

answers to African maladies. It rejects the notion of '*tabula rasa*' that western powers intentionally constructed in order to redefine Africa according to their own fixed objectives and images. It embodies a deconstruction process without which an individual human being may not be able to build a social self.

African renaissance, as a new movement of ideas and a potential political movement, is taking place at a complicated period in which the African state is further confused about which direction to take in order to engage its people with confidence toward a search for social progress. Neocolonial wars have multiplied. The African people have become materially poorer today than 20 years ago. The real social and political conditions in Africa and the contradictory behaviors of African leaders and states show that most Africans have lost confidence in them and in what they can do collectively. People without confidence are people without dreams and ambitions. In a very complex world system, these people are confused, degraded, and enslaved. There is no doubt that the colonial project, as objectively reflected in the neocolonial economies, the structure of the states, and the global marginalization of Africa, has totally failed the African people. Thus, the search for alternative theories of social progress is scientifically imperative. No people can progress without actions oriented toward social projects and a collective agenda. The African renaissance should not be another imitation of the western paradigm to deal with poverty and desperation.

The last call that Muammar Kadhafi of Libya made in 1999 to establish a common currency and achieve political union of some sort is being explored and discussed in many parts of Africa. But how far can it go in the current situation of wars and poverty produced by the actions and programs of the international institutions?

If Africa would like to remain in the world of states as it is, it should develop a collective security approach. This would decrease the chances of potential tensions among the states, as there would be common rules governing the behavior of all the states. Collective security arrangements are likely to work better within some forms of the federal system. This approach should not follow the model of the hierarchy and structures of the United Nations, for these are too costly and their bureaucracy is too slow and inefficient. The collective security approach should be built into the structures of a united government, to be promoted for the interests of all. Its operations must be decentralized but its command system should be centralized. This may also decrease the chances of military *coups d'état*, as all the armies would be commanded by one higher military institution that would divide its responsibilities into three structures: continental, regional, and national/state.

At the continental level, Africa cannot afford to adopt the early Costa Rica model of choosing not to build a strong army. The history of nation states and international capitalism shows that building a defensive military system is a necessity as a deterrent force against internal and external aggression. What

kind of military system, then, ought to be built in order to respond effectively and efficiently to African imperatives? Clearly, modern military systems are always costly to maintain and their proper functioning depends heavily on the military technologies developed by the industrial powers. In 1960, Sylvanus Olympio of Togo attempted to develop a state without a national army. He was overthrown in a *coup d'état* in which he was violently assassinated by ex-French soldiers, led by Sergeant Eyadema, who became a general and the President of Togo. The *coup* leaders were trying to argue for their incorporation into the Togolese security system. Though this position has not yet been documented, some scholars have argued that France was behind this *coup* because it disagreed with Olympio's political language and the structure of the new state. There is a need for building a military division in each region.

The question of the nature of the military systems to be adopted in Africa cannot fully be discussed in this article because it is an enormously complex issue, one that would require a continental political debate. Despite the fact that, with the exception of the north, Africa is not geographically located near the industrial powers, the political actions of Africa which may displace the interests and the role of the industrial powers will not be accepted by those powers because political elites in those countries, and most of their people, treat Africa as a collection of subordinate states and people. It is certain that strong African projects would be met with the politics of intimidation and with indifference, and they would also be the objects of political and perhaps even military attacks. This is why it is realistically imperative to have a defensive army to protect African value systems and people. Its ideology and mission would be to defend the people and to contribute to the development projects. In light of such a mission, what can we do with the existing military academies and training centers?

They must be centers for re-educating soldiers. Their objectives can be converted to fit the purposes of the new approach to the new nature of African politics and international relations. Some of those centers could even be converted into centers for social education and local factories of ideas or commodities; they could be converted into school enterprises. They could also be transformed into the national police academies. Furthermore, the process of actualizing this structural military transformation has to be democratic, and in a democratic process, those academies would come to better serve people.

Finally, Africa is capable of governing itself effectively, and of producing states from within its own dynamics, if the old state apparatuses, laws, and paradigms are dismantled through popular movements, democratic processes, internal and regional alliances of power, and innovative initiatives. In the 21st century, we must forcefully examine how to promote the notion of strong welfare states that can take care of people's needs and be responsible and accountable for their actions. As Julius Nyerere said:

In advocating a strong state, I am not holding brief for either an overburdened State or a State with a bloated bureaucracy. To advocate a strong state is to advocate a state, which, among other things has power to act on behalf of the people in accordance with their wishes. And in a market economy, with its law of jungle, we need a state that has the capacity to intervene on behalf of the weak. No state is really strong unless its government has the full consent of at least the majority of its people; and its difficulty to envision how that consent can be obtained outside democracy. So a call for strong state is not a call for dictatorships either. Indeed, all dictatorships are basically weak because the means they apply in governance make them inherently unstable (1999: 3).

Africa has to reinvent its own complex political systems with relevant and appropriate elements of republicanism, democracy, and liberalism, built on a strong basis of economic nationalism.

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