

DEMOCRACY & DEVELOPMENT

JOURNAL OF WEST AFRICAN AFFAIRS

Harmattan Edition 2004 • Volume 4 • Number 2

ECOWAS and the Crisis in
Cote d'Ivoire:
The Politics and Problems of
Peace-Making in West Africa

W. Alade Fawole

Reconciling Ethnic and National
Identity in a Divided Society:
The Nigerian Dilemma of Nation-
State Building

Abu Bakarr Bah

Despotism, Democracy and
Diplomacy:
Nigeria - South Africa Relations
1993-1999

*Okechukwu Ibeanu &
Orji Nwachukwu*

Hanging on a Shoestring:
Cameroon's Democratisation
Process

Nantang Jua

Briefings

Reviews

Democracy & Development - Journal of West African Affairs is a bi-annual (Rains and Harmattan editions), published by the Centre for Democracy & Development. The journal's broad focus areas are:

1. Conceptualising Democracy and Development in West Africa;
2. Practical problems that have inhibited democratic reform in the region;
3. Civic organisations and the new and innovative programmes, activities, and personalities driving the democracy and development agenda in the region;
4. Conflict and peace-building;
5. Public policy research (empirical and theoretical) on the democracy, security, and development nexus.

Democracy & Development: Journal of West African Affairs is the only one of its kind entirely devoted to reporting and explaining democratic developments in the sub-region. It is read widely by researchers, journalists, opinion moulders, and academics. The Journal is also a key resource for policy makers and analysts in government departments, extra governmental institutions, think tanks, and international organisations.

Democracy & Development does not just inform and explain; it is also a forum for open and robust debate on political and economic trends in West Africa, encouraging a cross-fertilisation of ideas in the theoretical and practical aspects of democratisation, development, and peace building in the region.

Editor-in-Chief: J. 'Kayode Fayemi

Editor: Ebenezer Obadare

Book Review Editor: Morten Hagen

Translator: Agnes Ebo'o

Editorial Advisory Board

Emmanuel Kwesi Aning, African Security Dialogue & Research, Accra, Ghana

Comfort Ero, UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), Monrovia, Liberia

Eboe Hutchful, Wayne State University, Detroit, USA

Comfort Lamptey, UN Peacekeeping Center, New York, USA

Robin Luckham, Institute of Development Studies, Brighton, UK

Boubacar N'Diaye, Wooster College, Ohio, USA

Chidi Odinkalu, Open Society Justice Initiative, Abuja, Nigeria

Tunde Zack-Williams, University of Central Lancashire, Preston, UK

Design and Layout Concept: Full Spectrum, Johannesburg

Cover Reproduction: Home Made Cookies Ltd, Lagos.

Layout: Rehoboth Publishing, Lagos

Printing: Modern Press & Associates, Lagos

Editorial Office

Centre for Democracy & Development, 2L Leroy House, 436 Essex Road,
London N1 3QP, UK. Tel: +44 (0)20 7359 7775; Fax: +44 (0)20 7359 2221

E-mail: cdd@cdd.org.uk, Internet: www.cdd.org.uk

The Production of this journal has been assisted by
The Ford Foundation, New York

Opinions expressed in the journal are not necessarily those of CDD or any of its sponsors.

ISSN: 1465-0142

CONTENTS

Call for Papers

Editor's Note

Ebenezer Obadare page 5

Articles

ECOWAS and the Crisis in Cote d'Ivoire: The Politics and Problems of Peace-Making in West Africa
W. Alade Fawole page 8

Reconciling Ethnic and National Identity in a Divided Society: The Nigerian Dilemma of Nation-State Building
Abu Bakarr Bah page 27

Despotism, Democracy and Diplomacy: Nigeria - South Africa Relations 1993-1999
Okechukwu Ibeanu and Orji Nkwachukwu page 44

Hanging on a Shoestring: Cameroon's Democratisation Process
Nantang Jua page 62

Briefings

Towards a Human Rights Approach to Citizenship and Nationality Struggles in Africa: The Regional Quandry
J. Oloka-Onyango Page 90

Africa in 2015: Interrogating Barbie Democracy, Seeking Alternatives
Francis B. Nyamnjoh Page 102

Book Reviews

John L. Hirsch, **Sierra Leone: Diamonds and the Struggle for Democracy**
(By *Tim Kelsall*) page 108

John F. Clark (ed.), **The African Stakes of the Congo War**
(By *Peter J. Schraeder*) page 110

Morten Boas and Desmond McNeill, **Multilateral Institutions: A Critical Introduction**
(by *Patrick Dela Cofie*) page 114

Jeffrey Herbst and Greg Mills, **The Future of Africa: A New Order in Sight?**
(By *Chris Ankersen*) page 117

R. Mainuddin (ed.) **Religion and Politics in the Developing World: Explosive Interactions**
(By *Olawale Ismail*) page 119

Alex de Waal (ed.) **Demilitarizing the Mind: African Agendas for Peace and Security**
(By *Christina M. Yeung*) page 121

Solomon O. Akinboye (ed.) **Paradox of Gender Equality in Nigerian Politics**

(By <i>Reuben Abati</i>)	
page 124	
Jeremy Lind and Kathryn Sturman (eds.) Scarcity and Surfeit: The Ecology of Africa's Conflicts	
(By <i>Germain Ngoie Tshibambe</i>)	page 128
Alex de Waal and Yoanes Ajawin (eds.) When Peace Comes: Civil Society and Development in Sudan	
(By <i>Chandra D. Bhatta</i>)	page 133
Lucky Mathebe, Bound by Tradition: The World of Thabo Mbeki	
(By <i>Buntu Siwisa</i>)	page 136
Books available for review	page 140

Subscriptions

Annual subscription for corporate bodies: £75 for UK; €113 for EU; \$138 for other countries (special rates apply for Africa); and for individuals: £30 for UK; €45 for EU; \$55 for other countries.

Single copy rate for corporate bodies: £40 for UK; €60 for EU; \$73 for other countries; and for individuals: £20 for UK; €30 for EU; \$37 for other countries.

Cheques should be made payable to Centre for Democracy and Development

Notes for Contributors

- Send all articles, book reviews, notices, and other correspondence to:
The Editor, **Democracy and Development: Journal of West African Affairs**

2L Leroy House, 436 Essex Road, London N1 3QP, UK
Tel: +44 (0)20 7359 7775, Fax: +44 (0)20 7359 2221

or: 2 Olabode Close, Ilupeju Estate, P.O. Box 15700, Ikeja, Lagos, Nigeria

Tel: +234 (0)1 804 3221 / 473 0705, Fax: +234 (0)1 555 6812

E-mail: cdd@cdd.org.uk, Internet: www.cdd.org.uk

Please note that by February 2005 the editorial office will move from London to Lagos with contact details as above.

- Submitted articles and/or reviews should be typed double space and with a wide margin on the left. Articles should not be more than 8,000 words; reviews, 1,500 words. Articles can be submitted by email as MS Word attachment or as a MS Word document on a floppy disk by post.
- Include professional details about the author at the bottom of the first page.
- *Democracy and Development's* house style is modelled on the Oxford English Dictionary and avoids 'Americanisms' like 'organize' (organise) and 'democratization' (democratisation). Italicise book and journal titles. Use single quotation marks.
- Notes should be presented as footnotes at the bottom of each respective page. References should appear on a separate page at the end of the article, and should be listed as follows:

For books: Clark, A.F. 2000. 'From Military Dictatorship to Democracy: The democratisation Process in Mali', in Bingen, R.J. et al. (eds.) *Democracy and Development in Mali*. East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press.

For journals: Hentz, J. 2000. 'The two faces of privatisation: political and economic logics in transitional South Africa', in *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 38, No. 2, pp. 203-223.

Call for Papers

Democracy and Development: Journal of West African Affairs Special Issue Volume 5, Number 1

Theme: Religion, Politics and Society in Contemporary West Africa

Post 9/11, the world at large has witnessed a deepening of both scholastic and policy interest in religion and related subjects. The United States, for one, has made the 'crusade' against religiously-inspired global terrorism the hub of its radically redefined foreign policy. This is also true of Europe, particularly Britain, where the threat associated with 'Radical Islam' is threatening to upstage the existing policy on immigration and foreigners.

These developments have not left the West-African sub-region unmarked. The post 9/11 'surveillance' on religious fundamentalism has coincided with a renewed resurgence of the religious imagination in many West African countries, leaving the spontaneous challenge of how to maintain a balance between doctrinal rigour and political extremism. At the same time, religion, which in many ways was central to the process of political demilitarisation, has continued to impact on transitioning West African societies in many ways. In these societies, the influence of religion can be observed across many social geographies – in higher institutions, corporate organisations, official institutions; in short, every social interstice where religion is theoretically expected to be 'noticed' by its absence.

This process, what we might call the enchantment of the public realm, has had profound consequences for traditional divisions between the public and the private spheres. Furthermore, there are emergent challenges to the State in West Africa, nay the continent at large, from youth movements whose allegiance to extant state structures are, at best, dubious; a development with serious consequences for already weakened state legitimacy.

We invite contributions from across disciplines and methodologies which balance the theoretical and the empirical, rethinking these issues in innovative and challenging ways. Authors are encouraged to pay special attention to the ways in which new religious movements question the legitimacy of the state, the role of alienated youth in the formation of these movements, the surge of fundamentalisms across the sub-region, and how ordinary people are using religion to re-negotiate the existing terms of citizenship, engage with or subvert the state.

However, we encourage potential contributors not to limit themselves to

these issues alone. Selected papers (which will not be more than 7,500 words long) will be peer reviewed. Electronic submissions (by email as MS Word attachment) are preferred. Notes and references should appear on a separate page at the end of the article, and should be listed as follows:

For books: Clark, A.F. 2000. 'From Military Dictatorship to Democracy: The democratisation Process in Mali', in Bingen, R.J. et al. (eds.) *Democracy and Development in Mali*. East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press.

For journals: Hentz, J. 2000. 'The two faces of privatisation: political and economic logics in transitional South Africa', in *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol. 38, no. 2, pp. 203-223.

Please direct all enquiries to Ebenezer Obadare at: e.obadare@lse.ac.uk or Dauda Garuba at: dgaruba@cddnig.org or visit the CDD home page at www.cdd.org.uk

Editor's Note

A core objective of this journal is to bring both mainstream scholarship and policy analysis into a fruitful coincidence with regard to the examination of socio-political and economic processes across the West African sub-region. Our choice of articles in this edition has been largely informed by this binocular vision, the aim being to capture the significant events taking place in different parts of West Africa, while acknowledging the fact that some of the issues under focus are yet to be fully resolved and as such may require further research before any reasonable conclusions can be reached. One such issue is the ongoing impasse in Cote d'Ivoire which has continued to stimulate scholarly reflections from a variety of disciplines, not least history, conflict studies, international relations, political science and social anthropology. W. Alade Fawole's article borrows perspectives from each of these approaches, although his main attention is focused on the problems of peace-making in general. In the process, he sheds crucial light on the genesis of the conflict, the historical responsibilities of individual actors, and perhaps most crucially, the way in which the political instrumentalisation of both religion and ethnicity has plunged the country into a crisis which even the most pessimistic observer of the Cote d'Ivoire scene could not have anticipated, say a decade, ago. Fawole situates the intervention of ECOWAS, still smarting from its controversial involvement in the crisis in Liberia, within this tragic cauldron, and concludes that lasting peace can only return to the country if ECOWAS and other interested actors (including those outside the region) can put aside their differences to work together for peace. For the beleaguered country, it would seem, the future looks heavily overcast, especially given the vagaries of peacekeeping and peace making in general.

It is tempting to think that the Cote d'Ivoire can learn a lesson or two from Nigeria, clearly the driving force in ECOWAS, and itself riddled with endemic ethnic and religious contradictions. For all their apparent divergence, Fawole's article on the crisis in Cote d'Ivoire and Abu Bakarr Bah's reflections on the dilemma of nation-state building in Nigeria share a poignant commonality - the continuing salience of religion and, in particular, ethnicity, as different (West) African countries attempt to build democratically viable states. Thus, the theme that Abu Bah's analysis privileges - the antinomies of national integration within the ambit of inter-ethnic struggle for resources - is one that clearly resonates, not only across the sub-region, but generally in the continent as well. Indeed, if there is any moral to be drawn from the Nigerian experience, it is that issues bordering on ethnicity and identity tend to enjoy a certain resilience, making them not problems to be *solved*, but historical conditions to be *managed*. Crucial to this process of management, Bah argues, are such factors as civic education and, more important, a deeply embedded democratic disposition.

Okechukwu Ibeanu and Nkwachukwu Orji powerfully underscore the importance of what might be called the habit of democracy in their dissection of

the role of political despotism in the breakdown of relations between Nigeria and South Africa in the crucial period between 1993 and 1999. While their overarching proposition is that inter-state intercourse is more likely to be conflictive in the face of fundamental differences in regime type and attitude to established international conventions, they amply illustrate it with the case of the regime of General Sani Abacha in Nigeria. For them, while Nigeria and South Africa may historically have been at daggers drawn for a variety of reasons (apartheid rule in South Africa and the conviction of the two countries' respective elites of a 'manifest destiny' to lead the continent are two examples that come to mind), mutual tension was arguably deepened by the apparent refusal of the Abacha regime to respect the basic tenets of both domestic and international law. A good example of this stubbornness was the hasty execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight fellow Ogonis on November 10 1995 (what Ibeanu and Orji define as 'the threshold of irreversibility'), prompting widespread international condemnation and inevitably putting the regime on collision course with many countries, including South Africa.

Following Nigeria's return to civil rule on May 29 1999, tensions between the two countries seem to have cooled off considerably, although strains have manifested from time to time over a number of issues, most recently the crisis in Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe. Nevertheless, Nigeria and South Africa would appear to have turned a crucial corner, and the leaders of the two countries (Olusegun Obasanjo and Thabo Mbeki respectively) have been at the forefront of initiatives aimed at achieving greater economic and social development for the continent. The most laudable of such efforts is the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

While it is possible to attribute the new phase in relations to the political transformation in Nigeria (and both Ibeanu and Orji make this clear, although they also emphasise the importance of the international environment), there is a clear danger of romanticising what at the end of the day remains an unfolding process of *democratisation* in Nigeria. Indeed, as citizens of many West African countries are beginning to learn, elections and rule by civilians, important as they may be, do not necessarily guarantee *real* democracy. This is the focus of Nantang Jua's paper on the democratisation process in Cameroon where a new constitution, general elections, and rule by civilians have failed to translate into genuine participation in governance by the mass of the people. According to Jua, in what amounts to a dampening of popular expectations, 'political reform has sought to privilege the will to power rather than the will to participation'. His may be a distressing summary of the specific dynamics of democratisation in Cameroon, but its ramifications for the sub-region in particular and the continent at large can hardly be disputed. Philosophically speaking, Jua's thesis can be construed as a fundamental rejection of the certitude underlying the dominant reading of the *progress* of democratisation as a continuous journey towards an increased participation of the common in the running of their affairs. If Jua is to be believed (and his argument surely has its

merits), this process has actually unfolded in fits and starts, seemingly stalling in the particular case of Cameroon in what he calls 'appeasement democracy'.

The preceding scenario pretty much sets a clear intellectual agenda for social and political research in the sub-region: the need to begin to question afresh many of the 'truths' generally taken for granted about liberal democracy in Africa and the role that ordinary citizens must play in bringing about social justice. These and corollary issues are taken up in the two articles by J. Oloka-Onyango and Francis Nyamnjoh in the 'Briefings' section.

We are hopeful that you will be stimulated by this diverse, yet interrelated, collection.

Finally, we would like to express our gratitude to the Ford Foundation, in particular its Governance and Civil Society Unit in New York, for financial assistance towards the publication of this journal.

Ebenezer Obadare

ECOWAS AND THE CRISIS IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE: THE POLITICS AND PROBLEMS OF PEACE-MAKING IN WEST AFRICA

By W. Alade Fawole¹

« La CEDEAO et la Crise en Côte d'Ivoire: Les Politiques et les Problèmes de la Construction de la Paix en Afrique de l'Ouest »

Résumé

L'implosion soudaine de la Côte d'Ivoire, jusqu'ici paisible et politiquement stable, présente une fois de plus la Communauté Economique des Etats de l'Afrique de l'ouest (CEDEAO) avec une crise majeure à résoudre. L'Organisation sous-régionale est immédiatement entrée en lice en envoyant une modeste force de maintien de la paix de 1300 soldats et a été engagée dans les efforts diplomatiques pour rétablir la paix dans le pays. Contrairement aux interventions passées de l'Organisation au Libéria et en Sierra Leone, tous deux pays anglophones, la Côte d'Ivoire présente un scénario légèrement plus complexe qui commande la prudence, étant un pays francophone majeur avec une prédisposition anti-anglophone perceptible. La prompt intervention militaire de la France recommande une grande prudence de la part de la CEDEAO.

L'étude présente trace la trajectoire politique du pays depuis l'indépendance, ainsi que les facteurs qui ont nourri le mécontentement et la violence politique. L'origine et les dynamiques de la crise ne peuvent pas être pleinement compris, pas plus qu'une paix durable ne peut être restaurée dans le pays, sans tenir compte des caractéristiques ethno-religieuses et géopolitiques, particulièrement la polarisation fautive ethno-religieuse Nord-Sud, et la conversion délibérée du concept d'*Ivoirité* ou « Ivoirien-été » en une véritable arme politique contre les opposants. L'implication de la CEDEAO est également analysée avec pour toile de fond son expérience passée dans le maintien et le rétablissement de la paix, les dynamiques internes propres au pays, l'influence d'acteurs intéressés de la sous-région ou du continent, la compétence (ou non) du *Mécanisme de la CEDEAO pour la Prévention, la Gestion, la Résolution, le Maintien de la Paix et la Sécurité*, ainsi que les problèmes fondamentaux inhérents au maintien et au rétablissement de la paix en général.

¹ Dr Fawole is Associate Professor, Department of International Relations, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria, email: wfawole@oauife.edu.ng.

Abstract

The sudden implosion of the hitherto peaceful and politically stable Cote d'Ivoire once again presented the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) with a major crisis to solve. The sub-regional organisation promptly stepped into the fray by sending a modest peacekeeping force of 1,300 soldiers and has been engaged in diplomatic efforts to restore peace to the country. Unlike the organisation's previous interventions in Liberia and Sierra Leone, both of them English-speaking states, Cote d'Ivoire presents a slightly more complex scenario that advises caution, being a major Francophone state with discernible anti-Anglophone predisposition. France's swift military intervention invariably advised greater caution on the part of ECOWAS.

The paper traces the country's political trajectory since independence and the internal factors that bred discontent and political violence. The origin and dynamics of the crisis cannot be fully understood, nor durable peace restored to the country, outside its ethno-religious and geopolitical characteristics, especially the polarisation along a North/South ethno-religious fault-line separating the Muslims of the North from the predominantly Christian South, and the deliberate conversion of the concept of *Ivoirite* or 'Ivoirian-ness' into a veritable political weapon against opponents.

ECOWAS' involvement is also analysed against the backdrop of its past experience in peacekeeping and peace-making, the peculiar internal dynamics of the country, the influence of interested sub-regional and other continental actors, the adequacy or otherwise of the ECOWAS *Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peace-keeping and Security*, and the inherent fundamental problems of peacekeeping and peace-making in general.

Introduction

The unexpected outbreak of the civil war in Cote d'Ivoire has, once again, presented the Economic Community of West African States, ECOWAS a problem to be solved. The organisation, even though initially strictly conceived as an economic integration mechanism, has, in the last decade and half, had to get involved in conflict management and conflict resolution in the sub-region. The most prominent of these conflicts have been in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau, and lately, in Cote d'Ivoire. ECOWAS involvement in these extra-economic activities is understandable because it is impossible to fulfil its fundamental *raison d'être* of economic integration and development in an atmosphere of pervasive intra-state crises, political instability and state collapse within the sub-region.

This paper analyses the capacity of the ECOWAS for conflict resolution and peacemaking in West Africa after the experiences of Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau. This is done against the backdrop of the ongoing civil war in Cote

d'Ivoire, another crisis which has attracted considerable interest from the member states of the sub-regional organisation. The interest it has generated among Cote d'Ivoire's sub-regional neighbours may not be unconnected with the overall implications of the civil war for peace and stability in the sub-region. The question then is: will ECOWAS not once again be compelled to play the role of the principal mediator and peacemaker, especially since peacekeeping has to be involved? Does the organisation have the wherewithal and strength for another such enterprise? What are the problems and prospects of eventual resolution of a largely internal crisis and the construction of a durable peace?

The reality on ground points towards the inevitability of ECOWAS involvement, as the main sub-regional body, in peacemaking in Cote d'Ivoire. With the UN and the Western nations now more circumspect about direct involvement in African crisis resolution in the post-Cold War era, ECOWAS is left with no choice but to get actively involved.² The organisation promptly approved the composition and initial deployment of a force of 1,300 soldiers drawn from the sub-region for peacekeeping.³ Even though France is already involved, with some 4,000 troops helping to maintain a semblance of order, there is not much that it can do as a foreign power. In any case, France has a tendency to abandon African states to solve their own problems. It cleverly abandoned Chad in the late 1970s, leaving Nigeria and the OAU to tackle what appeared like an intractable internal crisis. The other choice available to ECOWAS is to do nothing, and allow the entire sub-region to implode. This is a luxury the organisation cannot permit itself.

Peacemaking in the context of Cote d'Ivoire will involve not just ending the on-going contest of arms but also a complex political and diplomatic process of constructing a durable peace that would outlast the conflict and ensure that the conflict would not recur. The first aspect inevitably involves peacekeeping, i.e., the deployment of a neutral interpositionary military force to physically separate the combatants while other diplomatic efforts are put in place or intensified for negotiation and resolution. Peacekeeping involves 'keeping' or 'maintaining' a subsisting peace that is already agreed to by all the parties to the conflict. Peacemaking on the other hand is a much broader, more encompassing activity than peacekeeping.⁴ It is also more difficult to accomplish unless all the parties to a conflict decide to give peace a chance. Unfortunately, the record of constructing durable peace after the sub-region's most recent conflicts is not impressive.⁵ The

² The UN got involved in the peace efforts only in May 2003 when the Security Council approved deployment of the UN Mission in Cote d'Ivoire (MINUCI), a very small force to help monitor the peace process.

³ Ernest Harsch, 'Fragile Peace in Cote d'Ivoire', *Africa Recovery* (New York, NY: UN Department of Public Information, 2003), Vol. 17, No. 2, July, p. 6.

⁴ For a more rigorous conceptual explanation of peacekeeping as distinct from peacemaking, see Norrie MacQueen, *United Nations Peacekeeping in Africa since 1960* (London: Pearson Education, 2002), pp. 3-13.

Sierra Leone peace accords signed in Lomé in July 1999 soon collapsed because it did nothing to punish RUF's impunity. Liberia succumbed to another round of bloodbath not long after the peace process hastily put in place by the international community.

The rest of the paper is divided into six sections. The first section examines the internal characteristics and the dynamics of Cote d'Ivoire's politics that are responsible for the outbreak of violence in a country that was hitherto celebrated as a bastion of political stability in a crisis-prone and politically turbulent West Africa. The second examines the external dimensions to the internal crisis, while the third section looks at the ECOWAS mechanism for conflict mediation, resolution and peacekeeping to enable us determine what role it is configured to play and how effective it could be in the restoration of peace and normalcy to Cote d'Ivoire. This is followed in sections four and five by a critical look at both the politics of and the problems inherent in sub-regional peacemaking. The final section concludes with an examination of the implications of the civil war for peace, security and political stability in West Africa.

Understanding the Origin and Dynamics of the Crisis

The relative peace and stability that Cote d'Ivoire had hitherto enjoyed was shattered on 19 September 2002 when a group of disgruntled army mutineers attempted to overthrow the civilian government of President Laurent Gbagbo. What began as a mutiny by soldiers who were protesting being cashiered from the national army eventually whirled out of control, largely because of the naiveté, arrogance and the crass incompetence of the government to comprehend the gravity of the situation. Perceived erroneously as the handiwork of a few 'disaffected' soldiers instigated by former military ruler, General Robert Guei, who was defeated in the 2000 general elections, the government's initial feeble response to the uprising was to ask the mutineers to lay down their weapons and surrender to loyal government forces.

Believing that it was capable of bringing the situation under control, the government reportedly even spurned the initial offer of help from outside, especially from Nigeria. It took the government a while to realise that its arrogant posturing would not bring the situation under control. Though it was initially a mutiny, it has since escalated into a full-blown civil war that has virtually sundered the country along the north/south, Muslim/Christian divide. Laurent Gbagbo is a Southern Christian while his arch political opposition, one-time Prime Minister Alassane Dramane Ouattara, is a Northern Muslim.

¹ See *Africa Today*, (London: Africa Books Ltd, 1991), p. 786.

² *Ibid.*

The on-going civil war in Cote d'Ivoire is only the latest in the series of intra-state or internal conflicts that have punctuated the West African landscape since the end of the Cold War. The serial conflicts began with Liberia's sudden implosion in 1989/90, followed by Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau, sporadic violence along the Guinea-Liberia border, renewed insurgency in Liberia, and now full-scale war in the once peaceful Cote d'Ivoire. In the meantime since the Cote d'Ivoire conflict started, the different rebel factions that emerged to contend for power and attention have coalesced into a formidable guerrilla group called the *Mouvement Patriotique de la Cote d'Ivoire* (MPCI). The fighters were reportedly joined by demobilised and jobless former fighters of the Liberian NPFL and Sierra Leone's RUF, and an assortment of freelance mercenaries from neighbouring countries.

Any attempt to understand the situation in the country must necessarily include a trip down the post-colonial history and politics of Cote d'Ivoire. The current civil war cannot be divorced from the nature and dynamics of the country's internal politics since independence. The country's political fortune has fluctuated from Houphouet Boigny's iron-fisted paternalism (1960 - 1993) to Henri Konan Bedie's crass ineptitude, Robert Guei's authoritarian rule, and Laurent Gbagbo's arrogance and xenophobic policy of 'Ivoirite.' The concept of Ivoirite, which translates literally to 'Ivoirien-ness' or 'Cote d'Ivoire for pure Ivoriens' has become the bane of governance and politics since the advent of Laurent Gbagbo.

The concept reportedly originated among Ivoirien intellectuals in the late 1960s and early 1970s who were merely giving a cultural expression to their nationalism. The concept was so popular that even Houphouet-Boigny in the 1970s associated with it and used it to ensure that only Ivoriens were allowed to serve in the public service of the country. This led to the sacking of foreigners or immigrants who had hitherto served in such capacity. In a way, it was the actual beginning of xenophobia in official practice. In the hands of Laurent Gbagbo, Ivoirité has moved beyond being merely an intellectual concept and has been transformed into a weapon of political marginalisation and victimisation, not only of immigrants but also of political opponents like Alassane Ouattara. The concept re-emerged more powerfully in the political terrain from the 1995 presidential campaigns of Konan Bedie. It has since become associated with xenophobia and racism, a dangerous instrument in the hands of Laurent Gbagbo for the exclusion of his main political rival, Ouattara, from seeking election to the presidency.

Laurent Gbagbo had been a prominent figure in Ivoirien politics and his presidential ambition was already well known even before Houphouet-Boigny's death. He had formed the first opposition party, *Front Populaire Ivoirien* (FPI) as far back

¹ Tunde Fatunde, 'Gbagbo Ignites a Civil War,' *The Guardian* (Lagos), 2 February 2003, p. 7.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Africa Today*, *op. cit.*, p. 788.

⁴ Boigny's hatred for Samuel Doe was because Doe overthrew the government of William Tolbert, Houphouet's personal friend and sub-regional ally. Tolbert's son, Adolphus Tolbert, was also married to Boigny's daughter, Daisy. Both father and son were murdered in the 1980 Liberian coup.

as 1982, at a time that the country was still officially a one-party state.⁶ He contested the first multi-party general election of October 28, 1990 as the presidential candidate of his own party against the incumbent, President Felix Houphouët-Boigny, and has since then remained a factor to be reckoned with in Ivoirien national politics.

Alassane Ouattara, on the other hand, first came into national political prominence when Houphouët-Boigny appointed him the country's Prime Minister. Ouattara's expertise as former Governor of the Francophone Central Bank, was needed to shore up the sagging economy and the government's badly depleted political legitimacy. The move was part of Boigny's response to the agitation for political liberalisation which had reached a crescendo by the late 1980s. It was partly designed to create a buffer between the president and the general public, shield Boigny from public criticism of mismanaging the economy, as well as to utilise Ouattara's expertise and vast experience to restore the failing health of the national economy.

This was the beginning of what would turn out to be Ouattara's political headaches, as many ambitious Ivoirien politicians saw his appointment as a clear indication that the ageing Houphouët-Boigny, the country's only leader since independence, had cleverly anointed a successor. This group could not be pacified even in spite of the explicit provision in the 1985 amendment to the Constitution that stipulated that the 'President of the National Assembly would assume power in the absence or incapacity of the President and organise elections within 45 to 60 days.'⁷ Ouattara's main political rivals, especially from the largely Christian south of the country, would not be assuaged that his exalted position as Prime Minister was not a threat to them.

And immediately upon the death of Boigny, every possible diabolical plan was hatched to prevent Prime Minister Alassane Ouattara from ever becoming president. Henri Konan Bedie, who held the presidency of the National Assembly at the time, eventually succeeded Boigny after a brief power tussle. From that moment on began Ouattara's political troubles and victimisation. Bedie, apparently scared of Ouattara's popularity, resorted to the spurious allegation that Ouattara was not a true Ivoirien, as his parents were said to be originally from Burkina Faso, thus effectively disqualifying him from standing for national elections. This began a period of political crisis and instability, punctuated by ethnically motivated bloodshed, from which the country has yet to escape.

Bedie was overthrown in December 1999 by General Robert Guei, another Christian southerner. His rule did not bring any respite from the political troubles. Instead of making any changes, he merely continued from where his predecessor had left off, making sure that the now very popular Ouattara was effectively denied the rights of citizenship and of political participation. To worsen matters, Laurent Gbagbo, who took power from Guei after a controversial election in 2000, has also

been encouraging systematic xenophobia in order to stay in power.⁸ At the receiving end of his politics of exclusion are mostly Northern Muslims from Ouattara's home region. One consequence of these ugly political developments is the current civil war in the country. It was sparked by military personnel of northern origin who were cashiered from the army and police forces purely on suspicion of being sympathetic to the opposition, especially to Ouattara.⁹ They struck with the intention to overthrow the regime and possibly reverse the egregious political marginalisation their region had suffered. But when this initial objective failed, their refusal to lay down their arms subsequently allowed the mutiny to fester into a civil war.

Cote d'Ivoire has peculiar demographic characteristics. About one-fifth of its population is made up of immigrants from the neighbouring states of West Africa, mostly Burkinabes, Malians, Guineans, Senegalese, Ghanaians and Nigerians. These diverse nationalities had settled and lived in the country for generations, mostly working in the cocoa and other crop plantations. Throughout the country's history since independence, foreign African residents had been subjected to occasional orchestrated xenophobia, discrimination and hostility. There have been calls at different times for the introduction of identity cards as a means to control the immigrant population. In fact, Laurent Gbagbo especially had been associated with anti-immigrant political postures, even during Boigny's rule. He reportedly openly accused Boigny of allowing foreign residents to vote in the country's general elections.¹⁰ Judging from his previous bizarre anti-immigrant politics, it is not surprising therefore that he was associated with the overt and covert moves to deny Ouattara his citizenship rights and persecute his regional loyalists. Gbagbo's policies have consciously encouraged greater ethnic consciousness and discrimination that is currently tearing the once peaceful nation apart.

External dimensions to the crisis

No longer are internal conflicts in West African states purely internal in terms of their origin and sponsorship. From the early 1990s, intra-state crises have attracted external sponsorship and encouragement from neighbouring states which either have vested interests in such crises or whose leaders have personal scores to settle. The outbreak of the Liberian crisis in December 1989 provided an opportunity for the then Ivoirien president, Felix Houphouet-Boigny and Burkinabe leader, Blaise Compaore, to settle personal scores with President Samuel Doe.¹¹ The support that these two states gave to Charles Taylor's insurgency frustrated the search for solutions and prolonged the murderous conflict in Liberia for nearly a decade. The ECOWAS peacekeeping initiative also suffered severe setbacks because of the activities of these two states.¹² Since then, the incidence of trans-border involvement in internal crises has been on the increase. The then Liberian warlord, Charles Taylor, was the main sub-regional sponsor and supporter of the Sierra Leonean rebel group, the Revolutionary United Front. That rag-tag army of local bandits also threw Sierra Leone into a civil war which lasted about a decade. Burkina Faso was

also implicated in the Sierra Leonean civil war. Both Liberia and Burkina Faso benefited from the illicit exploration and export of Sierra Leone's 'conflict diamonds'. Through such external backing, rebel groups not only have foreign training grounds and sanctuaries, their access to illicit weapons is often made much easier. Burkina Faso reportedly surreptitiously imported arms for the RUF.

Even the current crisis in Cote d'Ivoire has not been immune from such external or foreign sponsorship. There is apparently no love lost between Cote d'Ivoire's Laurent Gbagbo and Burkina Faso's Blaise Campaore. But beyond the raging personal animosity between the two leaders, Burkina Faso is also the country's contiguous neighbour to the north, whose largely Muslim population has been at the receiving end of Gbagbo's xenophobia. Mali, also a predominantly Muslim country and immediate northern neighbour, apparently also harbours some sympathies for Cote d'Ivoire's northern Muslims who are victims of internal political discrimination.

Apart from the immediate sub-regional neighbours, Libya, a North African country, has long-standing vested interests in penetrating the sub-region. This was demonstrated in its support for NPFL in Liberia and the RUF in Sierra Leone. The leaders of both guerrilla forces, Charles Taylor of the NPFL and Foday Sankoh of the RUF, as well as scores of their fighters received training in Libya and enjoyed generous financial and material support and assistance from the Libyan government.¹³ According to General Ibrahim Babangida, Nigeria's former military president who was also the prime mover of the ECOMOG intervention in Liberia, the fact of 'foreign' intervention in the sub-region, a reference to Libya, was behind the collective decision to deploy a peacekeeping force in 1990. He noted that the West African leaders, including himself, were not going to allow 'a force from outside to come in and cause instability in Liberia' since such 'would spread into other neighbouring countries in the West Africa region.'¹⁴ Libya has also been fingered in the current crisis in Cote d'Ivoire.

The erstwhile foreign backers of Africa's numerous dictatorial regimes have shifted their focus and taken their monies and resources elsewhere, (...). African rulers now fond themselves on their own if and when internal insurgents take up arms against their states or regimes.

¹ See especially Abiodun Alao, *The Burden of Collective Goodwill: The International Involvement in the Liberian Civil War* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), especially pp. 79-84.

² W. Alade Fawole, *Military Power and Third-Party Conflict Mediation in West Africa: The Liberia and Sierra Leone Case Studies* (Ile-Ife: Obafemi Awolowo University Press, 2001), p. 15.

³ Transcript of General Ibrahim Babangida's nationally televised interview, reproduced in *West Africa* (London), 22-28 February 1993, p. 282.

The nature of post-Cold War international politics must also come into reckoning. Since the 1990s, insurgent movements in Africa have had a field day. The erstwhile foreign backers of Africa's numerous dictatorial regimes have shifted their focus and taken their monies and resources elsewhere, especially to Eastern Europe, in the wake of the fall of the Berlin Wall, the disintegration of the former Soviet Union and the collapse of Communism. African rulers now find themselves on their own if and when internal insurgents take up arms against their states or regimes. With the usual massive external military and material support, on which they used to rely, no longer available, African leaders are now left to sort out their internal problems on their own. A number of them like Samuel Doe of Liberia and Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire fell while others were forced to liberalise because regime survival could no longer be guaranteed from outside Africa. Unfortunately, armed insurgents now have unlimited access to illicit arms dealers in the world, who are willing and ready to supply weapons. Such easy and independent access to modern firepower is responsible for the prolongation of the internal crises in such countries as Sudan, Liberia, Sierra Leone, DR Congo, Angola, etc.

The following questions therefore beg for answers: are these crises contagious? Are there any possibilities of trans-border spillover into neighbouring countries? What role do trans-border ethnic affiliations play in these conflicts? What implications do these crises have for peace and security in West Africa? Will the sub-region ever know real peace? Is the ECOWAS alone capable of handling these situations? What are the structures and mechanisms that ECOWAS has on ground for conflict resolution, peace-keeping and security? How adequate are these structures for meeting these contingencies or 'complex emergencies'? What are the implications of frequent crises for ECOWAS capacity to maintain peace and security in the sub-region? These are some of the posers that the following sections will address.

The ECOWAS Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peace-keeping and Security

The Economic Community of West African States has provisions for conflict resolution and maintenance of peace and security in the sub-region. The instrument, known as the *Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peace-keeping and Security*, was adopted by the sub-region's plenipotentiaries at Lomé on 10 December, 1999. The broad objectives of the mechanism, as clearly spelt out in Article 3(a), are to 'prevent, manage and resolve internal and inter-state conflicts', 'maintain and consolidate peace, security and stability within the Community'.¹⁵ To achieve the objectives stated in the Protocol, the Community may, according to Article 3(h), 'constitute and deploy a civilian and military force to maintain or restore peace within the sub-region, whenever the need arises.'

The outbreak of the civil war in Cote d'Ivoire provided the surest indication of either the failure of the ECOWAS organisation to perceive that that country was sitting atop a keg of gunpowder, or collective unwillingness to sanction a sitting president. As for the early warning system embedded in the above mentioned protocol, it is either that it malfunctioned or that those who were supposed to monitor its performance simply lacked the capacity to discern when an explosive trouble was brewing. Another explanation could be that the organisation did not wish to censure any of its members, more or less shielding an errant leader from open blame. It is not uncommon for African rulers, most of them similarly inclined towards authoritarian rule, to close ranks and give each other a clean bill of health, even when the sick nature of their rule is too glaring for all to see. Had this not been the case, the ECOWAS plenipotentiaries would have seen the potential dangers inherent in President Laurent Gbagbo's xenophobia and possibly curbed it before it threw the country into avoidable civil war.

Whichever of these is the most plausible explanation, the fact remains that ECOWAS failed to apprehend the immensity and combustible nature of the internal political problems in Cote d'Ivoire and failed to act on time to save the situation. Once the war had begun, the organisation was no longer saddled with the burden of conflict prevention but that of conflict management and restoration of peace and normalcy. How well it has been able to perform this function is perhaps too early to determine. The crisis is still on, and even the fragile peace that was constructed in the wake of the power-sharing agreement negotiated in Marcousis, France, which gave the rebels participation in national governance, has been put to severe test when the rebels pulled out of the deal. This proves that peace-building is a much more delicate and painstaking process, for all post-conflict societies have to undergo a certain period of trauma and adjustment.

The Politics and Diplomacy of Regional Conflict Mediation

The swift intervention of French forces, which has assisted the Ivoirien government to maintain stability and political control in the capital, Abidjan, and in most of the southern part of the country, has been both a blessing and a handicap. But since the French troops were not deployed for fighting but to safeguard French and Western interests and nationals in Cote d'Ivoire, and prevent the forcible replacement of the government in the capital, their intervention has merely succeeded in driving the rebels into the interior, especially the north, where they have established their own military strongholds. The situation resembles the February 1998 intervention of Nigerian soldiers in Sierra Leone to reclaim Freetown for the restoration of the ousted Tejan Kabbah government. Having succeeded in that limited objective, the

¹ See ECOWAS, 'Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peace-keeping and Security'.

Sierra Leonean rebels that were ousted from the capital simply withdrew into the countryside and continued their operations. This led to the division of that country into two distinct enclaves, one controlled by the government with the assistance of Nigerian soldiers, and the other by rebels. Not even the arrival of the UN peacekeeping force, UNAMSIL, could accomplish much to reclaim the countryside from them. This was because of the unwillingness of the world body to use the necessary level of force to restore order. It was only the decisive intervention of British commando troops that eventually broke Foday Sankoh's resistance.

France's similar unwillingness to use much force, understandable as it is, has accomplished a similar result, i.e. the partitioning of the country between the government and the rebels. For to intervene and fight on the side of the government would create an inevitable quagmire for France, and the resultant body count would be politically suicidal for any Western government to accept. No Western nation would agree to shed blood for the sake of Africans. America is still battling with such an ugly fate in Iraq. But even that position of neutrality soon became problematic as France was perceived as an enemy by both sides. On the one hand the government, which was goaded by France into a hasty compromise with the rebels, fails to see France's position as helpful. Only recently, government troops stormed a television station in the capital demanding the withdrawal of the 4,000 French peacekeepers to enable them settle with the rebels on the battlefield.¹⁶ The rebels, on the other hand, cannot be persuaded to see France as an honest broker, since it was its troops that partly frustrated their desire to take over the capital and remove the government.

Caught between the two unfavourable viewpoints, France's military presence has created a stalemate that has left the country partitioned. Most of the Northern half and some parts of the west are still under rebel military control. How long France would remain in this quagmire is difficult to judge at this time. Would France pull out of the country and allow the contending forces to sort out the problem, or allow sub-regional mechanism to deal with the situation? Precipitate pullout without a concrete resolution of the conflict is a luxury that France could not afford. Realising its own lack of capacity to resolve the matter alone, France thus encourages more active involvement of ECOWAS in conflict resolution, and for obvious reasons too.

It was, after all, ECOWAS and Nigeria's credible application of military power that 'persuaded' Charles Taylor that he could not take over government of

¹ See *The Guardian*, (Lagos), 2 December 2003, p. 10.

² For details of the various UN interventions in the resolution of African conflicts, see MacQueen, *op. cit.*

³ Nigeria's unilateral peacekeeping in Chad in 1979 was a failure. See Terry M. Mays, *Africa's First Peacekeeping Operation: The OAU in Chad, 1981-1982* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2002), pp. 35-44.

⁴ For example, Libya was pressured to respect the International Court of Justice ruling that the Aouzou Strip that it had militarily occupied since 1973 belonged to Chad. The war between Ethiopia and Eritrea came to an end when both adversaries had to respect international opinion and mediation.

Liberia by force. The fact that Taylor much later became more willing to negotiate and comply with agreements became possible once ECOMOG had demonstrated stern resolve to frustrate his objective. But we hasten to assert that building a durable peace is always a more complex endeavour than the mere application of force to bring compliance with peace agreements. And that is why Liberia has been on the boil from time to time. The next session discusses the problems of peace making that ECOWAS confronts.

The Problems of Peace Making

The resolution of internal or civil conflicts by external third parties, whether states or international organisations, is infinitely more difficult than inter-state conflicts. The experiences of the United Nations in Africa since the early 1960s have varied from interventions that succeeded, those that failed and those that are difficult to classify.¹⁷ But so have been unilateral or multilateral actions by certain states - the US in Somalia, Nigeria in Chad,¹⁸ the OAU in Chad, etc. The fact is that civil conflicts, unlike inter-state conflicts, are not easily amenable to external mediation or resolution. In inter-state conflicts, sovereign states are much easier to put under heavy international pressure by their allies, international organisations and public opinion to respect international law or honour peace agreements.¹⁹ Internal insurgents who take up arms against governments often lack such discipline and are difficult to sanction. These have been the experiences of ECOWAS and the UN in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Angola where rebels had control of economic and natural resources that guaranteed independent access to illegal arms suppliers.²⁰ More often, the objectives of states engaged in conflicts are usually specific and easy to ascertain. The same cannot be said for internal rebels whose objectives are often unstable, sometimes varying from the very sublime to the most ludicrous, and changing with circumstances and shifting fortunes of war. This is why return of peace is difficult and slow, even after the demands of rebels have been met. Foday Sankoh and his RUF bandits in Sierra Leone typify this. Having lived a life of violence and impunity for so long, many rebel leaders and their men simply become incapable of adjusting to normal, decent lifestyles again, even after they are integrated into government.

Also worth mentioning is the fact that no matter how well intentioned they may be, external interventions always face certain difficulties. Such interventions are not always for the purest of altruistic motives, even when conducted by respected international bodies like the UN. Participating states always have their own national objectives for what they do. Nigeria for example was not an impartial arbiter in Sierra Leone, neither was the US intervention in Somalia entirely non-partisan. This fact may also allow third party peacemakers to make certain compromises which may border on appeasement of rebels. The US and ECOWAS-brokered Lomé Accords on Sierra Leone made concessions to the RUF that bordered on appeasement

and which continues to anger victims of RUF ruthlessness.²¹ The problem is that such compromises or appeasement never really guarantee restoration of durable peace, for hardly had the Lomé Agreement been signed when the RUF began systematically violating it, throwing the country into another round of needless bloodbath.

The resolution of Cote d'Ivoire's internal conflict is thus an immensely complicated endeavour. The complexity of the crisis, both in its internal and external dimensions, renders peace-making a profoundly difficult venture for ECOWAS. The internal political problems, with its curious combination of ethnic, regional and religious factors, and of course the politics of xenophobia and exclusion, are not easy to resolve. At the external level is the intrusion of other states and personalities that, perhaps, harbour vested interests in the conflict and whose activities are likely to be inimical to the peace process. Besides, the sub-regional states themselves are extremely cautious in handling the matter. And this is understandable in that they all have such potentially combustible internal situations to contend with.

Nigeria, the most prominent peacemaker in the sub-region, has had to be a bit more cautious than usual. In the first instance, Nigeria's need for caution in the conflict resolution effort in a prominent Francophone state cannot but make a significant impact in any ECOWAS peacekeeping. Nigeria is not only the true regional hegemon, but also has the largest military force and is by far the most experienced in the application of military power for conflict resolution in the sub-region. Its economy, in spite of downturns, is still substantially more buoyant and capable of absorbing the cost of such an exercise. The other remaining countries cannot be compared to Nigeria. But Nigeria would not participate in any extensive peacekeeping for the obvious reason that it might raise fears about Anglophone hegemony or a *Pax Nigeriana* in West Africa. Francophone states are not necessarily likely to welcome Nigeria's hegemonic incursions into their domains. Besides, it is unlikely that public opinion in Nigeria itself would support any further foreign military adventures after the experiences and the huge human and material costs of interventions in Liberia and Sierra Leone.

Some of the remaining countries in the organisation are unlikely to play any prominent military role either. Ghana shares a contiguous boundary with Cote d'Ivoire, and for the avoidance of the spectre of Anglophone hegemony also has to tread cautiously. Liberia and Sierra Leone have their own internal political problems to cope with. Burkina Faso is vicariously implicated in Cote d'Ivoire and therefore

¹ For a critical analysis of the difficulties inherent in peace making through armed intervention, see Christopher Clapham, 'Problems of Peace Enforcement: Lessons to be Drawn from Multinational Peacekeeping Operations in Ongoing Conflicts in Africa', in Tunde Zack-Williams, Diane Frost and Alex Thomson (eds.), *Africa in Crisis: New Challenges and Possibilities* (London: Pluto Press, 2002), pp. 196-215.

² The July 1999 Lomé Agreement not only granted amnesty to the rebels but actually compensated RUF leader Foday Sankoh with a powerful ministerial portfolio that put him in charge of the country's mineral resources. The full document is reproduced in *ACCORD, An International Review of Peace Initiatives*, Issue 9 (London, 2000), pp. 67-77.

an unlikely peacekeeper, while Senegal is battling with own domestic problems in the Casamance region. The remaining, predominantly Francophone states are small, poor and too weak to offer much hope. These severe limitations on the capacity of ECOWAS for peacekeeping would rule out any sub-regional exercise of the scale mounted in Liberia or Sierra Leone. In any case, the sub-regional body's capacity is under considerable strain with the current second round of peacekeeping in Liberia.

Implications for peace and security in the Sub-Region

West Africa has become a zone of crisis since the early 1990s, and it has attracted considerable negative global attention. It has taken on the character of an unstable zone where violent internal uprisings have become the norm, a fact which compelled UN Under-Secretary General, Ibrahim Gambari, to describe it as a 'dangerous neighbourhood.'²² This unenviable character has caused a number of very cynical foreign observers to propose re-colonisation of the sub-region by the various former colonial masters as a possible solution. Former US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Herman Cohen, and William Pfaff are two of the foremost apostles of re-colonisation who have elaborated their views in separate writings.²³ These rather cynical and patronising views of Africa's situation came about as a result of the frequency of internal crises - Angola, DR Congo, Rwanda, Liberia, Sierra Leone - that have been the lot of the continent in the post-Cold War era. As far back as 1994, Robert Kaplan's pessimistic view, which has, unfortunately, been widely cited by Western intellectuals, was that West Africa had become a 'real strategic danger'.²⁴ This unfortunate assessment was predicated on the outbreak of internal conflicts in Liberia and Sierra Leone.

Whilst outright re-colonisation is not being contemplated by the great powers, the United States is currently taking an unusually keen interest in developments along the West Africa coast, mostly for two reasons that have nothing to do with helping Africa but protecting America's interests. The first reason is to ensure the flow of petroleum from the region to the United States now that the Middle East region is becoming too hostile and problematic.²⁵ The second has to do with monitoring drug trafficking along the coast to checkmate the supply to the United States. It is said that international drug traffickers are using the various conflicts in the region as cover for their operations, and the US is taking a real interest in the threat that this poses for its security.

Unfortunately, these frequent internal crises, with their trans-border contagious effects,²⁶ are severely testing the capacity of the sub-region and its main umbrella organisation, ECOWAS, for conflict resolution. This is more so when

¹ *Africa Recovery* (July 2003), p. 4.

² Herman Cohen, 'African Capabilities for Managing Conflict: The Role of the US,' in D. R. Smock and C. A. Crocker, (eds.), *African Conflict Resolution: The US Role in Peacekeeping* (Washington DC: US Institute of Peace Press, 1995), p. 95; William Pfaff, 'A New Colonialism: Europe Must Go Back into Africa,' *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 74, No. 1 (1995), pp. 4-6.

the conflicts are launched by heavily armed insurgent groups that also enjoy some measure of external backing or support. In the cases of Liberia and Sierra Leone, both the scale and length of the bloodletting were mind-boggling because the concerned local insurgent groups had control of natural resources-producing areas of their respective countries. The National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) and the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF/SL) controlled the timber and diamond producing areas of Liberia and Sierra Leone respectively, a control that afforded them the means and freedom to purchase arms from the proliferating global arms dealers. A number of African states and private entrepreneurs were also severely indicted in the illicit smuggling of diamonds and other vital resources in order to purchase arms for the various rebel groups.

The subterranean involvement of interested sub-regional actors in the crises raises critical questions about security and stability in West Africa. The proliferation of illicit small arms, the festering problem of child soldiers, the increasing menace of freelance mercenaries from within the sub-region, the problem of trans-border contagion, and the economic interests of illicit arms merchants who stand to reap tremendous benefits from the crises, necessitate a critical appraisal of the future of security and stability of the states in the sub-region. It has simply become fashionable in the post-Cold War era, for any discontented or disgruntled national or sub-national group to take up arms against *de facto* governments. The ready availability of illicit sources of arms, especially from former states of the Soviet bloc such as the Ukraine and Bulgaria, has heightened the possibility of insurgency in the sub-region.²⁷ This, in fact, has been responsible for the extremely violent nature and character of the most recent conflicts in Africa, most of which, unlike earlier conflicts, lack specific ideological or political objective basis.²⁸ They are distinguished more by sheer lawlessness, banditry and mindless brutality targeted at civilians than by any concretely articulated political objectives. The RUF in Sierra Leone, which engaged in indiscriminate looting and reckless killing and maiming of women and children, is a case in point.

The readiness of interested sub-regional actors to support and provide sanctuaries for insurgency movements and bandits in order to subvert neighbouring states is also a critical factor in the incidences of recent intra-state conflicts. States such as Libya, Burkina Faso and Cote d'Ivoire were implicated in the Liberian crisis; Libya, Liberia and Burkina Faso also presumably had a hand in the civil war

¹ Robert Kaplan's view, quoted in Guy Martin, 'The African Nation-State in Crisis: An Alternative Framework for Regional Governance,' in Dani W. Nabudere (ed.), *Globalisation and the Post-Colonial African State* (Harare: AAPS Books, 2000), p. 156.

² Angola, Gabon, Cameroon and Nigeria are major oil producers along the Western coast of Africa.

³ The Liberian civil war spilled over into neighbouring Sierra Leone in 1991 when Charles Taylor sponsored the initial RUF invasion that sparked off the civil war in that country too. Now, the civil war in Cote d'Ivoire has also spilled over into Liberia where Ivoirien troops allegedly joined local mercenaries for the cross-border invasion and capture of the town of Toe in Liberia's eastern border. *The Comet*, (Lagos), March 3, 2003, pp. 1 and 4.

⁴ See, MacQueen, *op.cit.*, especially pp. 141-142

in Sierra Leone, while Burkina Faso is already accused of supporting the rebels in Cote d'Ivoire. This is in addition to a plethora of private entrepreneurs from Nigeria and South Africa who are willing to do business with rebel groups, especially where valuable minerals are involved.²⁹

One emerging trend in the recent peace-making processes in West Africa, and one which is quite disturbing, is that insurgents are now being compensated with political portfolios as a condition for peace to return to troubled states. Liberia's Charles Taylor set the standard when, through naked violence and anarchy, he became a political force without which it was impossible for peace to return to the beleaguered country. ECOWAS leaders reached series of peace agreements with him, even though he had proved to them over

One emerging trend in the recent peace-making processes in West Africa, and one which is quite disturbing, is that insurgents are now being compensated with political portfolios as a condition for peace to return to troubled states

and again how unreliable and slippery he could be.³⁰ The division within the ranks of the ECOWAS members over the sub-regional intervention in Liberia ensured that Charles Taylor would remain a force to reckon with.³¹ He later succeeded in winning the internationally supervised general elections, and subsequently threw the ECOMOG force out of his country.

In Sierra Leone, the ECOWAS peacemakers under pressure from the US, not having learnt much from their Liberian experience, proceeded to goad the government of Tejan Kabbah into signing a hastily prepared agreement with the rebel RUF, an agreement in which the government had to concede certain key ministerial and other government posts to the rebels.³² In that peace accord, signed in Lomé and guaranteed by ECOWAS and representatives of the Commonwealth, Foday Sankoh bagged the strategic portfolio which put him in charge of the country's vital mineral resources. In the final analysis, even this apparently unjustifiable political appeasement did not satisfy Sankoh's lust for total power. Hardly had the agreement been signed when he launched fresh assaults on the government in Freetown and UN peacekeepers, even abducting several of them as hostages. It was the British commandos' intervention that decisively checkmated his activities and brought some sanity into the peace process.

Experiences in other African states have shown that, more often than not, this appeasement of impunity rarely works. It failed in both Mozambique and Angola where the RENAMO and UNITA respectively were interested only in grabbing absolute power. This was evident when, after the internationally supervised 1992 general elections in Angola, Jonas Savimbi and his UNITA guerrillas went back to the bush to

continue the war rather than take up their seats in parliament.³³

This disturbing scenario has unfortunately also emerged in Cote d'Ivoire where the French-brokered peace accord signed in Marcousis, France, also contained elements of appeasement and offer of political compensation for the rebels. This agreement, which technically instituted a government of national reconciliation, was not capable of restoring peace. Believing that the government of Laurent Gbagbo was apparently arm-twisted to agree to this appeasement, Ivoiriens trooped out into the streets to denounce both the agreement and those who brokered it. Would the offer of sensitive ministerial portfolios of defence and internal affairs satisfy the rebels' lust for power? Let us remember that the original intention of the insurgents was to overthrow the government and seize power. It was when this failed that they demanded that Gbagbo step down. And Gbagbo called their bluff, hence the degeneration of the conflict into a civil war. In any case, would it not amount to robbing the elected government of its basic capacity to govern, if it has to be 'stripped' of control over the national defence apparatus and internal affairs? And will this fawning appeasement of the rebels necessarily bring the much-needed peace? Would this solve the pervasive problems of political exclusion, ethno-religious discrimination and xenophobia that are at the roots of Cote d'Ivoire's internal crisis?

Future prognosis for West Africa is not encouraging. Peace, security and stability of the member states of ECOWAS cannot be assured. The current half-hearted concessionary peace making in Cote d'Ivoire will send wrong signals that insurgents can actually hope to profit from taking up arms, no matter how unreasonable or unjustified their demands may be. If anything, the lack of proper and enduring resolution of the Liberian crisis led to the rise of another insurgent group *Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy* (LURD), which seriously challenged the integrity of the Liberian state and led to Taylor's exit from power. If the British commandos had not stepped in to forcibly checkmate the RUF and arrest Sankoh, the mayhem might have continued for much longer. And now that the crisis in Cote d'Ivoire has snowballed into a civil war with clearly religious and ethno-regional connotations, satisfactory resolution in such a way that would assuage all

¹ Yusuf Bangura, 'Understanding the Political and Cultural Dynamics of the Sierra Leonean Civil War: A Critique of Paul Richards's 'Fighting for the Rain Forest'', *Africa Development*, Vol. XXII, Nos. 3 and 4, (1997), p. 117.

² Nigerian and South African businessmen were among those fingered to be colluding with UNITA's Jonas Savimbi in the sale of diamonds. See MacQueen, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

³ In Taylor's seven-years war in Liberia, he concluded and signed several peace agreements with ECOWAS which he never implemented. See Michelle Pitts, 'Sub-Regional Solutions for African Conflicts: The ECOMOG Experiment,' *The Journal of Conflict Studies*, Vol. XIX, No. 1, (1999), p. 56.

⁴ The ECOWAS peace-making efforts were frustrated for long by states such as Burkina Faso and Cote d'Ivoire which saw ECOMOG as an instrument of Nigeria's hegemonic foray into the sub-region. See especially W. Alade Fawole, *Military Power and Third-Party Conflict Mediation in West Africa: The Liberia and Sierra Leone Case Studies* (Ile-Ife: Obafemi Awolowo University Press, 2001), especially pp. 46-47.

⁵ See the contents of the Lomé Accords July 1999.

parties seem far-fetched. With that scenario, return to normalcy in the country may not yet be on the horizon. Even though the war itself will come to an end, its consequences may be around for a while. These may generally include small arms in the wrong hands, existence of child soldiers and jobless former rebel fighters, freelance mercenaries, all of whom would constitute security headaches not only for the country but the entire sub-region.³⁴

The need for firm resolution of the crisis to discourage such reckless insurrections in the future is called for. Given the reality on the ground in the sub-region, is ECOWAS really up to the task? This is actually the time for ECOWAS to put its foot down firmly that change of regimes by force or insurrection would no longer be condoned. Cote d'Ivoire should be made a shining example of Africans' commitment to purge the continent of the vicious cycle of violence and instability. Failure to do this would only show lack of commitment to the ideals behind the New Partnership for Africa's Development, NEPAD, and present African leaders as lacking the moral rectitude and political courage to deal with critical developmental problems confronting them.

References

- ACCORD, An International Review of Peace Initiatives*, (London), Issue 9, 2000, pp. 67-77.
- Africa Recovery*, 2003. (July) p. 4.
- Alao, A. 1998. *The Burden of Collective Goodwill: The International Involvement in the Liberian Civil War*, Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Bangura, Y. 1997. 'Understanding the Political and Cultural Dynamics of the Sierra Leonean Civil War: A Critique of Paul Richards's *Fighting for the Rain Forest*,' *Africa Development*, Vol. XXII, Nos. 3 and 4, p. 117.
- Clapham, C. 2002. 'Problems of Peace Enforcement: Lessons to be Drawn from Multinational Peacekeeping Operations in Ongoing Conflicts in Africa,' in Tunde Zack-Williams, Diane Frost and Alex Thomson (eds.), *Africa in Crisis: New Challenges and Possibilities*, London: Pluto Press.
- Cohen, H. 1995. 'African Capabilities for Managing Conflict: The Role of the US,' in D. R. Smock and C. A. Crocker, (eds.), *African Conflict Resolution: The US Role in Peacekeeping*, Washington D.C.: US Institute of Peace Press.
- ECOWAS, 'Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peace-keeping and Security.'
- Fatunde, T. 2003. 'Gbagbo Ignites a Civil War,' *The Guardian* (Lagos), 2 February.
- Fawole, W.A. 2001. 'Nigeria and the Failure of Peace-Making in Sierra Leone,' *Africa*

¹ For details of Savimbi's and UNITA's obstruction of the Angola peace process, see MacQueen, *op. cit.*, especially pp. 122-146.

- Insight*, Vol. 31, No. 3, September, pp. 11-18.
- Fawole, W.A. 2001. *Military Power and Third-Party Conflict Mediation in West Africa: The Liberia and Sierra Leone Case Studies*, Ile-Ife: Obafemi Awolowo University Press.
- Gberie, L. 2003. 'Briefing: The Special Court of Sierra Leone,' *Africa Affairs*, Vol. 102, No. 409 (October), p. 644.
- Harsch, E. 2003. 'Fragile Peace in Cote d'Ivoire,' *Africa Recovery*, (UN Department of Public Information), Vol. 17, No. 2 (July), p. 6.
- MacQueen, N. 2002. *United Nations Peacekeeping in Africa since 1960*, London: Pearson Education Limited.
- Mays, T.M. 2002. *Africa's First Peacekeeping Operation: The OAU in Chad, 1981-1982*, Westport, CT: Praeger.
- Pfaff, W. 1995. 'A New Colonialism: Europe Must Go Back into Africa', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 74, No. 1, pp. 4-6.
- Pitts, M. 1999. 'Sub-Regional Solutions for African Conflicts: The ECOMOG Experiment,' *The Journal of Conflict Studies*, Vol. XIX, No. 1, p. 56
- Martin, G. 2000. 'The African Nation-State in Crisis: An Alternative Framework for Regional Governance,' in Dani W. Nabudere (ed), *Globalisation and the Post-Colonial African State*, Harare: AAPS Books, p. 156.
- The Comet*, (Lagos), March 3, 2003, pp. 1 and 4.
- The Guardian*, (Lagos), December 2, 2003, p. 10.
- Transcript of General Ibrahim Babangida's nationally televised interview, reproduced in *West Africa*, (London), 22-28 February 1993, p. 282.
- Uwechue, R. (ed.) 1991. *Africa Today*, (Second Edition), London: Africa Books Ltd.

¹ The issue of freelance mercenaries is already worrisome. For example, the former Sierra Leone junta leader, Major Johnny Paul Koroma who was ousted by ECOMOG forces in February 1998, and one-time RUF rebel commander Sam Bockarie (a.k.a. Mosquito) joined forces with Taylor to fight the LURD rebels in Liberia. See Lansana Gberie, 'Briefing: The Special Court of Sierra Leone,' *Africa Affairs*, Vol. 102, No. 409 (October 2003), p. 644. This has become a common occurrence in the sub-region.

RECONCILING ETHNIC AND NATIONAL IDENTITIES IN A DIVIDED SOCIETY: THE NIGERIAN DILEMMA OF NATION-STATE BUILDING³⁵

By Abu Bakarr Bah

« Réconcilier les Identités Ethniques et Nationales dans une Société Divisée: Le Dilemme Nigérian de la Construction de l'Etat-Nation ».

Résumé

Il s'agit ici d'une analyse théorique et historique des enjeux de la construction de l'Etat-Nation au Nigéria. La question centrale est de savoir comment un Etat post-colonial multi-ethnique promeut l'intégration nationale parmi ses citoyens dans un contexte de compétition entre les identités ethniques. L'étude porte une attention spéciale sur le rôle de l'Etat dans la lutte entre les différents groupes ethniques pour le contrôle du pouvoir politique et des ressources nationales. L'auteur argumente que, tandis que l'Etat a été une source majeure d'hostilité ethnique, il a également été l'objet de modifications nombreuses tendant à promouvoir l'intégration nationale et l'harmonisation ethnique. En dépit des problèmes majeurs liés aux arrangements institutionnels au Nigéria, l'article voit dans l'expérience nigériane une leçon importante dans la construction de l'Etat-Nation dans les pays post-coloniaux multi-ethniques. En plus de l'approche institutionnelle, l'article souligne l'importance de l'éducation civique, de l'histoire collective et de la démocratie dans la promotion de l'intégration nationale dans une société divisée.

Abstract

This is a theoretical and historical analysis of the challenges of nation-state building in Nigeria. The central question is how a post-colonial multiethnic state promotes national integration among its citizens within a context of competing ethnic identities. The study pays special attention to the role of the state and the struggles among the major ethnic groups for control of political power and national resources. It argues that while the state has been a major source of ethnic animosity, it has also been the object of numerous modifications intended to promote national integration and ethnic harmony. Notwithstanding the major problems associated with the institutional arrangements in Nigeria, the paper sees the Nigerian experience as a valuable lesson for nation-state building in post-colonial multiethnic countries. In addition to the institutional design approach, the paper points to the

importance of civic education, collective history, and democracy in promoting national integration in a divided society.

Introduction

Like many post-colonial countries, Nigeria is faced with the challenge of forging a nation out of the diverse groups of people living within its borders. Efforts to promote a national identity have been hindered by other competing forms of identity such as ethnic, regional and religious. The fundamental question has been how to reconcile these often conflicting identities and thereby promote national integration. This paper addresses Nigerian efforts to create a nation-state within a context of ethnic diversity. Translated into Durkheimian terminology, the problem can be formulated as follows: first, determining which factors can promote a greater collective consciousness vis-à-vis particularistic consciousness among a majority of the citizens of Nigeria;³⁶ second, determining which factors can enable the majority of Nigerians to reconcile the collective consciousness with their particularistic consciousness as Yoruba, Igbo, or Hausa. I argue that, in the multiethnic states that have emerged out of colonial Africa, people identify themselves as members of a particular ethnic group, which defines who they are in terms of descent, culture, and to some extent economic and political opportunity as well. Furthermore, I contend that people within the same country are progressively identifying themselves with the colonial state that was imposed on their forefathers.

We may ask why it should be a problem to have a dual identity, national and ethnic. After all, many people have multiple citizenships, and all of us harmoniously occupy multiple social statuses. The difference between reconciling ethnic and national identity on the one hand and harmonising multiple social statuses on the other hand can be linked to issues of resource distribution, group interest, domination, and power. As in many other ethnically divided societies, there are political and economic stakes tied to ethnic identity in Nigeria. Very often, as one ethnic group gains control of the state, members of other ethnic groups begin to feel alienated. Another difference is that compared to social statuses, ethnic and national identities are more abstract. As bearers of a status, we are frequently reminded of our obligations and we alone assume responsibility for our wrongdoing. In contrast, ethnic and national identities are ascribed and they embody our cultural, political, and social rights. Like other identities, ethnic and national identities also need to be reinforced. In Nigeria, ethnic identity is constantly reinforced through language, family and kinship networks, and neighbourhood and community settings. In contrast, the reinforcement of a national identity has been made difficult by ethnic favoritism in the distribution of resources, which also strengthens the ethnic identity.

¹ Abu Bakarr Bah is Assistant Professor of Sociology at Northern Illinois University, USA, email: tk0abb1@wpo.cso.niu.edu. He would like to thank the Transregional Center for Democratic Studies at the New School University in New York for the support in writing this paper.

Notwithstanding the conflicting demands and loyalties associated with ethnic and national identities, the problem cannot be solved by getting rid of the unwanted identity. Were that possible, nation-state building would have been less difficult in Nigeria. If a majority of Nigerians had successfully freed themselves from their ethnic identities, we would have had a Nigeria that is not plagued by ethnic conflicts. Alas, forty years after freeing themselves from the guns of the colonial masters, Nigerians, and all other Africans for that matter, have not yet freed themselves from the invisible chains of ethnicity. Conversely, if Nigerians had freed themselves from the Nigerian state that was imposed on them by the colonial power, they would not have had the trouble of reconciling two conflicting identities. Independence would not have meant the consolidation of the Nigerian state created by the British, but the revival of their pre-colonial political entities, such as the Hausa-Fulani state, the Yoruba state and the Igbo confederation. Chained to this dual identity, as a citizen of Nigeria and an Igbo for example, Nigerians are left with two options: to either destroy themselves through ethnicity or reconcile the two identities. Thus, the question becomes how to attain a sufficient level of national integration in a multiethnic state without resorting to 'genocide' against unwanted people. This is the Black man's burden of nation-state building.³⁷ Indeed, there have been numerous efforts to promote an integrated nation-state in Nigeria. Most of these have focused on creating a truly representative political arrangement and an equitable system of resource distribution. Apart from these institutional design efforts, there are also a wide range of educational, historical and social factors that have tended to promote national integration among Nigerians.

The Nation-State and Ethnicity

What constitutes a nation-state has been the subject of numerous debates.³⁸ To understand the nature of the nation-state in Nigeria, it is important to analytically separate the concepts of state and nation. The state can be viewed as a complex set of institutional arrangements as well as a structured relation among the various groups of people that inhabit it.³⁹ The Nigerian state can be seen as a defined territory, with institutions that have persisted for nearly a century. Furthermore, there is an authority which, to a large degree, has received the loyalty of Nigerians and monopolised the use of violence. The Nigerian state can also be seen as a field of contestation where the various ethnic and regional groups struggle for power. The primary axes of this contestation are the rivalry among the three dominant ethnic groups (Hausa-Fulani, Igbo, and Yoruba), the minority issue, the North-South regional divide, and the Muslim-Christian conflict over Sharia (Islamic Law).

¹ I am adapting Durkheim's 'individual consciousness' to refer to the various ethnic identities that exist in a multiethnic society; and the 'collective consciousness' denotes the national identity (Durkheim 1984).

While the state is viewed as a sovereign political entity within a specific territorial boundary, the nation is more fluid and directly linked to culture and sense of identity.⁴⁰ Very often, the nation is either viewed as a product of primordial and perennial forces or a socially constructed unit.⁴¹ Johann Herder, for example, saw the nation as a natural unit that is characterised by objective and subjective features, such as climate, ancestry, and mythology.⁴² In his study of nationalism, Florence Znaniecki viewed the nation as a product of secular culture invented through written language and the growth of literature.⁴³ The emphasis on written language is of great significance because it tells us about the creation, standardisation, preservation, and transmission of cultures, as well as the formation of national identities. In a similar way, Benedict Anderson sees the nation as an imagined political community that is limited in its membership and sovereign in its claims.⁴⁴ It is the product of cultural artefacts and the conjunction of discrete historical forces. Though these artefacts are for the most part accidental, Anderson argued, 'once created, they become 'modular', capable of being transplanted with varying degrees of self-consciousness, to a great variety of social terrain, to merge, and be merged with a correspondingly wide variety of political and ideological constellation.'⁴⁵

As I have indicated above, states and nations are not necessarily one and the same. In many African countries, the colonial powers created states and, at the same time, tried to undermine the formation of a common national identity.⁴⁶ However, it is important to note that state-building and nation-building are intertwined processes. Thus, what is actually under investigation in this study is the post-colonial nation-state - i.e. the multiethnic Nigerian state that is being transformed into a nation. Given the colonial legacy of Nigeria, it is important to note the transplantation of these European models of the nation and state to Africa. As Sheldon Gellar has argued, nation-states in Africa are shaped by their neo-patrimonial features as well as by their colonial inheritance.⁴⁷ In particular, he emphasised the continuity of colonial structures in the post-colonial state, the dependency on former colonial powers, and the promotion of a post-colonial identity

¹ Basil Davidson, *The Black Man's Burden: Africa and the Curse of the Nation-State* (New York: Times Books, 1992).

² Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992); Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism: A Critical Survey of Recent Theories of Nations and Nationalism* (London: Routledge, 1998).

³ Gerth and Mills (eds.), *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1956); Joseph Strayer, *On the Medieval Origins of the Modern State* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1970); Charles Tilly, 'Reflections on the History of European State-Making', in Charles Tilly (ed.), *The Formation of National States in Western Europe* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975), pp. 3-83; Theda Skocpol, 'Bringing the State Back In: Strategies of Analysis in Current Research', in Peter Evans et al. (eds.) *Bringing the State Back In* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 3-37.

⁴ Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983).

⁵ Anthony Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism: A Critical Survey of Recent Theories of Nations and Nationalism* (London: Routledge, 1998); Anthony Smith, *The Nation in History: Historiographical Debates about Ethnicity and Nationalism* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 2000).

around the state that was created by the colonial powers.

To better understand the problem of forging a nation-state in Nigeria, we must also address the competing layers of sub-national identities, such as the ethnic, religious and regional identities. While this paper focuses on ethnic identities, it is important to note that Nigeria is characterised by overlapping forms of identity. For example, the (northern) Hausa-Fulani are predominantly Muslims, the (eastern) Igbo are predominantly Christians, and the (western) Yoruba are split into Christians and Muslims. Within this configuration, the Yoruba has had a unique moderating role.⁴⁸ It is estimated that there are 387 ethnic groups in

One emerging trend in the recent peace-making processes in West Africa, and one which is quite disturbing, is that insurgents are now being compensated with political portfolios as a condition for peace to return to troubled states

Nigeria.⁴⁹ However, the three dominant groups are the Hausa-Fulani, the Yoruba, and the Igbo. Until recently, it was common to refer to the various linguistic and cultural groups of people in African countries as tribes and the problem of cohabitation among them as tribalism. However, as Gellar points out, 'what is called tribalism in Africa is part of the universal and timeless problem of how culturally pluralistic societies hold together and function within the framework of a single political system.'⁵⁰ Recently, social scientists have replaced the term 'tribe' with 'ethnic group.' Whereas tribe was a colonial fabrication, ethnic group is a post-colonial politically correct term for the same social formation.⁵¹ Ethnic groups consist of a relatively homogeneous body of people who share a common language, culture, and some ancestral ties. Such groups may be internally differentiated by dialects, religious practices, and customs.⁵² Usually, ethnic groups tend to be concentrated in specific regions of the country.

The problem of cohabitation among ethnic groups can be broken down into ethnocentrism and ethnicity. Ethnocentrism is the attitudinal dimension of ethnic relations. It is usually inward looking and promotes a sense of pride and positive image of the group's beliefs, customs and identity in relation to others. Ethnicity emerges during the process of interaction among ethnic groups inhabiting the same state. The interaction is often characterised by intense competition for power and resources. Conflict arises out of the attempt to include the members of one's ethnic group and at the same time exclude people from other ethnic groups in the distribution of resources. The urge to include and exclude fosters a collective consciousness among group members, making them not only a 'group in itself', but also a 'group for itself'.⁵³ Ethnicity has either been viewed as the result of innate tendencies to be loyal and support one's group or as the result of manipulation by

elites. While the former emphasises the strength of primordial identities, the later stresses social construction. Whether ethnicity is a natural tendency or socially constructed, the fact is that ethnicity exists in Nigeria. Most importantly, it is a source of instability and a hindrance to the development of the nation-state.

The Genesis of Nigeria

What is now known as Nigeria – as a defined territory, a political construct, and a group of people – is a fairly new entity that dates back to the British conquest of the territories of the Niger Delta. Previously, the region was inhabited by different groups of people, who were grouped together in what is now known as Nigeria. As Coleman noted, ‘the artificiality of Nigeria’s boundaries, the sharp cultural differences among its peoples points up the fact that Nigeria is a British creation and the concept of a Nigerian nation is the result of British presence’.⁵⁴ British administration in Nigeria formally began in 1861 with the capture of Lagos. By 1900, the British had conquered the three major regions: Lagos (the colony), and the East and North as protectorates. In 1914, these three regions were amalgamated to form the colony and protectorate of Nigeria. This marked the birth of Nigeria as a single political entity. What united the three regions was their common tie to the British. The British ruled most of the territories, especially the North, through the indirect rule system. However, indirect rule must not be understood as a system in which native rulers had power. Indeed native rulers found themselves in an ambiguous role: having to work for the British against their own people. However, they were powerless to do otherwise. Those that did not cooperate, and many did not, were replaced with puppet chiefs.⁵⁵

Though the British succeeded in conquering the people of Nigeria, they did face serious resistance. Starting with the creation of African churches and protests against inflation and low wages during the early 1900s, the nationalist movement developed strong political organisations that championed the struggle for independence. Some of the major organisations were the National Council of Nigeria

¹ Johann G. Herder, *Reflections on the Philosophy of the History of Man* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1968); Johann G. Herder (F.M. Barnard, Translator) *J.G. Herder on Social and Political Culture* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1969).

² Florence Znaniecki, *Modern Nationalities: A Sociological Study* (Urban, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1952).

³ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. (New York, NY: Verso, 1991).

⁴ *Op.cit.*, p. 4.

⁵ Basil Davidson, *op.cit.*; James Smoot Coleman (Edited by Richard Sklar) *Nationalism and Development in Africa: Selected Essays* (Berkeley, CA: University of California, 1994); Mamood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996); David Welsh, ‘Ethnicity in Sub-Saharan Africa.’ *International Affairs*, Vol. 72, No. 3, (1996), pp. 477-91.

⁶ Sheldon Gellar, ‘State-Building and Nation-Building in West Africa’, in S. N. Eisenstadt and S. Rokkan (eds.) *Building States and Nations*, Volume II, (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1973), pp. 384-426.

and the Cameroons (NCNC), which was led by Nnamdi Azikiwi, the Action Group (AG) led by Obafemi Awolowo, and the Northern Peoples Congress (NPC), which was headed by Ahmadu Bello. However, these organisations were dominated by the Igbo in the East, the Yoruba in the West, and the Hausa-Fulani in the North, respectively. In many cases, these organisations promoted ethnic agendas.⁵⁶

Since gaining independence in 1961, Nigeria has been ruled by successive military and civilian governments that have been plagued by ethnic bigotry and corruption.⁵⁷ Over the past decades, the smaller ethnic groups have begun to demand proper political representation and fair revenue distribution.⁵⁸ On several occasions, these grievances have led to the outbreak of violence in minority oil-producing regions.⁵⁹ Some of the most dramatic political events that have further increased ethnic tensions in the country include the assassination of Prime Minister Abubakar Tafawa-Balewa and Ahmadu Bello (the Premier of the Northern Region) during the 1966 coups, the Biafra War (1967-70), the controversies surrounding the 1979 and 1983 presidential elections, the annulment of the June 12, 1993 presidential election (won by Mashood Abiola), the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa in 1995, and the imprisonment of Mashood Abiola, who died in prison in 1998.

Over the past decades, the smaller ethnic groups have begun to demand proper political representation and fair revenue distribution.

National politics in Nigeria have been characterised by intense struggles for political power among the major ethnic groups. The struggle to control the central government began well before independence, which on numerous occasions cast doubt on the very survival of the federation. Some have tried to explain the problems by reference to class analysis. Certainly, one cannot ignore the role of elite in manipulating the political scene for their selfish ends. Nevertheless, it is also true that ethnicity has been one of the main vehicles through which they manipulate the people. Even in the case of religious conflicts, e.g. Christians against Moslems, one can locate elements of the ethnicity. After all, Yoruba Christians and Yoruba Moslems rarely come into conflict. Usually it is Hausa-Fulani Muslims against

¹ David Laitin, 'The Sharia Debate and the Origins of Nigeria's Second Republic', *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 20, No. 2 (1982), pp. 411-430.

² Onigu Otite, *Ethnic Pluralism, Ethnicity and Ethnic Conflicts in Nigeria* (Ibadan: Shaneson CI Ltd, 2000).

³ Sheldon Gellar, *op.cit.*, p. 409.

⁴ Mamood Mamdani, *op.cit.*

⁵ Donald L. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1985); Onigu Otite, *op.cit.*

⁶ Okwudiba Nnoli, *Ethnic Politics in Nigeria* (Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishers, 1980).

Igbo or Yoruba Christians. Of course, one must not forget that the Yoruba and Igbo, Christian brothers, fought on different sides during the Biafra War. At the heart of these ethno-political conflicts is the problem of resource distribution among the different groups. Since the wealth of the nation is virtually monopolised by the federal government, each group tries to make sure that it does not lose out in the struggle to control the government. To get a better picture of the nature of ethnic conflicts in Nigeria, it will be helpful to look at some historical cases. The 1953 to 1956 self-government and 1962-1963-census crises are particularly insightful in shedding light on the nature and roots of ethnic conflicts in Nigeria.

The Manifestation of Ethnicity

The crisis surrounding the timing of self-government clearly illustrates the problem of ethnicity in Nigeria. It is ironic that the people of Nigeria, who were sick of British rule, should be at one another's throats at a time when they should have been celebrating. 31 March 1953, the day when Chief Anthony Enahoro moved the motion that the House 'accept as a primary political objective the attainment of self-government for Nigeria in 1956,' should have been a day to rejoice. Alas, the session was abruptly ended. From the outset, the problem might have looked like a simple disagreement over timing. But one can ask why Ahmadu Bello demanded that the words 'in 1956' be replaced with 'as soon as practicable.' He pushed hard for the change even though he clearly understood what Chief Enahoro meant when he told the British 'the bare idea of self-government is no longer attractive, is no longer enough. Whether it is expressed as 'self-government in our life time' or 'self-government in the shortest possible time' or 'self-government as soon as practicable', it has ceased to be a progressive view, because Nigerian nationalism has moved forward from that position'.⁶⁰ After a bitter discussion, the session was

¹ James Smoot Coleman, *Background to Nationalism* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1958), p. 45.

² Mamood Mamdani, *op.cit.*

³ Richard Sklar, *Nigerian Political Parties: Power in an Emergent African Nation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1963), John P. Mackintosh, *Nigerian Government and Politics: Prelude to the Revolution* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1966).

⁴ Larry Diamond, *Class, Ethnicity and Democracy in Nigeria: The Failure of the First Republic* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1988), Richard Joseph *Democracy and Prebendal Politics in Nigeria: The Rise and Fall of the Second Republic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); M.C. Alli, *The Federal Republic of Nigerian Army: The Siege of a Nation* (Lagos: Malthouse Press, 2000).

⁵ Ken Saro-Wiwa *Genocide in Nigeria: The Ogoni Tragedy* (Port Harcourt: Saros International Publishers, 1992); A. Ikein and C. Briggs-Anigboh, *Oil and Fiscal Federalism in Nigeria: The Political Economy of Resource Allocation in a Developing Country* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998).

⁶ Karl Maier, *This House has Fallen: Nigeria in Crisis* (New York: NY: PublicAffairs, 2000); Tom Mbeke-Ekanem, *Beyond the Execution: Understanding the Ethnic and Military Politics in Nigeria*. (San Jose, CA: Writer's Showcase, 2000).

brought to a standstill and the delegates abruptly walked-out. Southern leaders, and the masses of Lagos, publicly rebuked the leaders of the North for stalling the demand for self-government. In response to the humiliation, the northerners threatened to withdraw from the federation. In the North, a visit by the NCNC and AG leaders led to a riot in which thirty-six people were killed and hundreds wounded in Kano.⁶¹ Essentially, the crisis was the surface manifestation of deep unresolved tensions. While the Igbo and Yoruba were dissatisfied with the 1951 Constitution and the slow rate of advance towards self-government, the Hausa-Fulani feared that they would be marginalised in a self-governing Nigeria.

Indeed, the 1951 Constitution favored the North. During the negotiations leading to the 1951 Constitution, the North would accept nothing less than 50% of the seats in the federal assembly. The stalemate over self-government was temporarily resolved by a two-track approach. The West and the East demanded that self-government be granted to them in 1956, but also agreed not to, in the words of Awolowo, 'coerce the North' into it. The North announced on May 30, 1956 that they would demand regional self-government in 1959. Even though an agreement was reached, it did not alter the mistrust among the various groups. In fact, the solution just underscores the difficulty of forging a united Nigeria. Back in March 1948, a key northern leader, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, told his southern colleagues in the Legislative council that, 'many [Nigerians] deceive themselves by thinking that Nigeria is one.... This is wrong. I am sorry to say that this presence of unity is artificial and it ends outside this chamber'.⁶² The North read the situation well and understood that self-government was the prelude to independence. Furthermore, they were aware that the political arrangement was still centralised. Given the tense situation, the Hausa-Fulani wanted to buy time to improve their competitive position in an independent Nigeria. The Hausa-Fulani feared that the more westernised Yoruba and Igbo would dominate them. As articulated in a 18 February 1950 editorial of the Hausa weekly, *Gaskiya ta Fi Kwabo*, 'Southerners will take the place of the Europeans in the North. What is there to stop them? They look and see it is thus at the present time. There are Europeans but undoubtedly it is the Southerner who has power in the North. They have control of the railway stations, of the post offices... in the different departments of government it is the Southerner who has power'.⁶³

These problems of competitive advantage came from the uneven economic development which resulted from colonialism.⁶⁴ The British brought new social and economic resources, such as western education, transportation networks, and export-oriented trade. Lagos, in the West, was the first area that the British established contacts with in the region. As a result, the Yoruba were the first to gain the resources that were to become valuable under colonialism and neo-colonialism. The

¹ Quoted in Coleman, *Background to Nationalism* (1958), p. 399.

most important of these was western education, i.e. the ability to read and write in English. The Nigerian writer, Chinua Achebe, very well articulates what was at stake. In his novel, *Things Fall Apart*, Achebe narrates the story of a missionary, Mr. Brown, who convinced the elders of Umuofia to send their children to his school. 'He said that', wrote Achebe, 'the leaders of the land in the future would be men and women who had learned to read and write. If Umuofia failed to send her children to the school, strangers would come from other places to rule them'.⁶⁵ This was precisely what was going on at the time. The British staffed the Native Courts in Eastern Nigeria with people from other parts of Nigeria, especially from the West. As colonial rule deepened in the Igbo areas, they realised the need to catch up in acquiring British education. They heeded Mr. Brown's warning and worked with the missionaries to set up schools in their region.

As latecomers, the Northerners had a lot of catching up to do. Not only were they far behind, but they were also much more resilient to British cultural imperialism. At the time of the British invasion, the Sokoto Caliphate in Northern Nigeria was practicing Islam, a religion that rivalled Christianity in sophistication and domination around the world. In fact, the missionaries did not make significant gains in the Hausa-Fulani areas. They were even discouraged by the colonial officials, who were interested in maintaining good relations with Muslim rulers, from aggressively propagating Christianity in the Muslim areas. In addition, the North had an educational system that was growing. However, once British hegemony was established in the whole region, Islamic education was devalued. The North was slow in adopting British education because of the interconnection between Christianity and British education. Given its hostility to Christianity, one can see why the North lagged behind in acquiring western education. Notwithstanding its good relations with the colonial government, the North paid a heavy price for lagging behind on western education.

To see the significance of western education in the Nigerian political arithmetic, one also has to follow the trends of the nationalist movement. After the pacification of traditional rulers, the nationalist movement was led by younger Nigerians who have acquired western education. Since colonial rule operated through the subjugation of traditional institutions to British interests, the emerging nationalist leaders tried to divert power from traditional rulers, whom they saw as easy victims of British manipulation, to national administrative institutions such as the civil service and legislative assemblies, which were dominated by young and articulate

¹ *Ibid.*

² *Ibid.* p. 361.

³ *Ibid.* p. 362. Southern Nigeria consisted of the Eastern and Western Regions.

⁴ Danald L. Horowitz, *op. cit.*

⁵ Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc, 1958), p. 156.

⁶ Mahmood Mamdani, *op. cit.*

leaders.⁶⁶ Given this trend, the Hausa-Fulani realised that they would lose out in the new political landscape. They tried to delay British withdrawal while bargaining for maximum political power to pre-empt future domination. The Hausa-Fulani were less worried about the British because it was inevitable that they would eventually leave. The real problem for them was their strange fellow Nigerians with whom they must live together.

The 1962-1963 census crisis also brings to light the problems of ethnicity in Nigeria. What should have been a purely technical matter for demographers became a serious political crisis. The 1962 census was held in the wake of a sweeping victory for the NPC in the northern region during the 1961 election.⁶⁷ The victory resulted in them attaining a majority position in the federal assembly.⁶⁸ It was soon apparent that such an arrangement could not sustain a stable federation. As Dr. Michael Okpara, Premier of the Eastern region, argued, 'since the mere publication of census figures precludes a leader from a major political party from aspiring to the leadership of the nation, something must be wrong with the set-up in Nigeria when one can already know that he has won and his opponent lost a general election on the basis of census figures'.⁶⁹ Since the allocation of seats in the federal assembly is based on the population size of the regions and voting patterns are predetermined by ethnic affiliations, it was clear that the census was going to be a de facto political campaign, if not an indirect election. Not only was the census conducted immediately after the 1961 elections, but more elections were due in 1964. Thus, the political leaders in all regions took the census very seriously. They all wanted to show that the population of their respective constituency was larger than that of their opponents.

The contest was between the Hausa-Fulani dominated North and the South, represented by the Igbo in the East and the Yoruba in the West. The North wanted to maintain the majority position, 16.8 million out of a total population of 30.4 million, it gained in the 1952-53 census. The South on the other hand wanted to correct the 1952-53 census, which gave them 13.6 million.⁷⁰ They alleged that the census was British engineered in favour of the North. In addition, they argued that many people in the South evaded the census because it was seen as part of British tax policy. Given the deep mistrust between the dominant ethnic groups and the issues at stake, it was highly unlikely that the census would produce an accurate count. The census yielded the following results: North 22.5 million, East 12.4 million, West 7.8 million, Mid-West 2.2 million, and Lagos 0.7 million. In analysing the figures, the chief census officer, J.J. Warren, noted that while the figures for the

¹ Mahmood Mamdani, *op. cit.*

² John P. Mackintosh, *Nigerian Government and Politics: Prelude to the Revolution* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1966).

³ Under the federal arrangement, the Northern region was given half of the seats in the Federal Assembly. This arrangement was largely based on population per capita.

⁴ Quoted in Larry Diamond, *op. cit.*, p.131.

North were reasonable, those for the East had been grossly inflated.⁷¹

Based on the census report, the minister of economic development, Alhaji Waziri Ibrahim, suggested that selected areas of the country be verified for discrepancies. Initially, all four regions agreed to the plan. However, after realising that the South would be in a majority, Dr. Okpara withdrew his support for the recount. Nevertheless, the verification went ahead in the other regions. At the same time, bitter accusations of census tampering were exchanged, especially between the Hausa-Fulani and the Igbo. After the verification, in January 1963 new figures were reported which increased the population of the North by 8.5 million. This further inflamed an already volatile situation. In February 1963, Prime Minister Tafawa Balewa annulled the 1962 census and called for a new census towards the end of the year. Once again, the Nigerian dilemma was suspended. Amidst mistrust and escalating allegations of rigging, the results of the new census, announced on February 24, 1964, were highly contested. The new count gave the North 29.8 million people, the East 12.4 million, the West 10.3 million, the Mid-West 2.2 million, and Lagos 0.7 million.⁷² If anything was different this time, it was the fact that all the regions openly engaged in rigging. From the point of strategic position in the federal power structure, the new census did not alter the 1952-1953 arrangement.⁷³ Not surprisingly, Dr. Okpara dismissed it as 'worse than useless.' In essence, the census was not about an accurate count of people, but rather about maximising access to power and resources.

The stalemate was not officially laid to rest until 1964. By that time, the easterners had lost the battle. The Hausa-Fulani dominated federal government had already struck a deal with Premier Samuel Akintola of the West and the Premier of the newly created Mid-Western region. Dr. Okpara challenged the census results in the Supreme Court, but the case was dismissed on the grounds that it was beyond the court's jurisdiction. Though a northern 'victory' was achieved, serious damages had been done to interethnic relations. In the beginning of March 1964, the Hausa-Fulani and Igbo began to prepare for a showdown.⁷⁴ The leaders of both regions traded derogatory remarks in the press. In his response to insults from the eastern press, Ahmadu Bello reminded the Igbo that his people were fully prepared to meet any challenges.⁷⁵ As retaliation for the insults, the North harassed the Igbo residents in the region. On March 1964, the Native Authority gave Igbo traders at the Sabon Gari market forty-eight hours to leave. The East protested, but obviously from a weak position.⁷⁶

¹ East 7.2 million, West 4.6 million, Mid-West 1.5 million, and Lagos 0.3 million; see Larry Diamond, *op. cit.*

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Even though the populations of all the regions increased in terms of absolute numbers, their percentile share did not alter significantly.

The Nigerian Dilemma and National Integration

Ethnically charged political conflicts continue to plague Nigeria. The worst experience was the Biafra war, during which the Hausa-Fulani dominated federal government fought the Igbo secessionists. Since the 1980s, Nigeria has been engulfed in a series of ethnic and religious clashes that have left thousands of people dead. Some of the worst cases include the Kaduna riots, the Ogoni uprising, and the crisis surrounding the annulled June 12, 1993 presidential election. These incidents are clear indications of the ways in which ethnicity has hindered national integration in Nigeria. At the heart of the problem is the question of resource distribution. This struggle is most evident in the Ogoni struggle for political and economic rights, the numerous alteration of the vertical and horizontal revenue allocation formulas, the growing demands for the creation of new states and local government areas, and the discriminatory practices in the allocation of government jobs, contracts and development projects.⁷⁷ To a large degree, identification with the nation-state is contingent upon access to the resources of the state. This has fostered a rights-centred sense of citizenship, which tends to inflame ethnic conflicts and alienate disadvantaged groups from the nation-state. As Peter Ekeh has argued, the way citizenship is understood has a direct bearing on the nature of political conflicts and the development of the nation-state.⁷⁸ He sees citizenship as a relation of rights and duties between the political community and its members, which is reinforced by subjective identification with the nation-state. However, in divided societies such rights and duties can be directed either towards the state or towards primordial affiliations, such as ethnic groups or religious communities. In situations where both rights and duties are directed towards the state, political conflicts tend to be *civic* in nature. In contrast, when both rights and duties are directed towards ethnic or religious affiliations, the conflicts tend to be *primordial*. The more problematic cases are *obligation focused primordial conflicts*, where rights are secured through primordial affiliations, but the state demands obligations from the citizens, and *right focused primordial conflicts*, which Ekeh used to characterise the Nigerian notion of citizenship. In Nigeria, Ekeh argues, 'social rights are

¹ During this period the West was politically weak and pacified by the North, partly due to internal divisions with the AG.

² Larry Diamond, *op. cit.*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Richard Joseph (1991) *op. cit.*; Ken Saro-Wiwa (1992), *op. cit.*; Ikein and Briggs-Anigboh (1998), *op. cit.*; Karl Maier (2000), *op. cit.*, Mbeke-Ekanem (2000), *op. cit.*; Rotimi Suberu, *Federalism and Ethnic Conflict in Nigeria* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2001); Igbo O'Ghorie, 'Nigeria: How should the cake be shared?' *West Africa*, Issue 4323, April 29th to May 5th (2002), pp. 31-33.

⁵ Peter Ekeh, 'Citizenship and Political Conflict: A Sociological Interpretation of the Nigerian Crisis', in Joseph Okpaku (ed.) *Nigeria: Dilemma of Nationhood* (New York, NY: The Third Press, 1972), pp. 76-117.

demanded by various groups from the central state agencies, while obligations originating from these sources are resisted.⁷⁹ Political issues tend to be focused on the distribution of social benefits along primordial lines.' The rights-centred notion of citizenship intensifies the competition for control of the central government. As Eghosa Osaghae rightly observed in his study of the effects of Structural Adjustment Programs in Nigeria during the late 1980s, the state is the major means of economic survival.⁸⁰ Consequently, the most significant ethnic tensions resulted from contestation for control of the state.

Peter Ekeh's proposed solution to this misplaced sense of duty and feeling of alienation from the nation-state is to redesign the federation in a way that eliminates ethnic centres. The design should ensure that no ethnic group is in control of a powerful region or state that could challenge the federation in its claims on the duties of the citizen. By so doing, primordial conflicts can be moved away from the centre of national politics and be defused in relatively isolated areas, such as the state or local government levels. Over the past decades, minority groups have successfully campaigned for the restructuring of the Nigerian federation. This has led to the adoption of the Federal Character principle and the creation of more states and local government areas.⁸¹ In some ways, the new arrangements have given minority groups some degree of autonomy from the dominant ethnic groups. However, the changes have also led to the concentration of more power in the hands of the federal government and the intensification of the struggle to control the federal government.⁸² This has been further complicated by prolonged military dictatorship. Not surprisingly, there has been a strong campaign, especially in the southern states, for devolving power to the states and ending military intervention in politics.

Apart from the institutional design approach, neutralisation of ethnic conflicts requires the cultivation of a Nigerian identity and sense of duty towards the nation-state. Already, Nigeria has a National Youth Service program that is

¹ Ekeh, *op. cit.* p. 85.

² Eghosa Osaghae, *Structural Adjustment and Ethnicity in Nigeria* (Uppsala: Nordic Africa Institute, 1995).

³ The federal character principle was introduced by General Murtala Mohammed and entrenched in the 1979 Constitution. As stated in article 14(3) of the 1979 constitution, 'the composition of the government of the federation or any of its agencies and the conduct of its affairs shall be carried out in such manner as to reflect the federal character of Nigeria and the need to promote national unity, and also to command national loyalty thereby ensuring that there shall be no predominance of persons from a few states or a few ethnic or other sectional groups in the government or in any of its agencies.' See: B.O. Nwabueze, *A Constitutional History of Nigeria* (New York, NY: Longman, 1982); Udo Udoma, *History and the Law of the Constitution of Nigeria* (Lagos: Malthouse Press, 1994); Suberu (2001), *op.cit.*

⁴ S. E. Oyovbaire, *Federalism in Nigeria: A Study in the Development of the Nigerian State* (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1984); Ignatius Upong, *The Charms and Perils of the Nigerian Presidential System: A Critical Review of Issues, Performance, and Trends* (New York, NY: Vantage Press, 1984).

mandatory for all university, college and polytechnic graduates under the age of thirty-one. The program, which was introduced by General Yakubu Gowon in 1973, aims at instilling discipline, patriotism, and a sense of common experience in Nigerian youths (Suberu 1999). However, some have argued for a much more comprehensive civic education program that will be integrated into the school curriculum. In a survey conducted among Nigerian professors, Augustine Nwoye (1997) tested the claim that political education in schools can eliminate ethnic tensions and promote national unity. His question, 'how far it is realistic to assume that our lack of national integration can be said to be largely an educational problem?' yielded three types of responses. These are: contested legitimacy (25%), conditional legitimacy (30%), and assumed legitimacy (45%). The respondents who contested the legitimacy of the claim argued that the way politics is conducted - especially in terms of the distribution of resources and leadership behaviour - is far more important than what is taught in the classroom. For them the problem of national integration is purely due to poor political leadership. Those that assumed the legitimacy of the claim argue that the kind of responsible leadership envisaged by the former respondents cannot be cultivated without the right political education. In their view, though most of the Nigerian political leaders are well trained, their political education is poor. The respondents who gave conditional legitimacy to the claim recognised the vital role of political education in national integration. However, they add that political education should be backed with actions and policies that reinforce the values of inter-ethnic tolerance and accommodation. So far, no serious national education program has been implemented to promote a sense of citizenship.

Despite the problems associated with most of the state sponsored initiatives to promote national integration, Nigeria is still intact and people do identify themselves as Nigerians. In addition to conscious efforts to promote national integration, it is important to take note of other forces that discretely function to integrate Nigerians, such as their shared history, the growth of civil society and democratic values, and the media. Since the amalgamation of Nigeria in 1914, the various ethnic groups that constitute the state have had many moments of joy and pain, which forms parts of their collective experience. For example, when the Nigerian Eagles played in the World Cup Soccer Tournament or won the African Nations Cup and Olympics soccer medal, the joy and celebration pierced through ethnic boundaries. Likewise, Nigerians collectively mourned Nigerian soldiers killed in the war in Sierra Leone. The growth of the media and the development of a dynamic civil society can also enhance national integration. Though media and civic organisations may champion ethnic agendas, it is also true that the development of a free media and a dynamic civil society has opened up the political space for Nigerians to debate the issues that threaten their country. In light of the growing trends toward democratisation, such debates can lead to a political culture that is much more tolerant and transparent.

Conclusion

The Nigerian experience illuminates some of the fundamental challenges facing post-colonial multiethnic countries in their efforts to build stable and democratic nation-states. Though Nigeria is not yet a success story, the country is remarkable for its experiments in managing conflicts. Nigeria has tried a variety of institutional arrangements to promote national integration while respecting ethnic identities. The Nigerian experience also shows that we cannot separate the problems of multiparty democracy from the challenges of national integration in a divided society. Given the diversity of the country, the Nigerian experiment can be an invaluable lesson for other countries in the region.

References

- Achebe, Chinua. 1958. *Things Fall Apart*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.
- Alli, M. C. 2000. *The Federal Republic of Nigerian Army: The Siege of a Nation*. Lagos: Malthouse Press Limited.
- Anderson, Benedict. 1991. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. New York: Verso.
- Brubaker, Rogers. 1992. *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Coleman, J. 1958. *Nigeria: Background to Nationalism*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- _____. (Edited by Richard Sklar). 1994. *Nationalism and Development in Africa*. Berkeley: University of California.
- Davidson, B. 1992. *The Black Man's Burden: Africa and the Curse of the Nation-State*. New York: Times Books.
- Diamond, L. 1988. *Class, Ethnicity and Democracy in Nigeria: The Failure of the First Republic*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.
- Durkheim, E. 1984. *The Division of Labor in Society*. New York: Free Press.
- Ekeh, P. 1972. 'Citizenship and Political Conflict: A Sociological Interpretation of the Nigerian Crisis', in Okpaku, Joseph. (ed.) *Nigeria: Dilemma of Nationhood*. New York, NY: The Third Press, pp. 76-117.
- Gellar, S.. 1973. 'State-Building and Nation-Building in West Africa', in S. N. Eisenstadt and S. Rokkan (eds.) *Building States and Nations*. Volume II, pp. 384-426. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.
- Gellner, E.. 1983. *Nations and nationalism*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Gerth and Mills. (eds.). 1956 *From Max Weber. Essays in Sociology*. NY: Oxford University Press.
- Herder, J. G. von. 1968. *Reflections on the Philosophy of the History of Man*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- _____. Barnard, F. M. (Translator). 1969. *J. G. Herder on Social and Political Culture*. London: Cambridge University Press.
- Horowitz, D. 1985. *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Ikein, A. and C. Briggs-Anigboh, 1998. *Oil and Fiscal Federalism in Nigeria: The Political Economy of Resource Allocation in a Developing Country*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Joseph, R. 1991. *Democracy and Prebendal Politics in Nigeria: The Rise and Fall of the Second Republic*. U.K.: Cambridge University Press.

- Laitin, D. 1982. 'The Sharia Debate and the Origins of Nigeria's Second Republic', in *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol. 20, no. 2, pp. 411-430.
- Mackintosh, J.P. 1966. *Nigerian Government and Politics: Prelude to the Revolution*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.
- Maier, K. 2000. *This House has Fallen: Nigeria in Crisis*. NY: Penguin Books.
- Mamdani, M. 1996. *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Mbeke-Ekanem, T. 2000. *Beyond the Execution: Understanding the Ethnic and Military Politics in Nigeria*. San Jose: Writer's Showcase.
- Nnoli, O. 1980. *Ethnic Politics in Nigeria*. Enugu, Nigeria: Fourth Dimension Publishers.
- Nwabueze, B.O. 1982. *A Constitutional History of Nigeria*. New York, NY: Longman.
- Nwoye, A. 1997. 'New Programme of Political Education in Nigeria for National Unity and Cohesion', in Okafor, F.U. (ed.) *New Strategies for Curbing Ethnic and religious Conflicts in Nigeria*. Enugu, Nigeria: Fourth Dimension Publishers, pp. 255-284.
- Osaghae, E. 1995. *Structural Adjustment and Ethnicity in Nigeria*. Uppsala: Nordic Africa Institute.
- O'Oghorie, I. 2002. 'Nigeria: How should the cake be shared?' *West Africa*, issue 4323, April 29th to May 5th, pp. 31-33.
- Otite, O. 2000. *Ethnic Pluralism, Ethnicity and Ethnic Conflicts in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Shaneson C. I. Limited.
- Oyovbaire, S.E. 1984. *Federalism in Nigeria: A Study in the Development of the Nigerian State*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press.
- Saro-Wiwa, K. 1992. *Genocide in Nigeria: The Ogoni Tragedy*. Port Harcourt: Saros International Publishers.
- Skocpol, T. 1985. 'Bringing the State Back In: Strategies of Analysis in Current Research', in Evans, Peter et al. (eds.) *Bringing the State Back In*. New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 3-37.
- Sklar, R. 1963. *Nigerian Political Parties; Power in an Emergent African Nation*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Smith, A. 1998. *Nationalism and Modernism: A Critical Survey of Recent Theories of Nations and Nationalism*. London: Routledge.
- _____. 2000. *The Nation in History: Historiographical Debates about Ethnicity and Nationalism*. Hanover: University Press of New England.
- Strayer, J. 1970. *On the Medieval Origins of the Modern State*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Suberu, R.T. 1999. *Public Policy and National Unity in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Development Policy Center.
- _____. 2001. *Federalism and Ethnic Conflict in Nigeria*. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace.
- Tilly, C. 1975. 'Reflections on the History of European State-Making', in C. Tilly, (ed.) *The Formation of National States in Western Europe*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, pp. 3-83.
- Udoma, U. 1994. *History and the Law of the Constitution of Nigeria*. Lagos: Malthouse Press.
- Upong, I. 1984. *The Charms and Perils of the Nigerian Presidential System: A Critical Review of Issues, Performance, and Trends*. New York, NY: Vantage Press.
- Welsh, D. 1996. 'Ethnicity in sub-Saharan Africa.' *International Affairs*, Vol. 72, No. 3, pp. 477-491.
- Znaniecki, F. 1952. *Modern Nationalities: A Sociological Study*. Urban: University of Illinois Press.

DESPOTISM, DEMOCRACY AND DIPLOMACY: NIGERIA - SOUTH AFRICA RELATIONS 1993 - 1999

By Okechukwu Ibeanu⁸³ and Orji Nkwachukwu⁸⁴

« Despotisme, Démocratie et Diplomatie:
Relations Nigéria-Afrique du Sud 1993-1999 »

Résumé

Immédiatement après son accession à l'indépendance en 1960, le Nigéria a assumé un rôle d'avant-scène dans la lutte contre l'apartheid en Afrique du Sud. Ce rôle a conduit à des relations glaciales entre le Nigéria et le régime de l'apartheid. Au début des années 1980, il y avait de grands espoirs que la fin de l'apartheid conduirait à des relations cordiales et de collaboration entre le Nigéria et l'Afrique du Sud. Toutefois, dans l'immédiat post-apartheid, les relations demeurèrent concurrentielles et conflictuelles. Cet article place son explication des relations Nigeria-Afrique du Sud dans la période [indiquée (1993-1999)] dans le lien entre le système international, le type de régime et la politique étatique. Il suggère que les relations inter-étatiques peuvent être caractérisées par les conflits s'il y a des différences fondamentales entre le type de régime et le comportement vis-à-vis des normes internationales. Par conséquent, la persistance du régime autoritaire au Nigéria sous Général Abacha, qui allait à l'encontre du «comportement acceptable» des Etats dans le système international, mit [le Nigéria] au-devant de l'affrontement avec l'Afrique du Sud. Parmi les points majeurs ayant dessiné les relations Nigeria-Afrique du Sud à cette époque figurent les luttes démocratiques internes au Nigéria, particulièrement le combat des Ogonis, une minorité ethnique de la région pétrolière du delta du Niger. L'exécution de son leader, Ken Saro Wiwa en 1995 devint un élément de l'irréversibilité de la nature conflictuelle des relations entre le Nigeria et l'Afrique du Sud. L'article examine un certain nombre de mesures et contre-mesures adoptées par les deux pays l'un contre l'autre pendant cette période, et conclut que, bien que les relations Nigeria-Afrique du Sud à cette époque reflétaient un échec de la diplomatie, le soutien de l'Afrique du Sud aux réformes démocratiques a grandement contribué à l'effondrement du despotisme au Nigeria, et au retour de relations diplomatiques normales entre les deux pays.

Abstract

Immediately after attaining independence in 1960, Nigeria assumed a frontline role

in the struggle against apartheid in South Africa. This role led to frosty relations between Nigeria and the apartheid regime. In the early 1990s, there were high expectations that the end of apartheid would usher in cordial and collaborative relations between Nigeria and South Africa. However, in the aftermath of apartheid, relations remained competitive and conflict-prone. This paper locates its explanation of Nigeria-South Africa relations over the period in the link between the international system, regime type and state policy. It proposes that inter-state relations are likely to be characterised by conflict if there are fundamental differences in regime type and attitude to international norms. Consequently, the persistence of authoritarian rule in Nigeria under General Abacha, which ran against the grain of 'acceptable behaviour' of states within the international system, put it on collision course with South Africa. Prominent among the issues that shaped Nigeria-South Africa relations at the time was internal democratic struggles in Nigeria, particularly the struggle of the Ogoni, an ethnic minority in the oil-rich Niger Delta. The execution of its leader, Ken Saro-Wiwa, in 1995, became a threshold of irreversibility in conflictive relations between Nigeria and South Africa. The paper examines a number of measures and countermeasures adopted by both countries against each other during this period and concludes that although Nigeria-South Africa relations at the time expressed a failure of diplomacy, South Africa's support for democratic reforms in Nigeria contributed immensely to an end to despotism in Nigeria and return to normal diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Introduction

Nigeria and South Africa are by far the two most important countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Both are geographically large, richly endowed with natural resources, and a large reservoir of skilled, trained and competent manpower necessary for managing a modern state. But while Nigeria gained political independence from the British colonialists in 1960, South Africa remained under a white minority government that applied an obnoxious doctrine of apartheid.

Immediately after attaining independence, Nigeria made it clear that it was not going to accept anything short of the total liberation of all countries in Africa from all forms of foreign domination and racial discrimination. The country took an early lead and championed the struggle that led to the restoration of democratic rule in South Africa. Its efforts towards the abolition of apartheid were directed mainly in the form of attempts, both within the United Nations and in other

¹ Okechukwu Ibeanu is Professor in the Department of Political Science, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, email: ibeanu@hotmail.com. Until recently he was Program Officer at the MacArthur Foundation in Abuja.

² Orji Nkwachukwu is Lecturer, Department of Political Science, Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki, Nigeria, email: nkwaorji@yahoo.com.

international fora, to persuade the international community to see apartheid as inhumane and a threat to international peace and security. Nigeria applied three major strategies to advance its anti-apartheid struggle.⁸⁵ These strategies included:

- a. resentment and condemnation of apartheid policy;
- b. the use and sponsorship of sanctions against the racist government; and
- c. advancement of moral and material support to liberation movements.

The measure of success of these efforts can be seen in the fact that within a period of twenty years (1960-1980), there were over one hundred and fifty-six (156) United Nations resolutions condemning apartheid. The racist government in South Africa was also suspended from active participation in virtually all international organisations.⁸⁶

With the abolition of apartheid in 1994, it was generally expected that Nigeria's relations with South Africa would improve, shifting from the initial pattern of confrontation to a post-apartheid era of mutually beneficial co-operation in a context of collective self-reliance. Nigeria's former Head of State, General Sani Abacha, expressed this optimism in a speech at the annual patron's dinner of the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA) in 1994, when he stated that:

We stand ready to co-operate with South Africa in various areas of socio-economic development. It is our hope that the bilateral relations with South Africa will give us a role model for the rest of the continent in the on-going efforts to achieve African integration as envisaged by the treaty of the African Economic Community.⁸⁷

The hope of cordial and collaborative relations between Nigeria and South Africa in the aftermath of apartheid was not immediately realised. Instead, Nigeria's relationship with South Africa again became frosty. A diplomatic row broke out between the two countries over continued military rule in Nigeria and the gross violation of human rights that accompanied it. The execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other Ogoni environmental activists by Nigeria's military government in November 1995, irrespective of the plea for clemency by South Africa was the last straw that broke the camel's back. South Africa led a concert of other countries to impose sanctions on Nigeria and to effect her diplomatic isolation. South Africa felt justified for its action based on the premise that the execution of the 'Ogoni nine' without fair trial was a violation of human rights, an area where Nigeria was expected to conform to international standard. The Nigerian government on its part interpreted South Africa's action as a 'gang up' aimed at reducing Nigeria's status in Africa. This way, the stage was set for a face-off between two African giants. This paper is an account of the external dimensions of the politics of democratisation in Nigeria

¹ Okwudiba Nnoli, 'Nigerian Policy towards Southern Africa', *Nigerian Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 2, Nos. 1 and 2 (1976), pp. 14-34.

between 1993 and 1998. It is an analysis of how the interface of despotism, represented by the military regime of General Sani Abacha and mounting democratic pressures from within and outside, shaped diplomatic relations between Nigeria and South Africa. It attempts to explain why the expected co-operation between Nigeria and South Africa could not be realised.

Understanding post-apartheid Nigeria-South Africa face-off

Although Nigeria's external relations with South Africa has inspired a number of works, only a few have focused on Nigeria- South Africa relations in the post-apartheid era. Out of these, the greater number are media reports by journalists, which make no significant attempt to provide theoretical explanations for the diplomatic collision between Nigeria and South Africa. Meanwhile, the analyses and projections of the few existing scholarly publications are also not adequately grounded theoretically.

Many of the studies carried out in the late 1980s and early 1990s (when the diplomatic collision had not occurred) envisaged competition between Nigeria and post-apartheid South Africa.⁸⁸ They based their assumption on the belief that the two countries possess immense potentials well above other countries in sub-Saharan Africa, hence that the re-entry of South Africa into African and global politics would certainly challenge Nigeria's perceived leadership role in Africa. While this analysis and projection may be revealing, there is however a need to anchor it in a sound theoretical and explanatory framework.

To analyse a complex subject of this nature scientifically with all its intricate political, psychological, social and institutional ramifications, we need an explanatory framework, which can articulate the multifarious variables systematically. The explanatory scheme adopted here is formulated in terms of the relationship between the global capitalist system, regime type and state policy. In effect, it focuses on how the nature and contradictions of the global capitalist system condition and determine state policy and action. The basic thesis is that state policies are guided and determined by the structure of the international system.⁸⁹

The key to understanding this nexus lies in the distinction between 'form' and 'essence'. The former refers to visible social relations, the latter denotes a level of reality invisible but nevertheless present behind the visible appearances.⁹⁰ Godelier (1972) therefore defines structure in these words:

'Structures' should not be confused with visible 'social relations', but constitute a level of reality invisible but present behind the visible social relations. The logic of the latter and the laws of social practice more generally, depend on the functioning of these hidden structures, and the discovery of these should allow us to account for all the facts observed.⁹¹

Structuralists accept the notion that an understanding of structures and their internal

functioning is the ultimate basis for the explanation of reality.

To this end, Wright (1978) accepts Althusser's argument (1971) that the explanation of reality requires the establishment of a 'structural causality'. Structural causality implies that social, political and economic reality is determined by a structure whose existence is known by its effects. Structural causality as elaborated by Althusser (1971) is highly abstract and may prove to be very difficult to use in empirical investigations.⁹² However, Wright (1978) provides an outline that simplifies the concept of structural causality and makes it more empirically useful. The following are among the most important elements.

1. Structural Limitation

This implies that the structure of the international system limits variation in the structure of the state and organisation of its government, and also shapes the kinds of policy states pursue. The end of the Cold War has led to the emergence and dominance of an international economic, political and ideological structure informed by capitalism. As such, rich and powerful countries of the West are making attempts to diffuse capitalism globally, employing maximally their resources and strength to ensure that all nations embrace both political and economic liberalism. Consequently, there is the tendency for all countries incorporated into the global capitalist system to embrace liberal political reforms. This situation has conditioned state policies as well as inter-state relations. The trend is that countries that have subscribed to liberal reforms see themselves as close allies while their relationship with non-reforming countries is not very cordial. Most times, liberal nations attempt to persuade their non-reforming allies to embrace liberalisation. This was the case in Nigeria's relations with South Africa. Immediately South Africa embraced majority rule, the new leadership in the country began to persuade its allies to democratise. The failure of Nigeria to democratise and the gross violation of human rights in the country provoked the inimical relations between the two countries.

Reproduction

This means that the policies of capitalist states tend towards the reproduction of the global capitalist system and the capitalist state itself. Today, capitalist states are expected to conduct their affairs in line with the tenets of political and economic liberalism. Any policy or action by any capitalist state that contradicts the liberal ideology is usually resisted and opposed by other states. The concept of reproduction

¹ G. Obiozor, *Nigerian Participation in the UN* (Enugu: Fourth Dimension, 1985), p. 64.

² A.A. Lipede, 'Contemporary Realities in Nigeria-South Africa Relations', *Nigerian Forum*, Vol. 16, Nos. 5 and 6 (1996), p. 105.

provides strong capitalist states with the moral authority and justification to interfere in the internal affairs of other states even when international law prohibits such an act.

2. Functional Compatibility/Contradiction

The political structure and type of regime existing in some countries might not be compatible with the liberal structure of the international system. Consequently, policies of such states may contradict existing capitalist relations and mode of conduct, threatening the existence of the international structure. The military dictatorship in Nigeria was incompatible with the ideology of the international system, and as such contradicts the tenets of global capitalism. In such a situation, it is expected that the domestic structure will adjust to the international structure and that resistance to change will usually be opposed by other states. Nigeria failed to adjust to the structure of the international system and South Africa led the concert of capitalist states to oppose Nigeria's unwillingness to conform to global capitalist structure.

One empirical deduction that can be made from our theoretical perspective is that inter-state relations are likely to be characterised by conflict if there are fundamental differences in the regime type of states. The rest of the work is an attempt to demonstrate this proposition.

The Emergence of Liberal Democracy as a Global Norm

The late 1980s recorded extraordinary progress in the drive towards political liberalisation around the world. The global democratic revolution touched all the major continents of the world to the extent that some scholars described it as 'globalization of democracy'.⁹³ In the Communist Eastern and Central Europe, the demise of many Communist governments created the opportunity for political and economic liberalisation. In early 1991, Poland embraced this political transformation when it elected its first democratic government in more than 60 years. Within the

¹ See among others R.A. Akindele, 'External Structure and Nigeria's Foreign Policy: Perspectives on the Future', *Nigerian Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 12, Nos. 1 and 2 (1986); S.G. Tyoden, 'Nigeria, South Africa and the Liberation Struggle: A Futuristic Analysis', *Nigerian Forum*, Vol. 10, Nos. 1 and 2 (1990); A.A. Lipede, 'Contemporary Realities in Nigeria-South Africa Relations'; Julius Ihonvbere and Tim Shaw, *Illusions of Power: Nigeria in Transition* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 1998).

² D. Gold, C. Lo and E.O. Wright, 'Recent Developments in Marxist Theories of State', *Monthly Review*, Vol. XXVII, Nos. 5 and 6 (1975).

³ R. Heilbroner, *Marxism: For and Against* (New York, NY: Norton, 1980).

⁴ Maurice Godelier, 'Structure and Contradictions in Capital', in Robin Blackburn (ed.), *Ideology in Social Science* (London: Fontana, 1972), p. 336.

⁵ E.O. Wright, *Class, Crisis and the State* (London: New Left Books, 1978); L. Althusser, 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses', in Louis Althusser (ed.), *Lenin and Philosophy* (New York, NY: Monthly Review Press, 1971).

same period, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria moved towards radical economic reforms and full democratisation. In the Soviet Union, the wave of democratic sentiments merged with other forces to precipitate the collapse of Communist authority.

The stunning changes in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union reverberated visibly throughout Africa, where authoritarian rule has been nearly pervasive. Ignited by President De Klerk's bold decision in February 1990 to release Nelson Mandela and legalise the anti-apartheid opposition, South Africa began a process of dialogue and reconciliation that culminated in the successful transition to non-racial democracy. Inspired by South Africa's successful democratisation, and disgusted with the oppression, corruption, and economic and moral decadence associated with authoritarian rule, the rest of African continent was swept by a wave of change that saw dictatorial regimes conceding to popular demand for plural democracy. In this direction, the end of 1991 saw roughly 26 African countries or about half of all the states in the continent embracing what could be classified as 'either democratic or moderately or strongly committed to democratic change'.⁹⁴

Even dictators who had ruled without challenge for many years such as Felix Houphouët-Boigny of Ivory Coast, Omar Bongo in Gabon and Kenneth Kaunda in Zambia, found themselves forced by popular mobilisation and international pressure to accept multi-party electoral competition. This wave of liberal political reform also affected Benin Republic, where President Mathieu Kérékou, who came to power in 1972 was removed in 1990 through a constitutional conference. Authoritarian regimes in Congo, Togo, Niger and Madagascar were forced (though after considerable resistance) to accept the formula of a Sovereign National Conference. We should note, however, that democratic change in Africa is not reducible simply to a 'parody' of 'demonstration' effect of democratic change in Europe and Latin America. On the contrary, mounting democratic pressures have from the very beginning trailed the post-colonial state in Africa, as for instance expressed in the Second Independence Movement.⁹⁵

Politics of democratisation in Nigeria

Nigeria was not left out in this massive diffusion of democracy in Africa. The country's military dictatorship was persuaded to initiate a programme of transition to democratic rule in 1989. But quite disappointingly, the country's political transition programme was halted abruptly following the annulment of the Presidential election held on June 12, 1993 by the former military ruler General Ibrahim Babangida.

This annulment provoked widespread civil unrest in Nigeria, leading to the departure of General Babangida, and the emergence of General Sani Abacha as the Head of State, following the demise in November 1993 of the interim civilian government General Babangida had hastily installed as he made his exit.

The continuation of military rule in Nigeria following the rise of General Abacha to power posed two fundamental challenges to Nigeria. At the domestic level, it led Nigeria into unprecedented political crises that manifested in repression, intimidation, violence, corruption, betrayals, manipulation of primordial loyalties, and the suffocation of popular groups and communities. At the international level, it plunged Nigeria's external relations into a grave crisis. The contradictions, crises and conflicts that preceded the continuation of military rule, led to a diplomatic collision between Nigeria and its allies as well as the isolation of the country from the comity of nations.

The political tension in Nigeria heightened when pro-democracy groups in the country led by the Campaign for Democracy (CD), an umbrella organisation founded in May 1992 to ensure the restoration of democracy in Nigeria, vowed to oppose the continuation of military rule. The Campaign for Democracy (CD) instituted machinery to mobilise Nigerians through its numerous affiliate organisations to make the country ungovernable and force the military out of power. Massive protests were organised across the country especially in the south-western parts where support for Chief M.K.O. Abiola, the presumed winner of the annulled presidential election, was greatest.⁹⁶

Meanwhile hundreds of thousands of leaflets exposing corruption, lawlessness, and abuse of power by the military regime, and urging Nigerians to take a final stand against military dictatorship and subversion of popular will were printed and distributed by popular democratic movements. Organisations such as the Committee for the Defence of Human Rights (CDHR), National Association of Democratic Lawyers (NADL), Civil Liberties Organisation (CLO), the Constitutional Rights Project (CRP), Women in Nigeria (WIN), the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ), the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), the National Union of Petroleum and Natural Gas Workers (NUPENG), the Nigerian Medical Association (NMA), and Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), and the all embracing Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), all came out in opposition against military rule. For the first time in Nigeria's post-civil war history, organisations in the civil society took measures that openly challenged the authority of the military dictators, shook the political foundation of the nation, and succeeded in mobilising millions of Nigerians in both urban and rural areas, across ethnic, regional, religious, class and gender lines to defy the military and take a stand for democracy.

In response to this new awakening of the civil society, the military junta arrested the leaders of the pro-democracy movements, shut down universities and media houses, and expanded its co-optation network. It also tried to bribe factions

¹ Larry Diamond, 'The Globalization of Democracy', in Robert O. Slater, Barry M. Schutz and Steven R. Dorr (eds.), *Global Transformation and the Third World* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1993).

² Richard Joseph, 'Africa: The Rebirth of Political Freedom', *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 2, No. 4 (1991), p. 12.

³ G. Nzongola-Ntalaja and M.C. Lee (eds.) *The State and Democracy in Africa* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 1998).

of the political class, journalists and social critics.⁹⁷ Expectedly, these measures failed to stem the tide of opposition. The General Abacha-led junta therefore intensified its fight against university lecturers, students, and the organised Labour especially the Oil workers. The media was not left out in the attack. Scores of journalists were thrown into jail while several media houses including the influential Guardian Newspaper were closed down. When in July 1994, the National Union of Petroleum and Natural Gas workers called a strike that crippled the oil industry and the oil dependent economy, its secretary, Frank Ovie Kokori and president, Wariebi Agamene were arrested and detained without charge. The leaders of the Campaign for Democracy and other pro-democracy groups were also harassed, arrested and detained for long periods without charge.

The assassination of Chief Alfred Rewane, a prominent leader of the National Democratic Coalition (NADECO) in October 1995 was the high point of the attack on civil society. The killing was interpreted by many as a signal to the public that criticising the military government was certainly not a wise thing to do. Though the government has not been directly implicated in the assassination, the fact that it took place only after Chief Rewane had published several critical articles against the military has aroused public suspicion.⁹⁸ The Abacha junta had no doubt that in order to maintain law and order, and effectively consolidate its rule, it must contain the growing popular consciousness and completely destroy the pro-democracy groups. Consequently, it designed specific strategies to contain the opposition. In September 1994, the military government promulgated eight new decrees with ouster clauses to expand its arbitrary powers. The decrees were backdated to enable it cover events that had taken place earlier. Decrees 12 and 14 in particular eliminated the jurisdiction of the law courts and the use of habeas corpus. With these draconian decrees, the State Security Service (SSS) and the Police detained hundreds of innocent Nigerians and activists.

In March 1995, as a final strategy to get rid of all opposition, the Abacha led junta initiated an unprecedented crackdown on civil society. Several journalists including Mrs. Christy Anyanwu and Bayo Onanuga of *The Sunday Magazine* and *The News* respectively, pro-democracy activists like Beko Ransome-Kuti, retired military

The Abacha junta had no doubt that in order to maintain law and order, and effectively consolidate its rule, it must contain the growing popular consciousness and completely destroy the pro-democracy groups.

¹ *Tell* (Lagos), 19 July 1993; *Newswatch* (Lagos), 19 July 1993.

officers like Olusegun Obasanjo and Shehu Musa Yar'Adua, and serving military officers like Colonel Lawan Gwadebe, were among the civilians and military officers that were detained and charged for coup plotting.⁹⁹ Following the secret trials of about fifty accused persons, forty were convicted and very stiff sentences ranging from death, through life imprisonment to long prison terms were imposed.¹⁰⁰

One of the consequences of the continuation of military rule in Nigeria was the intensification of the struggle for identity, visibility and political space by the ethnic minorities and other communities. The struggle of the Ogonis, numbering about 500,000 in River State was the greatest and the most visible manifestation of this process. Of course, other minority communities, even in the oil producing areas like Ijaws were also involved in similar struggles.¹⁰¹ But the case of the Ogonis was different in five ways.¹⁰² First, they carefully studied their problems, evaluated their strengths and weaknesses, and effectively mapped out a strategy for pursuing their goals. The preparation and presentation of the 'Ogoni Bill of Rights' in October 1990 and the 'Addendum to the Bill of Rights' in August 1991 reflected these preparations. Second, the Ogonis had established a broad based grassroots organisation (the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) which, in spite of its initial leadership problems, fully articulated and represented all Ogoni people in their six kingdoms cutting across class, gender, generational, and sub-ethnic lines. Third, MOSOP joined the Campaign for Democracy (CD) and had the opportunity to disseminate its agenda and struggles through the channels of other Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), pro-democracy movements, and grassroots organisations across the country. Finally, MOSOP adopted a strategy, which no other popular movement has attempted in Nigeria's political history, that is, the internationalisation of the Ogoni struggles and the fight against military rule.

MOSOP took the case of the Ogonis to the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organisation (UNPO), the United Nations, international NGOs (especially environmental and human rights organisations), and enlisted the support of foreign governments to put pressure on the Nigerian military government and the multinational oil companies to compensate the Ogoni people for decades of exploitation and environmental abuse. Though the strategy of MOSOP was largely peaceful (engaging mainly in letter writing, demonstrations and rallies, and international campaigns), the military government saw the growing influence of MOSOP's President Ken Saro-Wiwa and the publicity surrounding the Ogoni issue as a threat to its agenda for consolidating military rule.¹⁰³

¹ *The Guardian* (Lagos), 27 August 1993.

² *The News* (Lagos), 23 October 1995.

³ *The News* (Lagos), 13 March 1995.

⁴ *The News* (Lagos), 24 July 1995.

The Nigerian military government needed to urgently contain the rising tide of opposition and protests by showing an example. The struggles of the Ogonis provided such an opportunity. Besides the instigation of violent inter-communal clashes between the Ogonis and their neighbours such as the Andonis, the Ndokis, and the Okirikas, and the frequent detention of MOSOP leaders, the military government also occupied Ogoni villages, terrorised the people, and destroyed lives and properties.¹⁰⁴ The murder of four prominent Ogoni statesmen by a mob provided a good opportunity for a full-scale military expedition and the detention of hundreds of Ogoni people including the leaders of MOSOP. Following a clearly flawed trial by a military tribunal without the right of appeal, nine MOSOP leaders were sentenced to death.¹⁰⁵ The military government hurriedly confirmed the sentences and the nine Ogoni men were executed by hanging on November 10, 1995.

Developments in Ogoniland significantly affected the character of politics in Nigeria and redefined the country's external relations. First, the Ogoni issue made the campaign of the pro-democracy groups for external support in the fight against military rule more legitimate. The execution of the nine Ogoni men stirred up negative reactions from the international community. Second, the Ogoni issue created an unprecedented international awareness, which made international NGOs, particularly environmental movements and human rights bodies to place Nigeria's military regime as target for special attention and action. Special task forces or desks to monitor developments in Nigeria were established to provide support for the opposition, and to expose the misdeeds of the dictatorial regime. Protests and other forms of campaigns against the military regime continued worldwide. Finally, the response of the international community to the Ogoni crisis expanded the threshold of politics and political action for the pro-democracy groups. Most pro-democracy groups received a sort of jolt to their activities and were emboldened by the response of countries like South Africa to deepen their contacts and politics. Many found it much easier to link their agitation to the experience of the Ogoni people and to use them as a basis for mobilising support. Consequently, a great number of opposition groups sprang up within and outside the shores of Nigeria with the sole aim of displacing the military rulers and recreating the platform of politics and power.

¹ *New Nigeria* (Kaduna); 8 January 1993; *Daily Champion* (Lagos); 7 October 1993; *Vanguard* (Lagos); 5 November 1993; and *The Guardian* (Lagos), 18 December 1993.

² Julius Ihonvbere and Tim Shaw, *op. cit.*

³ Julius Ihonvbere, 'Are Things Falling Apart? The Military and the Crisis of Democratisation in Nigeria', *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 2 (1996).

⁴ Richard Boele, *Report of the UNPO Mission to Investigate the Situation of the Ogoni of Nigeria, 17-26 February 1995* (The Hague: UNPO, 1995).

⁵ *Tell* (Lagos) 13 November 1995.

South Africa's Reaction to Developments in Nigeria

Several analyses have demonstrated how the structural composition of the international system, and the domestic structure and processes condition international relations.¹⁰⁶ International circumstances and domestic conditions have formed a circle that determines the behaviour of states in international relations. In our context, the politics of democratisation, which reflects the evolution of new global order, has redefined the domestic political setting in Nigeria and impacted heavily on the country's external relations, especially with South Africa.

The political crisis precipitated by the inability of Nigeria to democratise and the failure of the military regime in Nigeria to abide by the international standard of human rights attracted the attention of the international community, particularly South Africa. Soon after the inauguration of the multiracial democratic government in South Africa, the country got involved in attempts to persuade the military to quit power, and to resolve the crisis continued military rule has caused in Nigeria. South Africa's intervention in Nigeria is informed by the belief among the country's leadership that as an important member of global capitalist system, and one of the most influential countries in Africa, the country should be at the forefront of conflict resolution in Africa.¹⁰⁷

Generally, South Africa seems to be in a position to rise up to the occasion. The country's economy is perhaps the most vibrant in Africa, with a Gross National Product (GNP) that is equal to 36 percent of the combined GNP of all countries in the sub-Saharan Africa.¹⁰⁸ Politically, South Africa is a role model as her peaceful transition to majority rule gave impetus to democratisation in Africa. The euphoria that trailed South Africa's liberation heightened the hope within and outside Africa that the country would assist Africa overcome its many challenges of which hunger, civil strife and bad governance ranks high. Drawing from these wide expectations, South Africa conceived policies that would enable her realise the expectations. Consequently, the country named broadening, deepening and sustenance of democracy as one of the five major issues that would occupy her African policy.¹⁰⁹

¹ K. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*. (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979). K. Waltz, *Man, the State and War*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959); C. Phillips, *The Development of Nigerian Foreign Policy* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1964); H. Kissinger, 'Domestic Structure and Foreign Policy', *Daedalus*, Vol. 95, No. 2 (1966); I. W. Zartman, *International Relations in the New Africa*, (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1966); G. Idang, *Nigeria: Internal Politics and Foreign Policy 1960-1966*, (Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, 1973); B.A. Akinyemi, *Foreign Policy and Federalism: The Nigerian Experience*, (Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, 1974); O. Aluko, *Ghana and Nigeria 1957-1970: A Study in Inter African Discord*. (London: Rex Collings, 1976); I. Gambari, *Party Politics and Foreign Policy: Nigeria under the First Republic*. (Zaria: Ahmadu Bello University Press, 1980); G.A. Nweke, 'The Domestic Structure and Processes of Nigeria's Foreign Policy', in G.O. Olusanya and R.A. Akindede (eds.), *Nigeria's External Relations: The First Twenty-five Years*. (Ibadan: University Press Limited, 1986); C. Kegley, and E. Wittkopf, *World Politics: Trend and Transformation*. (New York: St. Martin Press, 1997).

Incidentally, the political situation in Nigeria became the first major test for the post-apartheid South Africa's foreign policy machinery. South Africa adopted what is now popularly referred to as 'quite diplomacy', gentle persuasion, and constructive engagement as strategies to deal with the problem. In June 1994, when the military government arrested and detained Chief M.K.O. Abiola, the presumed winner of the annulled presidential election of June 12, 1993, for declaring himself as the President of Nigeria, South Africa responded immediately by dispatching Desmond Tutu, the widely respected Anglican Archbishop of South Africa to Nigeria. Tutu's mission was to initiate a dialogue with General Abacha and to negotiate for the release of Chief Abiola. General Abacha was intransigent and Tutu's mission failed.

... the political situation in Nigeria became the first major test for the post-apartheid South Africa's foreign policy machinery.

Subsequently, a military tribunal tried Nigeria's former Head of State, General Olusegun Obasanjo and thirty-nine others on coup-plotting charges. They were convicted and given death sentences, prompting further international pleas for clemency. This time, President Mandela of South Africa sent his deputy, Thabo Mbeki, who had a cordial relationship with Nigeria when he served as African National Congress (ANC) representative in Lagos during the apartheid era. Again, the mission failed. Then came the trial of Ken Saro-Wiwa, a well-known writer and environmentalist, and eight other Ogoni men for murder charges. A military tribunal tried the nine men and sentenced them to death amidst calls for clemency by the international community, which by that time had already been successful in getting the death sentences passed on General Obasanjo and thirty-nine others commuted.

On this occasion, South African President Nelson Mandela intervened personally. He made direct telephone contacts with the highest authorities of the Abacha government in Abuja. This continued until when President Mandela departed his country for the Commonwealth Summit in Auckland, New Zealand. Throughout, President Mandela was optimistic that the lives of the Ogoni men would be spared. This belief prompted him to adopt a more malleable approach towards the Abacha regime. This, however turned out to be his Achilles heel: the nine Ogoni men were hanged on November 10, 1995, 48 hours after the Provisional Ruling Council (PRC), the highest decision making body of the military junta confirmed the sentences, the pleas for clemency notwithstanding.

¹ P.J. Mc Gowan and F. Ahwireng-Obeng, 'Partner or Hegemon? South Africa in Africa', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 2 (1998).

² See *Human Development Report* (1997).

³ I. Taylor and P. William, 2001. 'South African Foreign Policy and the Great Lakes Crisis: African Renaissance Meets Vagabondage Politique?', *African Affairs*, Vol. 100, No. 399, April (2001).

Enraged by the intransigence of Nigeria's military government, South Africa adopted what Rummel (1968) referred to as 'conflict behaviour' towards Nigeria. Conflict behaviour includes acts such as verbal vilification of one state or its leader by another, recalling or expelling of diplomatic personnel of one state by another, imposition of sanctions that restrict or prevent the exchange of people, goods or ideas by one state on another, severing of diplomatic relations by states, issuing of military threats by states, and undertaking of military actions by states, among others.¹¹⁰ President Mandela received the news of the execution of the nine Ogoni men with shock and outrage; he immediately condemned Nigeria's action in strong terms. In a statement, President Mandela described Nigerian leadership as 'irresponsible and hardened', maintaining that the General Abacha regime is 'barbaric, corrupt and arrogant'.¹¹¹ In a further statement, Mandela stated that Nigeria's action is a major embarrassment to Africa because the rest of the world expects a standard behaviour from Nigeria in matters relating to democracy and civilised governance.¹¹²

At the venue of the Commonwealth Summit in Auckland, New Zealand, South Africa initiated and spearheaded the moves that led to the suspension of Nigeria from the Commonwealth.¹¹³ The country also withdrew its High Commissioner from Nigeria. Along with some Western nations, South Africa imposed a number of sanctions against Nigeria. One of such was a ban on the issuance of visas to senior military officers and senior government officials and their families, particularly 'those who actively formulated and implemented or benefited from the policies that impeded Nigeria's transition to democracy'.¹¹⁴ The visa application made by Nigeria's representative to the Miss World pageant hosted by South Africa was turned down.¹¹⁵ Similarly, the invitation given to Nigeria's soccer team and their officials to participate in a four nation pan-African tournament in Johannesburg was cancelled. According to Mr. Solomon Morewa, Chairman of South African Football Association (SAFA):

We decided that we condemn the inhuman act of hanging of the nine activists in Nigeria, and we regard it as a gross violation of human rights. And we are of the opinion that it would do the Nigerian soccer team no good to be here while this mood is prevailing in our country. Consequently, we have decided to withdraw their invitation to participate.¹¹⁶

¹ For a detailed list of forms of conflict behaviour see, McClland and Hoggard, 'Conflict Patterns in Interactions Among Nations', in James Rosenau (ed.), *International Politics and Foreign Policy*. (New York: Free Press, 1969).

² *The Sunday Independent* (Lagos), 26 November 1995.

³ *The Guardian* (Lagos), 28 November 1995.

⁴ *Newswatch* (Lagos), 8 January 1996.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Lipede (1996), *op. cit.*

⁷ *The Guardian* (Lagos), 14 November 1995.

South Africa tried, though without much success, to persuade its non-western allies such as China, Russia and the member states of South African Development Coordinating Council (SADCC) to impose sanctions on Nigeria.¹¹⁷ In a bid to punish Nigeria economically, South Africa threatened to apply punitive measures against Shell Petroleum if the company, which is the biggest multinational firm operating in Nigeria's oil industry, does not stop its operation in Nigeria.¹¹⁸

Nigeria's Response to the South African Offensive

Nigeria's military government was somewhat bewildered by the degree of negative reactions the execution of the nine Ogoni men received especially from South Africa. The government responded immediately by branding South Africa its 'official enemy'.¹¹⁹ The government also commenced a recriminatory verbal attack against South Africa. In an official statement, the then Chief of General Staff, General Oladipo Diya, chided President Mandela for vilifying Nigeria's military leader. He stated that 'it is distressing to observe how President Mandela has descended to the point of hauling personal insults at our Head of State...'.¹²⁰ The climax of the diplomatic row came in January 1996 when the Nigerian government announced to the astonishment of many people that it is withdrawing the country's senior soccer team from participating in the African Nations Cup competition hosted by South Africa. A government statement issued by the then Sports Minister, Jim Nwobodo alleged that 'the right security atmosphere does not prevail in South Africa for Nigeria to participate in the Nations Cup...'.¹²¹ The decision to stop the soccer team from participating in the Nations Cup, even when South African authorities have given specific guarantees to protect the lives and properties of Nigerian sportsmen and their officials, is interpreted by many as a deliberate plot by Nigerian government to reduce the glamour of the competition and dim the image of South Africa.

Meanwhile, the intensity of the local and international pressures for democracy forced the military government in Nigeria to make a number of concessions. First, the junta began to make wide consultations with both local and international forces pressing for democracy. It used such forums to justify its ascension to power, and to reassure the international community of its readiness to hand over political power to a democratically elected civilian government. In an address to senior military officers, the former Head of State, General Sani Abacha claimed that his government was aware of:

¹ *Newswatch* (Lagos), 18 December 1995.

² *Newswatch* (Lagos), 11 December 1995.

³ *The Guardian* (Lagos), 30 November 1995.

⁴ *Newswatch* (Lagos), 11 December 1995.

⁵ *The Sunday Magazine* (Lagos), 14 January 1996.

⁶ A.A. Lipede, op. cit, p. 115.

The concerns among some friends and partners that the country had abandoned the programme leading to a restoration of civil democratic government and replaced it with a return to military rule. Nothing could be further from the truth. The administration came into office in response to a national consensus for the armed forces to step-in and avert a threatened descent into anarchy and disintegration.¹²²

The next step the military government took was to announce some measures aimed at safeguarding human rights in Nigeria. Among the measures was the setting up of a National Human Rights Commission, the amendment of the decree on civil disturbances to allow for the right of appeal, and the restoration to the courts the jurisdiction over the habeas corpus applications. Finally, the military government instituted modalities for a return to civil rule. The modalities included the initiation of a three-year transition to civil rule programme spanning from 1995 - 1998. Others were the establishment of the National Electoral Commission of Nigeria (NECON), registration of five political parties, creation of new states and local governments, as well as the preparation of a voters' register. Meanwhile, the government made some periodic releases of some notable civil rights activists. Among those released were Chidi Ubani, Abdul Oroh, Mathew Popoola, Tunji Abayomi and Gani Fawehinmi.¹²³

Conclusion

This work acknowledges the fact that there is a strong relationship between international and domestic structures and processes. International structure to a large extent influences events at the domestic level. The politics of democratisation in Nigeria is a good illustration of how the international system conditions the domestic structure and processes, and how this impacts on inter-state relations. South Africa's intervention in the political crisis in Nigeria and the country's confrontation with Nigeria's military regime is borne out of its perception of its role in Africa. Being the most developed capitalist nation in sub-Saharan Africa, South Africa perceives itself as the policeman of economic and political liberalisation in Africa. It is this role, which entails making sure that African countries comply to international standard of good governance that placed Nigeria and South Africa in a situation of competition.

On the whole, it is important to note that the task of identifying and analysing the determinants of a country's foreign policy is not only difficult, but also complicated. A number of reasons account for this situation. The most important is that aside from being a product of both internal and external structures and forces, foreign policy is also shaped and influenced by many other forces, which act

¹ *Ibid.*

simultaneously and sometimes in different directions. In other words, the process of a country's foreign policy involves interaction among numerous and at times conflicting political, social and economic structures, which may not have any systematic linkage with one another. Instead, they may be negatively correlated. Such a process of continuous interaction of forces so numerous, varied and at times so imperceptible would be almost impossible to trace and describe with any scientific precision even if all the variables could be described in mathematical terms and each assigned a firm statistical weight.

References

- Akindede, R.A. 1986. 'External Structure and Nigeria's Foreign Policy: Perspectives on the Future', *Nigerian Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 12, Nos. 1 and 2.
- Akinyemi, B.A. 1974. *Foreign Policy and Federalism: The Nigerian Experience*. Ibadan: Ibadan University Press.
- Althusser, L. 1971. 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses', in Louis Althusser (ed.), *Lenin and Philosophy*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Aluko, O. 1976. *Ghana and Nigeria 1957-1970: A Study in Inter African Discord*. London: Rex Collings.
- Boele, R. 1995. *Report of the UNPO Mission to Investigate the Situation of the Ogoni of Nigeria, 17-26 February 1995*. The Hague: UNPO.
- Diamond, L. 1993. 'The Globalization of Democracy', in Robert O. Slater, Barry M. Schutz and Steven R. Dorr (eds.), *Global Transformation and the Third World*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner.
- Gambari, I. 1980. *Party Politics and Foreign Policy: Nigeria under the First Republic*. Zaria: Ahmadu Bello University Press.
- Godelier, M. 1972. 'Structure and Contradictions in Capital', in Robin Blackburn (ed.), *Ideology in Social Science*. London: Fontana.
- Gold, D., C. Lo, . and E.O. Wright, 1975. 'Recent Developments in Marxist Theories of State', *Monthly Review*, Vol. XXVII, Nos. 5 and 6.
- Gwexe, S. 1999. 'Prospects for African Conflict Resolution in the Next Millennium: South Africa's View', *African Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 1, No. 1.
- Heilbroner, R. 1980. *Marxism: For and Against*. New York: Norton.
- Idang, G. 1973. *Nigeria: Internal Politics and Foreign Policy 1960-1966*. Ibadan: Ibadan University Press.
- Ihonvbere, J. and T. Shaw, 1998. *Illusions of Power: Nigeria in Transition*. New Jersey: Africa World Press.
- Ihonvbere, J. 1996. 'Are Things Falling Apart? The Military and the Crisis of Democratisation in Nigeria', *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 2.
- Jan, A. 1997. 'It Can Work: Strengthening the OAU Conflict Resolution Mechanism', *Track Two*, Vol. 6, No. 2.
- Joseph, R. 1991. 'Africa: The Rebirth of Political Freedom', *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 2, No. 4.
- Kegley, C. and Wittkopf, E. 1997. *World Politics: Trend and Transformation*. New York: St. Martin Press.
- Kissinger, H. 1966. 'Domestic Structure and Foreign Policy', *Daedalus*, Vol. 95, No. 2.
- Lipede, A.A. 1996. 'Contemporary Realities in Nigeria-South Africa Relations' *Nigerian Forum*, Vol. 16, Nos. 5 and 6.

- Mc Clelland, C. and G. Hoggard, 1969. 'Conflict Patterns in Interactions Among Nations', in James Rosenau (ed.), *International Politics and Foreign Policy*. New York: Free Press.
- Mc Gowan, P.J. and F. Ahwireng-Obeng, 1998. 'Partner or Hegemon? South Africa in Africa', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 2.
- Nnoli, O. 1976. 'Nigerian Policy towards Southern Africa', *Nigerian Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 2, Nos. 1 and 2.
- Nweke, G.A. 1986. 'The Domestic Structure and Processes of Nigeria's Foreign Policy', in G.O. Olusanya and R.A. Akindele (eds.), *Nigeria's External Relations: The First Twenty-five Years*. Ibadan: University Press Limited.
- Nzongola-Ntalaja, G. and M.C. Lee (eds.) 1998. *The State and Democracy in Africa*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press.
- Obiozor, G. 1985. *Nigerian Participation in the UN*. Enugu: Fourth Dimension.
- Phillips, C. 1964. *The Development of Nigerian Foreign Policy*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.
- Rummel, R. 1968. 'The Relationship between National Attributes and Foreign Conflict Behaviour', in David J. Singer (ed.), *Quantitative International Politics: Insights and Evidence*. New York: Free Press.
- Taylor, I. and William, P. 2001. 'South African Foreign Policy and the Great Lakes Crisis: African Renaissance Meets Vagabondage Politique?', *African Affairs* Vol. 100, No. 399 (April).
- Tyoden, S.G. 1990. 'Nigeria, South Africa and the Liberation Struggle: A Futuristic Analysis', *Nigerian Forum*, Vol. 10, Nos. 1 and 2.
- Waltz, K. 1979. *Theory of International Politics*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- _____ 1959. *Man, the State and War*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Wright, E.O. 1978. *Class, Crisis and the State*. London: New Left Books.
- Zartman, W. 1966. *International Relations in the New Africa*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

HANGING ON A SHOESTRING: CAMEROON'S DEMOCRATISATION PROCESS

Nantang Jua¹²⁴

«Suspendu à un Fil: Le Processus Démocratique au Cameroun»

Résumé

Le processus démocratique au Cameroun, même plus d'une décennie après son initialisation, est à la croisée des chemins avec l'imminence de l'élection présidentielle. C'est une démocratie «unpacked». Depuis la rédaction de la Constitution de 1996 par le gouvernement, il n'est pas surprenant que lois ne soient pas perçues comme des ressources morales qui génèrent et maintiennent des solutions collectives à des problèmes politiquement controversés. La réforme politique a cherché à privilégier la volonté de pouvoir plutôt que la volonté de participation. Non convaincu par les mérites de la démocratie au plan normatif, le régime en place a usé de la stratégie de la rhétorique pour dissimuler ses intentions réelles. Bien que s'engageant à établir la séparation des pouvoirs, les relations entre les institutions dans cet Etat héroïque demeurent fondées sur le principe de la coordination impérative. Ceci explique l'énormité des pouvoirs de l'Exécutif, de même que les efforts conscients d'empêcher la presse de jouer sa fonction de surveillance. Les élections ne sont ni libres ni justes; l'emphase est placée sur l'électorisme. Les ordonnances administratives usent du binôme allogénie/ autochtonie pour affranchir ou dés-affranchir les votants. Ceci a suscité une réponse ambivalente dans la population. Pour les bénéficiaires [du système], il engendre un changement dans la culture politique. Les perdants optent pour la sortie. A cause de cette situation le Cameroun est une faible, plutôt qu'une forte démocratie. Quand bien même seule cette dernière permettrait une consolidation démocratique, il est argumenté que ceci a vicié, mais pas obvié, le processus de démocratisation du Cameroun. Le sauvetage démocratique est possible si l'Etat opte pour une domination dispersée. Par conséquent, les espaces dans lesquels le peuple engage l'Etat et refuse l'accaparement par les élites pourront, et sont en train, d'émerger. Chaque victoire défie le mode existant de domination tout en renforçant la volonté de participation. Encourager la citoyenneté sociale permet également de percevoir la démocratie comme moyen de développement humain dans la sphère publique.

¹ Senior Researcher at Cameroon's Ministry of Scientific Research, and currently a Research Fellow at University of Maryland, Silver Spring, MD 20901, email: bbenjua@yahoo.com.

Abstract

More than a decade after, Cameroon's democratisation process is at a crossroads with the imminence of Presidential elections. It is an unpacted democracy. Since the 1996 Constitution was scripted by the government, it is not surprising that its provisions are not perceived as moral resources that generate and sustain collective solutions to politically contentious issues. Political reform has sought to privilege the will to power rather than the will to participation. Normatively unconvinced about the merits of democracy, the incumbent regime has used the rhetorical strategy to conceal its real intentions. While committing to a separation of powers, relations between democratic institutions state are still predicated on the principle of imperative coordination. This explains the enormity of the powers of the Executive as well as conscious efforts to pre-empt the press from performing its watchdog function. Elections are neither free nor fair; indeed, the emphasis is on electoralism. Administrative fiats use the *allogèny/autochtony* binary to enfranchise or disenfranchise voters. This has elicited an ambivalent response in the population. Among its beneficiaries, it is prompting a change in the culture of politics. Losers are choosing the exit option. Due to the foregoing, Cameroon is a weak rather than strong 'partial democracy'. Though only the latter enables democratic consolidation, it is argued that this has vitiated but not obviated Cameroon's democratisation process. Democratic rescue is possible if the state opts for dispersed domination. Consequently, spaces in which people engage the state and deny elite capture will and are emerging. Each victory challenges the extant mode of domination while furthering the will to participation. Fostering social citizenship also enables democracy to be seen as human development in the public sphere.

Bad governance arguably accounted for the economic meltdown, and in extreme cases state collapse, which were a prominent feature Africa's political landscape in the 1980s. The African postcolonial state was broken and therefore had to be fixed. Claims that the one party state would enable development had not been realised. By contrast, the one-party arrangement fostered the birth of a patrimonial state, rather than a Weberian rational one. This state form was a cause of the African crisis and its victims were the African masses who bore the brunt of the free fall in human development indicators for the period. However, there was a flipside to the crisis, as in Hegelian dialectic, crisis constitutes a moment of birth and transition to a new period.¹²⁵

With a view to redressing economic performance in Africa, the Bretton Woods institutions signed structural adjustment programs (SAPs) with the various governments. SAP quickly became a 'damaged brand name' (Naim, 2003) because

¹ G.W.F. Hegel, *Hegel: Text and Commentary*, trans W. Kaufman (New York: Anchor Books, 1977), p.20.

it emphasised not only market liberalism but also political liberalism and in some instances secularisation. Both variants are now a metaphor for good governance or democracy. Both concepts are synonymous because of their emphasis on transparency and accountability. Normatively, its institutionalisation should induce a change in the political opportunity structure in Africa by revalorising and empowering those previously marginalised.

In this paper, we are interested in how the transition to democracy has been perceived, experienced and dealt with by both the dominant and the subordinate classes in Cameroon. Failing a negotiated resolution of the political impasse that has dogged the country since 1992, there is anxiety that the forthcoming 2004 Presidential elections might eventuate in violence. Newspapers already dub it *l'élection de tous les dangers*. State failure is therefore not just an imaginary; it as the *Collectif des Organisations Démocratiques et Patriotiques des Camerounais de la Diaspora* (CODE) intimate probable. The State Failure Task Force (SFTF) constituted in 1994 in the United States posits that a country's political institutions are the single most-important factor in shaping the relative risks of state failure (Gladstone *et al*, 2003:20). While democratic and autocratic regimes are more stable, it cautions that policies seeking to bring stability to world affairs by spreading democracy 'must look beyond simply identifying the spread of democracy with greater stability'. 'Loosening up' an autocratic regime, or installing the wrong mix of democratic institutions is a likely recipe for political turmoil (Gladstone, 2003:6). It is this transitioning that Cameroon seeks to negotiate.

For successful transitions, the SFTF recommends strong partial democracies which place high levels of constraints on the chief executive or hold regular and institutionalised political competition or both as ideal for creating democracies resistant to various kinds of severe political violence. (Gladstone, 2003:29). According to the Electoral Democracy Index (EDI), institutionalised political competition combines four variables: the right to vote, fair elections, free elections, and elections as a means of access to public office (see UNDP, 2004). These conditions, and not elections as such, and certainly not the mythical or utopian notion of democracy should guide policy-makers seeking greater stability in the world. Where these conditions obtain, even amidst seemingly inhospitable conditions for stability or democracy, *as in sub-Saharan Africa* (my emphasis), the relative odds of ethnic wars, revolutions and genocides have been dramatically lower (Gladstone, 2003:32). In short, a strong partial democracy should enable people reappropriate the state, converting it into a *res publica*. Weak partial democracies that have periodic elections but lack executive parity as well as open and institutionalised competition disable this process. To a large extent, I would argue, this has occurred in Cameroon.

¹ O'Donnell and Schmitter cited in Michael Bratton and Nicolas van de Walle, *Toward Governance in Africa: Popular Demands and State Responses in Governance and Politics in Africa* ed. by Goran Hyden and Michael Bratton, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1992), p.29.

Rather than 'loosen up', it mutated from a hegemonic state ruled by a hegemonic party (Bayart, 1979) to a *heroic state* which manifests most traits of a *heroic nation* where 'the essence of heroic power is to legitimise only the will of the chief. Heroes, generally do not accept the presence of other heroes' (Dahomay, 2001, 12-13). This was largely facilitated by the regime's preoccupation with electoralism, that is, outcome rather than process in the founding election which took place in October 1992. Other elections in 1996 and 2002 were characterised by a similar emphasis.

'Loosening up,' as the SFTF suggests, is unsettling. Further exacerbating this is the reversibility of the democratisation process as substantiated by instances in Africa where autocracy like a sphinx is reborn from its ashes. Any analysis of this process must take into cognisance certain caveats. First, there is a tendency to equate political liberalisation and democratisation. Although these processes may occur simultaneously and may actually be complementary, they are autonomous. Each has its own dynamic; the dismantling of the authoritarian state does not necessarily suggest the birth of democratic structures¹²⁶. Second, even if the old order is dead and the birth pangs of a new one are already being felt, a successful transition to democracy is still not tantamount to its consolidation. These two phases should not be conflated. Samuel Huntington has argued that not all countries in this 'third wave' of democratisation would remain at the shore. Some would recede with the wave. While the SFTF study is concerned with partial strong democracies that stay on the shore, sceptics have doubted the chances of democracy travelling to Africa or its successful conversion to this new political ideology¹²⁷. As

¹ For a case in point, see Giovanni Sartori, 'How Far can Democracy Travel' in *Journal of Democracy*, Vol.6, No.3, (July, 1995), p.92. This argument is informed by the traditional idea of development put forth by the modernization thesis. Modernization presupposes the eradication of ignorance and illiteracy. The democratic franchise cannot be extended to those that fail to meet these conditions. Edmund Burke in his *Reflections on the French Revolution* even finds a biblical justification for this position in the *Ecclesiastes*: 'The wisdom of the learned man cometh by the opportunity of leisure and he that hath little business shall become wise.... How can he get wisdom that holdeth the plough and that glorieth in the goad; the driven oxen; that is occupied in their labors; and whose talk is of bullocks?' (London, 1964, p.47). Two related propositions are derived from this argument. Wealth allows leisure, which facilitates education, which produces fitness for public life. The negative corollary is that poverty necessitates full-time labouring, hence the absence of learning and so a basic unfitness for political participation. But there is a new consensus that this argument is *demodée*. Even modernization does not consist of erasing the past but of incorporating aspects of it into aspects of the future.

² See Stephen Ellis, 'Africa after the Cold War: New Patterns of Government and Politics', *Development and Change*, Vol.27, No.1, January (1996), p.7.

³ According to this poll, 54.5% of the sampled population(1000) equated it with the idea of liberty, 26.6 saw it as government by the people and 6% saw it as the ensemble of cultures, practice and institutions allowing for an equitable, consensual and negotiated resolution of societal problems. Cited in *Le Messager*, No.814, 13 (September 1998), p.6.

⁴ See Edmund Burke, *supra*, footnote 4.

⁵ 20,000 people throughout Latin America were involved in the poll. See www.undp.org/dpa/perssrelease/releases/2004/april/0421prodal.html.

such, they would find any study on democratisation on this continent where this doctrine does not supposedly have any cultural resonance normatively suspect. Avoiding this patronising approach, Stephen Ellis cautions that in the absence of empirical research, one cannot discern what democracy means to the African public¹²⁸. According to a recent survey, 87%¹²⁹ of a sample of polled Cameroonians knew the meaning of democracy. Knowing what democracy means may not be enough; Hegel, Giovanni Sartori and other high priests who serve as its gatekeepers may emphasise the importance of literacy and in some cases a surplus of knowledge¹³⁰.

Knowing what democracy means does not pre-empt the possibility of democratic fatigue among the people. Disenchantment with this form of governance, as demonstrated by evidence from Latin America after twenty-five years of democratic growth, sets in failing a notable improvement in the quality of life. A recent UNDP poll found out that 54.7% of all Latin Americans preferred 'authoritarianism' to a democratic government insofar as it would enhance their economic status. Their exasperation with the latter can be explained by the failure of the first generation of Latin Americans to come of age under this mode of governance to witness any growth in their per capita.¹³¹ Widening the economic gap between classes and shrinking the middle class reinforces the asymmetric power relations and consequently distorts the equal exchange of ideas intrinsic to democracy. In this context, the chances for liberalising relations which enables an open mind required in the everyday practice of communication with a view to constituting the capital of confidence (Habermas, 2004:17) dwindles. Though an analogous situation prevails in Cameroon, there is evidence that people are empowering themselves at multiple sites.

Remotely connected to the political in some instances, the beneficiaries of empowerment develop the confidence necessary for engagement in things overtly political. Elena Martinez's posits that 'if human development as the reports of UNDP have time and gain argued is 'the expansion of options so that people can improve their lives' then I would say that democracy is human development in the public sphere. It is the expansion of the collective options that impact on the quality of our lives'¹³². Granting the normative discourses about growth and development intrinsic to democracy, people tend to make demands for social policies that guarantee access to health provision, education and income maintenance. Both the state and the private sector can provide these 'goods'. 'However, none of the foregoing is factored in when Africa's new democracies are forced to choose between the state and market. ... Choice within the neoliberal economic paradigm, is little more than the Keynesian complex compromise between a strong market and a strong state; that is, the whole complex notion of 'embedded liberalism'' (Amuwo, 2004: 325).

This paper focuses mostly on the capacity of the Cameroonian government to provide these goods. Doubts about the state's commitment to democracy as human development in the public sphere are prompted by its initial reluctance of the regime. Preoccupied by the will to power, it was hesitant to commit to this

project which fostered the will to participation among the dominant class. Reform instituted in the wake of protests¹³³ simply acknowledged a shift in the balance of forces. Ordinarily, reform should reflect a new morality that obtains in society and consequently provide the normative basis for consent in the political exchange between subordinate and dominant classes. In other words, the new morality is a mechanism for social governance that strives to unite society. Yet, the existence of common projects should not create the illusion of consistency because each actor may follow a distinct path. Thus, there is a need to focus on the dual dimensions of reforms with a view to ascertaining that they do not simply lead to a 'cosmetic restructuring of the political terrain'. They should open up more spaces or micro-habitats for more struggles for democracy and democratisation¹³⁴. Though struggles carried out at this level are inhibited from gaining the salience of a macro-confrontational momentum, they are important when connected to an historically determinate environment and thereby restored to the world of meaningful interconnections¹³⁵.

Mapping a new political future

The uncontested functioning of the hegemonic project introduced early into the postcolonial state gave the impression that Cameroon lacked the internal capacity to change. Besides contracting political space, this project engendered prebendalism (Bayart, 1979) and involution or the downward spiralling of ever worsening conditions (Jua, 1988, 1991). What it lacked in compassion, it failed to make up for in possibilities. Despite this, political quietude remained the norm as disciplined and normalised subjects 'lived the lie', consigning their consciences to the Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (CPDM). Existential opposition could be found only in the interstices of society. Its growth was stifled by the police rule of law. Change

***To the present generation of
Cameroonian politicians, liberal
democracy is counter-intuitive and
perforce counter-productive. Thus,
pessimists were not comforted by
the passage of the 1990 Liberty
Laws that allowed, inter alia, the
formation of political parties***

¹ Ibid.

² See Bratton and van de Walle, *op cit.* p.37.

³ Julius O. Ihonvbere, 'Threats To Democratization in Sub-Sahara Africa: The Case of Zambia', *Asian and African Studies*, 27, (1993), p.218.

⁴ John and Jean Comaroff, *Ethnography and the Historical Imagination*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992), p.16.

was ushered in only by the synergy produced by a combination of factors (Bratton and van de Walle, 1998). Denying the state discursive monopoly signalled a challenge to its aspiration to normative homogeneity. Clear proof of this was the launching of the Social Democratic Front (SDF) in May 1990 in Bamenda which, amid heavy state security presence, called for the introduction of liberal democracy. Its defiance stripped the state of its claims to invincibility. In this changed context, the affective community of those calling for democratisation grew; while there was an inverse correlation between its growth and state delegitimation or legitimacy deficit. Consequently, this state could no longer present Cameroonians with the moral grounds for cooperation and obedience (Beetham, 1992:26).

Against this backdrop, protests putting a premium on the immediacy of democracy increased. But the CPDM-qua-regime balked. Its rallying cry was 'no to precipitated democracy'. Arguably, the regime's belief in its ontological superiority caused it to seek to dictate social the agenda. And its reluctance to make the mental adjustment necessary for change barred it from inscribing regime change on this agenda. Instead of a clear position shift, it resorted to a rhetorical strategy in the face of persistent demands. Evidence of this was President Paul Biya's laconic response to *Operation Villes Mortes* (Dead Towns Operations) used to blackmail the regime into changing: 'yes, I have understood'. Reminiscent of Charles de Gaulle's response to the thousands of *Union pour la Défense de la République* protesting against the granting of independence to Algeria in 1958 (Ngoh, 2004:434), it could only give rise to a *polysemous* reading and sustain the impasse.

To the present generation of Cameroonian politicians, liberal democracy is counter-intuitive and perforce counter-productive. Thus, pessimists were not comforted by the passage of the 1990 Liberty Laws that allowed, *inter alia*, the formation of political parties. In their view, barons of the regime having failed to undergo an ideological adjustment were more interested in appeasement than democracy which promotes human development in the public sphere. Already, at the CPDM 1995 Bamenda Congress, mavericks in the party noting this reluctance argued that for the 'New Deal' policy of rigor and moralisation to be successful, only new wine must be put in new wineskins. A Progressive wing of this party was born in the early 1990s because the mainstream practiced *rigueur en corruption* (rigor in corruption) rather than rigor and moralisation *per se*. This brought into broad relief the fact that the existence of a common project should not create the illusion of consistency, as various actors may opt for different trajectories. Scepticism as a result thereof was not conducive to the constitution of a transparent

¹ cited in Robert D. Putman, *Making Democracy Work*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993) p.88. As Putman observes, this is the same as civic humanism.

² cited in *Le Messager*, No. 785, 8 juillet (1998), p.7.

³ cited in *La Nouvelle Expression*, No.1252, 21 April (2004).

consciousness. And absent this, Cameroonians doubted the political willingness of the regime to reform.

In retrospect, these doubts were justified. Despite its declared commitment to reform, the mainstream of the CPDM continues to manifest *des reflexes de partie unique*. The prevalence of autocratic tendencies within this party explains its recent factionalisation along the conservative-modernist spectrum. Recently, Milla Assoute and other modernists erupted into public space with the publication of a White Paper which decried endemic corruption in the party and the lack of a democratic culture. Pointedly, most of these modernists who belong to a younger generation educated in post-1956 France doubted why Biya who is Chairman of the CPDM should be seen as its natural candidate for the 2004 Presidential elections. Their critique was unsettling to the extent that some of the older barons bought into their argument. But the party was comforted by the differences in the on-stage and off-stage script of its members. The ensuing *volte face* in position-taking weakened the modernists. Further exacerbating this is the negative effect that the mainstream conservative wing has on it, offering prebends to its members as baits. Because of these trends, in the popular consciousness of Cameroonians, the CPDM can neither foster nor nurture democracy in Cameroon.

Contributing to this lack of capacity is the party's penchant to instrumentalise leadership positions. The one party state had enabled this post-colony to be converted into a resource in itself, while patrimonialism enabled barons to acquire phenomenal wealth. Democracy which emphasises transparency and accountability can thrive only following a change in the culture of politics. This new culture does not dissuade the pursuit of self-interest. Rather, according to de Tocqueville, it emphasises 'self-interest properly understood', that is, self-interest defined in the context of broader public needs, self-interest that is 'enlightened' rather than 'myopic', self-interest that is alive to the need of others¹³⁶. It puts a premium on transparency and accountability. Discounting of these principles is proof that self-interest of the CPDM leadership is still myopic.

Acknowledging the continued institutionalisation of corruption, a Western embassy in Yaounde posited that it may have the political utility of enabling members of the ruling class to mass fortunes would be used in future political competitions¹³⁷. Its subtext was that corruption could be purposeful and not just a Sisyphean tendency. With the value of hindsight, this Embassy had it all wrong. Corruption, in Cameroonian public space, is a culture. *Le Confidential africain* recently highlighted this it described Biya's mode of governance thus: 'the most invisible President in Africa, who does not govern at all rather than badly, hanging above a society where it is permissible for everyone to take his share and leave the president alone. From the junior civil

¹ Department of International Development, 'Cameroon's Human Development Report' www.dfid.govt.uk/Pubs/files/Cameroon_csp.pdf.

servant to the judge in remote areas, everyone is preoccupied with rent-seeking'.¹³⁸ Essentially, Cameroon is a warehouse accessible to all political entrepreneurs. Presiding over this warehouse is a cabal which, according to Voltaire is 'divided by interests but united by crime'. Partly because of this, Cameroon ranked first back to back on Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index (CPI) in the late 1990s and has since then retained its dubious distinction as one of the world's most corrupt countries.

Insofar as this engenders a 'maximax problematique' where the state overloaded with demands has only minimal funds for investments, it has negative repercussions for the development of social citizenship. Evidence of this is the country's 134th position out of 174 countries included in UNDP's Human Development Index in 2000. More obnoxious is the skewed distribution of income. According to the report, 10% of the poorest segment of the population had a GDP per capita income of about US\$100 as compared to \$1500 for the upper 10%.¹³⁹ Despite paying lip compliment to the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), the regime lacks the political will to promote justice as fairness (Rawls). Yet, this minimalist position, that is, efforts to fight poverty and inequality are imperative for democracy to go 'beyond the ballot box' (UNDP, 2004). Failing this, and in what is clearly a profound paradox, democracy may actually engender democratic fatigue. In other states, as warranted by specific historical conditions, these minimalist conditions may have to be complemented by policies meant to, for instance, promote a forgetting of the past with a view to levelling the playing field (Jua, 2004:355).

It is against this backdrop that advocates of regime change argued that the 1990 Liberty Laws, though necessary, were not sufficient to kick-start democratisation. A constitutional review, a view that they foisted on the regime, was a prerequisite. Elsewhere in Francophone Africa, with the adoption of a holistic approach where sovereign national conferences (SNCs) adopted constitutions as well as the organising principles, this problem of sequencing had been avoided. Constitutions embody the morality of any society and therefore are common frameworks of beliefs for organising everyday life. They therefore set out the conditions for the existence of all other laws which should be barometers of all moral and social thinking (Friedman, 1964:143).

To ascertain this morality, Biya convoked what is referred in Cameroonian speak as the large/grand debate in 1996. But people doubted his commitment to the inclusiveness principle for he had claimed at the 1992 CPDM Congress in his

¹ *The Herald*, No. 266, 11 December (1996), p.1. For example, he claimed, contrary to available (ocular) evidence that no student died in the University of Yaounde as a result of clashes with the forces of state violence in the early 1990s had earned him the sobriquet 'zero mort'. Similarly, he was indicted for giving *Cameroon Tribune* partial results of the legislative results which had been fabricated by the regime. He erupted into public space again to inform Cameroonians that the money they had contributed to support their national team in 1995 was lost in a briefcase between Cameroon and the United States.

defiant *Qui sont-ils?* (who are they) speech that only his party could bring democracy to Cameroon. And given that people are differentially endowed, only those at the top at this party, an exclusive social location, could participate in the process. But proceeding along this path would have denied people ownership of this document. To imbue it with a semblance of public ownership, he invited members of civil society.

But Biya's insistence in naming the delegates brought into broad relief the fact that he still subscribed to the organising principles of the hegemonic state. 'Disciplined' and 'normalized' subjects had no voice. Alternatively, Biya was using another register where the leader as head of an African family controls all members. As *jural* and social minors, their *agentic* capacities are not fully developed. The similarities of this paternalistic ethos with the monarchist one is remarkable. In the latter, liberty is best guaranteed by a benevolent monarch. With a view to fostering an impression of popular participation, the Minister of Communication, Kontchou Kouomegni, urged all Cameroonians to send in their views by telephones, faxes and email. That this was only a rhetorical strategy can be discerned from the fact that the country in 2000 had only 134,000 fixed telephone lines with 70,558 being operational (Mezom, 2000). Use of this mode of communication at this defining moment in the transition could only promote differential access to the state. Not even the freehand given to political parties to name their delegates could change this. Thus, whereas collective life (popular sovereignty) requires inclusiveness, discursive diversity was de-emphasised, denying the government a 'moral resource' that 'generates and sustains collective solutions to politically contentious issues (Knight and Johnson, 1994:278).

Though referenda are the privileged mode for adopting constitutions, the document was sent to Parliament. The presence of Opposition parties such the Union for Democracy and Progress (UNDP) in this institution did not stop the CPDM from trying to make history and do so in circumstances of its own choosing. This preoccupation caused it, for example, to suspend voting on this document in the Constitutional sub-Committee which had a quorum. Done at the behest of the Prime Minister, it afforded the CPDM the opportunity to use the iron law of oligarchy to bring its nonconforming members into line. And with a view to manufacturing a consensus, it also resorted to symbolic violence to silence opposition from the UNDP MPs. Its goal failed only when the people discovered that the draft published in *Cameroon Tribune*, the official government paper, was an amended version of the 1972 Constitution, rather than one adopted in Parliament.

¹ see critique by Adamou Ndam Njoya, President of the Union for Democratic Change (UDC) and Member of Parliament for Noun in *La Nouvelle Expression*, No. 1252, 21 April (2004).

² Cited in *The Post*, No.0085, 7 September (1998), p.2.

This realisation opened a window, however slight, into the government's intentions. Conscious of the 'profitable dialectic between information and control' (Said, 1979:36), Biya had urged Cameroonians to read only the *Cameroon Tribune* in search of the truth. When it was caught peddling misinformation, this caused people to question its credibility. Henceforth, admission of its victory would not stop a questioning of its truth. The government used plausible deniability to reverse this. The President of the National Assembly published a laconic rejoinder in the paper that the paper's version of the constitution contained a lot of errors and omissions from the one effectively adopted by the Assembly and caused Kouomegni, the official who supposedly induced it into error to be queried by the Presidency and the Security forces.¹⁴⁰

Ascertaining moral correctness even after the promulgation of the 1996 Constitution is problematic because the 1972 Constitution remains in force and the new one is being applied only incrementally. So far, this has been obfuscated incrementalism. Ambiguity has enabled a continuous reign of the arbitrary. Paradigmatic of this is the failure of the members of the ruling class to declare their assets when they enter and leave office as stipulated in its Article 66. Lack of enabling legislation, that explains the non-application of some other articles, is not a justification in this case. And it begins to validate Foucault's observation that sovereignty remains a centralised power to command that is more or less impervious to the democratic discourses within which it is located (Hunt and Wickham, 1994:61). Seen through another prism, Cameroon is still an absolutist state where those who make the laws are above them. Rather than investing its 1996 constitution with undue intentionality and centrality; it should be seen as a clear example of linguistic inflation. 'Despotism when overthrown gives rise to new forms of despotism' (Elster, 1993:215). And only a reversal of this trend would enable Cameroon to qualify as a partial strong democracy.

Reading Cameroon's Democracy into the SFTF framework

For Cameroon's democracy to become a strong partial democracy, Presidential powers have to be curbed and the separation of powers between institutions which 'embody accepted principles and their rules reflect established beliefs, about the rightful source of political authority' (Beetham, 1991:127) guaranteed. Furthermore, with a view to assuring popular control of these institutions, it needed to institutionalise effective political competition as defined in the EDI. The *constative* aspects and *performative* dimensions of constitutions provide are entry points to assessing democracy compliant systems.

¹ See *Le Quotidien Mutations*, 16 April (2004). www.quotidienmutations.net

² For a critical appraisal of this measure, see Albert Dzongang in *Le Messager*, No.848, 2 December (1998), p3.

Institutional capacity building and the separation of powers

Totalising powers wielded by the President had caused this institution to be depicted as imperial (Etonga, 1980). It was even construed as having imaginary powers over the means of production (Jua, 2003). The 1996 Constitution could provoke a rupture from this past only to the extent that it guaranteed a jurisdictional distribution of political powers. Per this Constitution, the President who ensures its respect and has the prerogative to define national policy is elected for a seven-year period, renewable once. Article 8 empowers him to set up and organise the administrative services of the state as well as refer matters to the Constitutional Council. Departing from the emphasis of the EDI that elections should be the means of access to public office, it give President the powers to appoint the Prime Minister who is Head of Government and the Ministers on recommendation of the latter. That these officials do not need Parliamentary confirmation denies this institution leverage over the President and those implementing the policy of the nation as defined by him. It is common to hear Ministers accredit their positions to the confidence that the President has in them. Consequently, they are accountable only to him.

Arguably, Article 14 which grants the National Assembly (Parliament) and the Senate legislative powers is a corrective measure. It grants the legislative branch which can propose bills for adoption powers of oversight over government action. Article 15 defining the constituency of each member of Parliament (MP) as the entire nation buys into the Burkean logic 'Parliament is a deliberative assembly of one nation, with one interest, that of the whole, where not local purposes, not local prejudices, ought to guide, but the general good resulting from the general reason of the whole'. To guarantee this, MPs are elected by direct universal and secret suffrage. For the Senate, however, Article 20 stipulates that 'each region shall be represented in the Senate by ten senators of whom seven shall be elected by indirect universal suffrage on a regional basis and three appointed by the President.

Indicative of a rupture from past practice, its Article 37 recognised the Judiciary as a power. This power is exercised in the name of the people by the Supreme Court (comprising the judicial, administrative and audit benches), Courts of Appeal and Tribunals which shall be independent of the executive and legislative powers. Consequently, magistrates of the bench, in the discharge of their duties, shall be guided only by law and their conscience. Enigmatically, per Article 38(3) the President shall guarantee the independence of the judiciary as well as appoint members of the bench and of the legal department. Admittedly, he is assisted in this task by the Higher Judicial Council 'which shall give him its opinion on all nominations for the bench and on disciplinary action against judicial and legal officers'. Article 46 provides for a Constitutional Council which shall have jurisdiction

¹ See *Mutations*, 29 March (2004).

in matters pertaining to the Constitution, rule on the constitutionality of laws and regulate the functioning of the institutions. This jurisdictional division of powers should preempt policy makers from emulating Bismarck who claimed that those who like laws and sausages should not look at how they are made. Yet principle and practice do not necessarily coincide, especially in heroic states.

Separation of Powers or a relationship of Imperative Coordination

The doctrine of the separation of powers, though a gauge of the politically feasible or ethically justifiable, becomes irrelevant in the absence of constitutionalism. Cognisant of this, Jean-Jacques Rousseau argued that men should be before laws what they become through them (in Douzinas and Warrington, 1991:147). Institutional restraints compliment rather than substitute for self-restraint, a trait that is seemingly in short supply among Cameroon's ruling class. Against this backdrop, it has been argued normatively that founding elections are crucial for democratic consolidation in Africa (Villalon, 1993:165). Seemingly to give effect to this, Cameroonians were overwhelmingly voted change in the 1992 Presidential elections. But Biya's regime, conscious of the fact that those who make important miscalculations in these elections are eliminated from office (Prezworski and Lynn Karl 1990:6) rigged these elections. Cameroon's democracy thereafter became 'not a matter of breaking through the barrier to further development of a political and economic system on its way up, but the last gasp attempt to hold together one on its way down' (Clapham, 1993:534). Since this required reinforcing the powers of the President, the doctrine of the separation of powers has been turned on its head. The relationship between the Executive and Parliament is one of imperative coordination as can be discerned in a recent claim by Adamou Ndam Njoya, the President of the Cameroon Democratic Union (CDU).¹⁴¹ And this is because the CPDM, Biya's party, has an overwhelming majority of seats in Parliament. Though opacity is a trademark of this party, it has been claimed that all decisions emanate from Biya who holds all the carrots and sticks. Thus, a former Vice President of the Assembly noted: 'I don't know how I was made Vice President. It was a surprise to me. There is not way, I think, anybody can try to influence such decisions without burning his fingers.'¹⁴² 'We, the people' are further disempowered when an MP insists in defining his role as the representative of the President in his constituency! Against this backdrop, one can begin to understand the disconnect between some MPs who live in urban areas and their constituents. Paradigmatic of this is the lack

¹ *The Herald*, NO. 290, % February (1996) p.1-2.

² Reporters Sans Frontières, *2003 Annual Report: Africa Introduction*, www.rsf.org/rubrique.php3?id_rubrique=329.

of constituency 'surgeries' that enable MPs to see their constituents at specific times. Fear has vitiated, if not obviated, the spirit of independence among the MPs. Thomas Jefferson noted: 'If I can go to heaven but with a political party, I would not go there at all' (Hostadter, 1969:123). Jefferson's skepticism about political parties is not shared in Cameroon which does not allow for independent MPs.

Arguably, the presence of fear pre-empts MPs from using the organisational resources, though few, at their disposal to control Executive action, powers discerned on them per Article 14(2) of the Constitution. To enable this legislative oversight, Article 10 of the Parliament's internal regulations allows MPs to pose either oral or written questions to Ministers. Though question and sessions have been institutionalised after several hiccups, CPDM MPs are constantly reminded not to use these sessions to embarrass the Government. Similarly, the Ministers see it as an unnecessary ritual and seek to deride MPs during these sessions. Failure of the House leadership to stop this caused leaders of the Opposition to put it in the public domain¹⁴³. Disregard for MPs among the Ministers can be explained by the fact that even bills rejected by Parliament can still be signed into law. A case in point is the bill liberalising the health sector.¹⁴⁴ Indicative of a failure to accept the moral authority of Parliament, it also shows the Executive's propensity to ignore the 'due process of law' in the implementing its policy. Laws therefore take on the semblance of a *coups de force* rather than emanate from a political exchange.

To maximise the chances for political exchange, dissent should not be confounded with conflict. Yet this is the prevailing attitude among Cameroonian political parties. MPs who disagree with their parties risk exclusion from the party and ultimately the loss of their seat. MPs are conscious of Article 15(3) of the Constitution which renders 'any imposed mandate null and void' (*mandate imperative*). This reinforces the iron law of oligarchy as expulsion from a party leads to a loss of Parliamentary seat. MPs would go to any extent to avoid negative narcissism (Rosenfeld, 1971:169) that is, political destruction directed to the self or be labelled, in Cameroonian speak, as *les ennemis dans la maison* (enemies in the house). Against this backdrop, Parliamentary compromises become difficult. Its deleterious effect in the United States- helping to turn the United States from a strong to a weak democracy- has been shown in the railings of the ineffective Congress in the years leading up to the Civil War (Gladstone *et al*:2003:29). Furthermore, it also explains the inability of MPs to vote into law or even discuss any private member bill since 1992. Though Article 14(4) of the Constitution stipulates

¹See *Challenge Nouveau*, No.100, 24 juillet (1997)' and *Le Messenger*, No. 730, 20 février (1998), p.5.

² *The Herald Today*, No.1491, May 12 (2004), www.herladnewspaper.org.

³ See www.cameroon-info.net/cmi_show_news.php?id=14527.

⁴ IRIN News.Org 'Cameroon: Government allows Catholic Station to resume broadcasting', 29 April (2004).

⁵ *Le Quotidien Mutations*, 24 avril (2004), www.quotidienmutations.net.

that private member bills not considered during two ordinary sessions are automatically considered at the very next ordinary session, the CPDM majority has pre-empted this by resorting to subterfuge. By and large, present trends in Cameroon suggest 'the decline of opposition' as opposed to 'the decline of the opposition'. This as Sidney Tarrow noted in the case of Italy signals a decline in the level of dialogue between the government and the opposition, the summit and the base, that is the hallmark of Parliamentary democracy.

Absent Parliamentary opposition, only the Judiciary can begin to redeem Cameroon's democratic project. This required that it foster the judicial discipline of the Executive as well as the rule of law. Enforcing the rule of law requires an ethos of impartiality and a condition of its possibility is a Judiciary 'which is capable of withstanding the pressures and blandishments of the powerful' (Beetham, 1992:123-124). To nurture judicial correctness, the Constitution provides that judges should apply the law in accordance with their conscience. Structural conditions, however, have made this impossible. Notable among them is the overwhelming space occupied by the Higher Judicial Council that promotes, transfers and sanctions judges. This Council which meets only when the President can squeeze its meetings into his schedule mostly endorses proposals prepared by the Executive. Appointments are seen as rewards and the fact that the Council has previously sanctioned magistrates for applying the law does not comfort magistrates.

Notable is the sanction meted out on the magistrates of the Bamenda High Court granting bail to Justice Nyo Wakai *et al.* detained 1992 under the State of Emergency Law (suit No. HCB/19 CRM/92). The magistrates in ordering their release, noted that they had been held beyond the period prescribed in the law and that detention, in some cases, resulted from administrative *voies de faits*, that is, illegal administrative acts. This decision, though founded in law, was not politically correct. Enforcing it would have meant releasing some officials of the SDF which had claimed in the 1992 Presidential elections and declared its intent to form the legitimate government in Bamenda. The Attorney General therefore refused to implement it. Cameroonian legal practitioners have noted the reticence of Attorneys General to apply court decisions that do not favor the state. This is in violation of Section 24(A) of Ordinance 72/4 of August 1972 (amended by Ordinance 72/21 of October 1972) calling on them to intervene in cases in 'the interests of the law' (Cameroon Law Reports, 1998:13). With the passage of time, a judicial

14 According to Jeremie Engolo who was the leader of the 'ambulant voters', they were hired by the Minister of Towns, Claude Mbafo and Mme Mebara who transported them to Dschang. Here they could vote several times with a view to guaranteeing victory for the CPDM in this municipality. In return, they were to be paid handsomely as well as rewarded with government contracts (*The Post*, 19 July (2002), p.2. Those imported into the North-West Province (in Santa specifically) were lodged and fed as well as promised the sum of 15.000 francs for their transport fares to their homes (*The Post*, 1 July (2002), p.3).

culture that confounds 'the interests of the law' with the 'the interests of the state *qua* regime' has emerged.

Attempts by the Court or some of its officials to enforce some of these decisions have been stopped on the tracks by police or the military officers placed under the authority of the Executive. They use physical well as psychological violence on bailiffs executing court decisions. Recently, a bailiff executing a decision of the Douala Court of Appeal expelling a tenant from a house, was beaten by a Army captain working with the Douala branch of the *Direction Générale des Renseignements Extérieurs (DGRE)*, a security intelligence gathering outfit. Consequent to this, one of the presiding judges revisited the decision and asked that the tenant, who is the daughter of a General be reinstated in the house.¹⁴⁵ Law in a case where connections rather than rules count is not blind. And the tendency to privilege connections rather than rules does not augur well for the state. Lord Atkins noted that justice is the last line of defense in a state which if 'overrun by the ever advancing avalanche of moral decay or of pressure' signal the warning shots 'being fired for the inauguration of the reign of terror'.

Presently, the Executive as in all heroic states us the locus of power. The Legislative and Judiciary have only ancillary powers. Failing a change in the present configuration of power, the creation of other structures such as the Senate, Constitutional Council and Regions provided for in the 1996 Constitution would probably only enhance the enormity of the President's powers. The Constitution empowers him to name a third of the members of the Senate and the bulk of those of the Constitutional Council which shall rule on the constitutionality of all laws. Similarly, at the regional level, per Article 58, he appoints a delegate who 'shall be responsible for national interests, administrative control, ensuring compliance with laws and regulations as well as maintaining law and order'. In effect, the delegate shall have powers over the elected regional representatives. Historical evidence from early postcolonial Cameroon, as underscored in the conflict between the Federal Inspector and the elected government of West Cameroon (Konings and Nyamnjon, 2003:53-54), brings to the fore the nuisance effect of this 'bicephalism'. It was reshaped in 1996 after the Municipal elections with the appointment of Government Delegates to urban municipalities such as Douala, Limbe and Bamenda.¹⁴⁶ Appointment of candidates who had lost the election gave the impression that the President sought to negate the commonweal of the people and resonates with a use of subliminal force. Though Machiavelli points out the need of both law and force to guarantee stability (1994: 57), historical evidence suggests that Biya regime would opt for a disproportionate use of force, thus upsetting the balance between these two ordering principles. This as I have argues elsewhere is attributable to the fact 'throughout Cameroon's history power has been the text, fear of the 'other' the controlling subtext, with the ultimate fear being the loss of power' (Jua, 2001:41).

The watchdog functions of the Press

The centrality of the fear of losing power in the regime's policy agenda explains its desire to feminise other institutions such as the Legislative and Judiciary that serve as countervailing forces. Only public shaming can rein it in. But this requires 'effective participation' that depends on appropriate structures and processes as well as access and information (Hill, 1994:7). In a democracy, this role devolves on the press. Commenting on its role, Jeremy Bentham notes: 'such is the nature of man when clothed with power ... that ... whatever mischief has not been done by him today, he is sure to be mediating today, and unless restrained by fear of what the public may think or do, it may actually be done by him tomorrow' (1820-21:15). Arguably, this explains the regime's reluctance to liberalise the media even after the passage of Law 90-92 of December 1990 to this effect. Under duress, it permitted the creation of alternative newspapers such as *le Messager*, *La Nouvelle Expression*, and *The Post* which have problematised the regime's accounts of events. Promotion and nurturance of another consciousness causes people to account in the government paper. *Cameroon Tribune* as a truth and not *the* truth which is ascertained by an intersubjective consensus. Because of this, people turn increasingly to the alternative press. Its sales have increased while those of *Cameroon Tribune* have plummeted. To counter this trend that the regime sees as contributing to the growth of an oppositional consciousness, it frequently jails journalists of the private press, ostensibly for libel. Or to avoid the gaze of the international community, the courts are now fining them 'exorbitant sums'.¹⁴⁷ Not even papers such as *Popoli* that publishes only cartoons, which like jokes in the Freudian (1905) scheme allow the expression of illicit emotion or desire in the form everyday utterances made safe have escaped the wrath of the government.

Preoccupation with containment also led the regime to hesitate liberalising the audio-visual space. It attributed this to the 'immediacy of news (which) can have serious effects that are not easily controllable' and a wish to see 'a liberalisation worthy of our country in a domain where technological progress is rapid'¹⁴⁸ respectively. Evidently, it was conscious that Cameroonians privileged the audio-visual media as a source of information. According to a survey by the Center for Research and Study in Economic (CRETE), most Cameroonians in Yaounde and Garoua prefer televisions as their source of information while those Douala, Bafoussam and Bamenda favour the radio.¹⁴⁹ These urban centers, notably, are heavily populated and in the consciousness of its residents, the policy is construed to further *Cameroon Radio and Television* (CRTV), the official media dubbed 'his master's voice', monopoly this space. For example, a recent study of the access time given to five political parties by les Nouveaux Droits de l'Homme shows that the CPDM occupied a disproportionate space occupied by the CPDM- 92.31% on television, 94.1% on radio and 99.53% in the written press.¹⁵⁰

Against this backdrop, this fringe of the population sees decisions

suspending or barring ventures, such as the one in November 2003 closing *Radio Veritas*, opened by Christian Cardinal Tumi whom was speculated to be a candidate for the 2004 Presidential elections, as designed to pre-empt a levelling of the playing field. That a license for reopening this station and only broadcasting 'religious programs for the social and cultural education of the Catholic community of Douala'¹⁵¹ was granted only after Cardinal Tumi denied the rumour only further validates this line of thinking. Similar constraints are placed on the privately owned stations such as Adriane Television (ATI) and Canal 2 which are seen as presenting the 'really real'. Under the rules of engagement, the Minister of Communications, who is the political correctness police, has to approve all their programs.¹⁵² And this conditionality is imposed only after the private investor must have gone through the eye of the needle. Exorbitant operational fees - US\$15,6000 for radio stations, US\$73,000 for local television stations and \$146,000 for national television stations - serve as a disincentive for most of them (US Embassy, 2002). On the whole, media laws and practice by the regime are liberticidal.

Denying audio-visual licenses, though an efficient way (managing at low costs) of control the spread of information can hardly be effective (managing it in the best way possible). This is because it is predicated on the uncritical acceptance of the doctrine of political sovereignty and territorial integrity. Not only is space bounded but the government is seen to have complete control over its eminent domain. Global forces are gnawing away these powers on a quotidian temporality basis. Thus, stations with a global reach such as the BBC, RFI and Voice of America not only compete with CRTV as the source of information but have become *the* preferred source of information of most Cameroonians.

Furthermore the advent of new modes of communication such the e-mail and its democratisation has enabled the formation of an affective community of the oppressed that eschews national boundaries. Also important is deterritorialisation promoted by cable television. All of these have contributed to the CNN factor; margins are erased broadcasting from any geographical location is always from the centre.

EDI: The Right to vote and free elections

EDI emphasises the role of free and fair elections as a way of giving back 'power to the people' who under the hegemonic party had been reduced to irrelevance, or at best, 'standing reserves' used for instrumental value (Heidegger, 1977:18). Cameroon embarked on this path with the holding of its first multiparty elections in March 1992. The CPDM, referred to in popular parlance as *chop people them money*, won only 88 seats in the 180 member Parliament. The *Mouvement Démocratique pour la Défense de la République* (MDR) the *Union pour la Démocratie et du Développement* (UNDP) and *Union des Populations du Cameroun* (UPC) won six, 68 and 18 seats respectively. Only an alliance with the MDR enabled the CPDM to gain

a working majority in Parliament. Though pacts are aimed at drastically curtailing conflict in a political system (Cohen and Arato, 1992:54), in a context of transition, it has been noted, they 'attempt to control the agenda of policy concerns deliberately distort the principle of citizen equality (O'Donnell and Schmitter, 1986:38). Control of Parliament enabled the CPDM to broach laws for the October 1992 Presidential elections, considered as the founding elections and all other elections that have taken place in Cameroon. It was conscious of the fact that the CDU had boycotted the March elections because of the regime's failure to respect the minimum rules of engagement laid down at the 1992 Yaounde Tripartite Conference, described as a tragic epic by a newspaper. The SDF, arguably the most popular party, which had *ab initio* doubted the possibility of this Conference to chance Cameroon's unpacted democracy also boycotted the elections.

These two parties indicated their intention to participate in the 2002 Presidential elections, despite it's the unpacted nature of Cameroon's democracy. Seemingly, heeding Prezworski's warning that parties that make important miscalculations would be eliminated from office, the CDPM turned its focus to electoralism, that is concerned more with outcomes than procedure of elections. In its furtherance, it insisted that the Ministry of Territorial Administration (MINAT) organise the elections. Because the Opposition parties wanted this to be confided to an independent electoral commission, this led to a 'reciprocal stalemate fed by recalcitrance and polarisation with no visible exit' (Palma, 1990:56). Despite the failure to resolve this stalemate which continues to dog elections even today, all the parties still participated in the elections. Creation of the National Election Observatory popularly known by its French acronym ONEL, a concession by the regime, has produced at best, a placebo effect, temporary improvement that may follow even medically useless treatment. And this inheres from ONEL's limited mandate - to observe the whole election process and the fact that all of virtually all of its members belong to the CPDM or are sympathetic to it. This caused its stock of social capital to be depleted. In essence, MINAT retains full powers over organising elections.

Its foregrounds the 'prefectoral mode of representation', reminiscent of the practice under the Third French Republic where administrators fabricated election results. The memory Algerian-type elections in the declining French Empire, (Eboussi, 1997: 11) continues to inform the consciousness of its administrators. Not surprisingly therefore, Andze Tchoungui who was a Prefet on the eve of Cameroon's independence in 1960 and the Minister of Territorial Administration in 1992 put a premium on *l'obligation de resultants*. In a pre-election meeting with Provincial governors, he told them that Biya had to win whatever the outcome of the voting. Because of this, the vote was rigged in favor of Biya to the detriment of Fru Ndi, the SDF Chairman and candidate of the Forces of Change who was the presumed winner. The National Democratic Institute noted that because of flaws like this, the system was 'designed to fail' (National Democratic Institute, Press Release, 27 April 2003). This flaw has not been redressed as administrators who are not schooled

in the *étatist* tradition (cf. John-Nambo, 1994:134, Robert, 1992:443) still organise all elections. This tradition cannot be nurtured in a heroic state and administrators are conscious that their careers as well as upward mobility depend on their ability to foster the regime's vertical political concerns.

Paradigmatic of this is the zeal with which it sought to execute a 2004 Supreme Court decision annulling results of June 2002 elections in some constituencies. In its exuberance, the Minister faxed message No. 376 Minatd/Dajc of 23 April 2004 to the Governor of Littoral Province informing him of the cancellation of the results in Nkongsamba Municipality and to forthwith inform the SDF which was administering this Council.

***... Fru Ndi declared himself
and was seen by a fringe of
the country as the
legitimate President while
Biya was described as the
legal President***

Unreflexively, the Governor by his message No. 95 Mfx/Sg/Cc1 of 28 April 2004 informed the Prefet of Mungo. And with a view to executing this instruction, the Prefet informed the SDF per letter No. 057/Mp/C16/bc of 29 April 2004. Quick and prompt action in this case is anomalous in an Administration known for its legendary lethargy. It was common knowledge that the Court had rejected the CPDM's appeal to cancel the results of this particular municipality. Though in the public domain, no administrator dared to question the instruction. A basic premise underlying MINAT's instructions was the Court's submission to MINATD *qua* CPDM in all issues in the realm of elections. This was already evident in the 1992 Presidential elections when the President of the Supreme Court after noting its flaws declared that his inability to do anything because his hands were tied.

Its inability to rule in questions of electoral disputes has spawned concepts in Cameroon's political grammar, such as legal and legitimate results as well as stolen victory. Their effects can be far reaching as demonstrated by the 1992 stalemate when Fru Ndi declared himself and was seen by a fringe of the country as the legitimate President while Biya was described as the legal President. Admittedly, the Court is now resolving some of the disputes engendered by this, even if belatedly. It took seven years to intervene in the case of the first Municipal elections. This interval has been reduced as it took two years to resolve disputes from the 2002 elections. Its discretion vis-à-vis time lines arises from the fact unlike the law governing the Parliamentary elections which stipulates that all electoral disputes be settled within a sixty day period, no time limit is given for resolving similar disputes

¹ Cited in *Le Messenger*, No.788, 15 July (1998), p.4.

² *Le Quotidien Mutations*, 03 May (2004), www.quotidienmutations.net.

³ See *Le Messenger*, www.wagne.net/messenger/2004/02/1627/listeelectorale.htm.

⁴ See www.reseauvoltaire.net/article_7950.html.

in Municipal elections. This oversight, whether contrived or fortuitous, does not help to blunt the edge of the arbitrary.

Further exacerbating prejudice caused by the lack of fairness is the fact that elections are not free. Disenfranchisement has been promoted through the introduction of differential entry costs to participation. Terms like *allogène*, *autochtone* and *electoral village* are now mainstreamed in Cameroon's culture of politics, that is, practice that is culturally legitimated and validated by local knowledge (Robinson, 1994:39). In effect, *autochtones* claim the right to decide on the political destiny of their *electoral village* and *allogènes* or *kam-no-gos* that comprise 'an overzealous immigrant population' should not decide the destiny of their host communities (Jua, 2004:309). Government functionaries played an invaluable role in nurturing this cognition as well as giving it effect. In the South-West Province, for example, a gubernatorial order issued requiring every *allogène* to produce a resident permit before being registered. To obtain a permit, *allogènes* needed to show proof of continuous residence in the Province for at least six months. Revealingly, the prerogative of issuing these permits was given to CPDM officials. In Kumba, it devolved on Chief Mukete, a member of its Political Bureau. Rather than recuse himself, the Chief and his forces violated and exercised violence on *allogènes* who went to his palace in search of permits. And administrators who failed to enforce this order because it lacked the comfort of morality were reminded that they were jeopardising their careers. Evidential of this is a letter from the National President of the CPDM Youth wing to the Senior Divisional Officer for Kumba. Berating him for disrespecting this order he warns: 'You claim to work for your personal interests, even if the CPDM, *your employer* (my emphasis) loses in Kumba'. Revealingly, state and party are confounded.

This doctrine of excluding voters suspected of harboring an oppositional consciousness was pushed to its logical conclusion in the June 2002. Electoral charters, that is, bus loads of *allogènes* were brought into constituencies where it was presumed the *autochtones* would vote for the Opposition. Disenfranchised in the areas where they were resident for fear of the influence they would have its political destiny, they were also disenfranchised in their *electoral villages* because they would not vote for the CPDM. In Dschang in the Western Province, for example, bus loads of Beti *allogènes* were brought and given the privilege of multiple votes while *autochtones* were denied the right to vote!¹⁵³. Though the *allogène/autochtone* binary was foregrounded in throughout the electoral process, it is not sacrosanct. The name of any potential voter suspected to be infected by the Opposition virus is expunged from the electoral register. Notable is the case of Professor Ndiva Kofele Kale, the SDF candidate for Parliament for Buea Urban who could not even vote. His name was not on the register!

These electoral practices have contributed significant to demobilising people, albeit their will to participation. They no longer register to vote or vote. Analogically, elections have become like projects where if the implementers could foresee how tortuous the path to completion would be, the precautionary principle

would prevent them from undertaking such projects. This principle of the hiding hand is functional to progress (Hirschman, 1967: 22) Since this hiding hand is visible in Cameroonian politics, people simply opt for exit; their votes would not influence electoral outcomes. A recent French Senate report noted that there is a yawning gap between the announced rate of 80 and 90% participation and the effective rate one. According to the report, this was attributable to the nostalgia for ancient practices.¹⁵⁴ To further sustain this thesis, a report by the Cameroon Episcopal Council found out that only 30% of the potential voters were registered in 2002. And the number of those actually voting dwindled because most people did not know where to vote. Whereas the law prescribes that electoral lists should be published three days in advance, they were published only on voting day in 90% of the voting stations.¹⁵⁵

Other factors also explain the current demobilisation among the people. Notable is ONEL's inability to even supervise and control the mixed commissions that revise electoral registers. Some of commissions do not even have an ONEL representative.¹⁵⁶ Similarly, opposition parties have exhausted the political credit that the people gave them without bringing about any change and now resemble the CPDM in many aspects. An intra-party political exchange of ideas is discouraged and transparency (Transparency International, 2004) as well as accountability de-emphasised. Public funds given to some of the parties represented in the Assembly such as the SDF have not been well managed. And some of their leaders readily abandon the agenda for change as a result of bribes from foreign countries as in the case of Françafrique.¹⁵⁷ All political parties are beginning to look like Tweedledum and Tweedledee. It is spurious to attribute the general demobilisation, as the CPDM has done, to the fact that opposition parties *projets de société*. Most African parties are electoral rather than thought machines. The importance of the *projet de société* has waned considerably as demonstrated by the election of Silvio Berlusconi's *Forzi Italia* in Italy in 1993 despite the widespread perception that it lacked a *projet de société* or even a precise program (Buijttenhuis, 1994: 134) and Brazil where people think and participate in politics in more personalistic and immediate ways (Mettenheim, 1990: 39-40). Generally, Cameroonians are suffering from a 'rebound effect', caused by the inverse correlation between the effort expended to bring about political liberalism and its payoff. Because of this, they have opted for free riding (Hirschmann, 1982: 80) and maintain an attitude of critical silence.

Negotiating the Impasse

The argument that only alternation ushered by founding elections can help consolidate democracy needs to be interrogated. In Senegal where Abdoulaye Wade, the President

¹ See www.afrol.com/News/cam_011_logging_mafia.htm.

of *le rue publique* has finally become the President of *la République*, cynicism seems to run deep as Senegalese bemoan 'alternation without an alternative'. In other words, people are seduced by democracy not just because it enables participation but also an improvement in their life chances. The normative discourses of growth and development are intrinsic to it. Its failure to bring about these ends in Latin America, as noted above largely explains the sprawl of democratic fatigue among the people. This is echoed in the Senegalese case. Though elections have not led to an alternation as yet in Cameroon, there are certain conditions that would hamper the emergence of an alternative, if not an enabling environment for development. To counter this, the IMF has urged for a reform of the judicial system. In Cameroon's first Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), the IMF notes: 'the results from consultative participations identified violence, corruption and lack of security as important elements of contributing factors to poverty' (IMF, 2003: 11). And corruption, Kofi Annan notes 'undermines democracy and the rule of law, leads to violations of human rights, distorts markets, erodes the quality of life and allows organised crime, terrorism and other threats to human security to flourish (UN Wire, April 12, 2004).

This is brought into broad relief with the privatisation of the state which signals an absence of the notion of public good and general interest. Guaranteeing entitlements to the rich, it disempowers the poor. Subterfuge, such as the Cameroon's refusal to budget oil revenues with a view to starving off the Dutch disease, is used in some instances. Enigmatically, these revenues disappeared into a black hole. Budget deficits spiralled. This impacted negatively on the development of social citizenship. Attempts by the state to get policy right, though a conditionality of their exposure to international financial institutions (IFIs), have not borne the anticipated dividends. Leakages still abound as demonstrated in the Forestry sector. Despite a Forestry law to assure rational exploitation, 'anarchic logging outside of the boundaries of the legally allowed license' is commonplace. Purveyors of this crime benefit from the regime of immunities (Mbembe, 2001). They are Army officers, leaders of the CPDM, the members of Biya's family and European forest exploiters¹⁵⁸ who have exploitation licenses. To begin to curb this, IFIs have insisted on their democratic management through the introduction of management committees, a reform embraced by the people who are no longer inert (Braudrillard, 1983). As in other reform measures that seek to institute an enabling environment for development, elites have sought to capture these committees. Elite capture is grounded in altruism. Supposedly, the common man, through a Hegelian prism, is unable to make distinctions and therefore needs to be saved from himself.

But increasingly this claim is challenged as instanced in the case of the Mengu Gorilla Sanctuary, created to promote conservation, eco-tourism and local development of the area. With a view to realising these goals, the government entered into a Partnership Agreement (PA) with Société Forestière Petra (Sofopetra) in 1997. It was renewed in September 2000. Sofopetra built roads, bridges as well

as a saw mill which led to job creation. The quality of the people's life improved as it also opened small consumer shops, built classrooms and opened community nurseries for palms. Having satisfied the engagements in its *cahier des charges*, it expected the Cameroon to respect its promise by granting it 'most favoured company' status when assigning logging rights in the surrounding forests. It not only failed to do this but also cancelled the PA with Sofopetra in 2001, accusing it of 'illegal logging, manipulation and contributing to forest degradation'. These indictments were supported by Green Peace.¹⁵⁹

But the people, who as it emerges from local discourses privilege immediacy and are more concerned with improving their quality of life (Oyono *et al*, 2003) failed to buy into this argument. Since Sofopetra contributed to its realisation, it was seen as the holy grail and attempts to expel it from this area conspiratorial. The conspiracy thesis was only validated by the attempts of the MP, Efova Mbozo, to have the exploitation licenses for peripheral forests to be granted to Aveico Ltd. and Cofa, owned by the son of an Army General and Biya's nephew respectively. The people weighed in at this juncture with popular protests which helped to convert decision making in this area into a new site of struggle. Other sites are emerging all over the country. To escape capture, people acting more as opportunity snatchers are continuously wresting voice which confers legitimacy (Lyotard, 1993:140) on elites seen as reifying the state. Costs of protests at this level are politically acceptable when seen through the prism of dispersed domination. In this mode of governance in which parts of the state may be pulled in different directions, neither the state nor any social force manages to achieve countrywide domination (Migdal, 1994:9). Alternatively, it evidences a multiple authority polity where the dysfunctional state endeavors to preside over torn societies (Kamrava, 1993:705). Though fragments, they change the way power is lived, experienced and dealt with. This has far reaching implications as it is essentially an insurrection against the extant mode of domination, which to paraphrase Michel Foucault has been 'fixed throughout its history in meticulous procedures that imposed rights and obligations and established its marks of power and engraved memories on things and even with bodies' (Shumway, 1992:11)

Arguably, the state cedes grounds readily in the economic realm because this does not directly threaten its political power. But each victory reveals its capacity deficit, that is, its means 'to implement official goals in the face of actual or potential opposition of social powerful groups or in the face of recalcitrant socio-economic circumstances' (Stocpol, 1985:9). This was brought into broad relief recently by the nation wide strike called by taxi drivers to protest extortionary practices by the police. Rather than address the substantive issue, the state used the ethic card and symbolic violence (bribes) in a quest to fragment their common experience. This was to no avail. Resistance by the poor in circumstances like this is remarkable for Hegel

¹ See www.greenpeace.or/media/publications/forests/cameroon.pdf.

notes: 'dissoluteness, misery and physical and ethical corruption disconnects people from formative associations, with a consequent sense of right and wrong, of honesty and the self-respect that makes a man insist on maintaining himself by his work and effort' (1952:123-124). Increasingly, the inventiveness of African societies and their capacity for innovation when confronted by pauperisation (for details see Ela, 1998:3)-tending to foreground social networks and reciprocity in devising alternative survival strategies- is enabling them to deal with uncertainty (Berner and Trulsson, 2000). The informal economy contributes to the development of social citizenship.

Conclusion

The endurance of the democratisation process for more than ten years begins to prove the chances of democratic possibilism on the continent. Despite this, few doubt the prescience of Larry Diamond's observation that 'if progress is made toward developing democratic government (in Africa), it is likely to be gradual, messy, fitful and slow, with many imperfections along the way' (1989:24). Evidence from Cameroon shows that this progress is further inhibited in heroic states where the democratic projects are unpacted. Architects of this project are more concerned with the will to power than the will to participation. The regime has resorted to a lexical inflation to cover over this; Cameroon moved from practicing *advanced* to *appeasement* democracy. Essentially, this is rhetorical strategy that conceals the regime's autocratic tendencies and its accumulated disregard for organisational principles such as the jurisdictional distribution of political, free and fair elections that are intrinsic to strong partial democracies. The emphasis on electoralism has even led to a change in the culture of politics. Its cumulative effect has been democratic fatigue. Because of this, Cameroon has the traits of a weak partial democracy and only an alternation in power would increase the chances for its reversal. Presently, the chances of a democratic rescue are increased by the practice of dispersed domination. Empowering people at other sites that are remotely connected to the political seems innocuous. But it overlooks the effect of empowerment on the nurturance of a critical consciousness and the fact that capital is easily transferred from one field to the other. Because of this development, the democratisation process as perceived and experienced in Cameroon as essentially work in progress though hanging on a shoestring.

Bibliography

- Accardo, A. 2003. 'Un savant engagé' *Awal, Cahiers d'études berberes*, Nos.27-28.
- Amuwo, K. 2004. 'State Repair and Democratic Development in Africa' in Mbaku, J.M. and S.C. Saxena, (eds.), *Africa at the Crossroads: Between Regionalism and Globalization*, Westport, CT: Praeger.
- Bayart, J-F. 1979. *L'état au Cameroun*, Paris: Presses de la Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques.
- _____. 1993. *The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly*, New York: Longman.
- Beetham, D. 1991. *The Legitimation of Power*, London: Macmillan.
- Bentham, J. 1820-21. *On Liberty of the Press and Public Discussion*, London.
- Bratton, M. and N. van de Walle, 1998. *Democratic Experiments in Africa: Regime Transitions in Comparative Perspective*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Berner, B. and P. Trulsson, 2000. *Manoeuvring in an Environment of Uncertainty*, Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Braudrillard, J. 1983. *In the Shadow of Silent Majorities*, Semiotext(e), New York: Columbia University.
- Buijttenhuis, R. 1994. 'Les parties politiques africaines ont-ils de projets de société? L'exemple du Tchad', *Politique africaine*. Vol.56. Decembre.
- Clapham, C. 1993. 'Democratization in Africa: Obstacles and Prospects', *Third World Quarterly*, Col.14, No.3.
- Cohen, J. and Arato, A. 1992. *Civil Society and Political Theory*, Massachusetts: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press.
- Comaroff, J and J. Comaroff, 1992. *Ethnography and Historical Imagination*, Boulder. CO: Westview Press.
- Dahomy, J. 2001. 'La Tentation tyrannique haïtienne', *Chemins critiques*, Portes au Prince. Vol. V, no. 1 Janvier, p.12-13.
- Diamond, L. 1989. 'Beyond Autocracy: Prospects for Democracy in Africa' in R. Joseph (ed.), *Beyond Autocracy in Africa*, Atlanta, GA: The Carter Center.
- Douzinas, C. and Warrington R. 1991. *Postmodern Jurisprudence*, London: Routledge.
- Eboussi, F.B. 1997. 'An Assessment of the Organization of Elections in Cameroon' in Friedrich Ebert Foundation (ed.), *The Role of the National Electoral Commission in the Democratization Process*, Yaounde: Editions Saagraph and Friedrich Ebert.
- Ela, J.M. 1998. 'Refus du Développement ou Echec de l'Occidentalisation: Les voies de l'Afro-renaissance', *Le Monde Diplomatique*, Octobre, www.monde.diplomatique.fr/ELA/199811133.
- Elster, J. 1993. 'Majority Rule and Individual Rights' in S. Shute and S. Hurley (eds.), *On Human Rights*, London: Basic Books.
- Etonga, M. 1980. 'An Imperial Presidency: A Study of Presidential Power in Cameroon' in N. Kofele-Kale, (ed.), *The Bilingual Cameroon Republic since Reunification*, Boulder, CO: Westview.
- Freud, S. 1905. *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious, (Standard Edition)*, Vol.8, Hogarth, (1960).
- Friedman, W. 1964. *Law in a Changing Society*, England: Harmondsworth.
- Gladstone, J., T.R. Gurr; M. Marshall and J. Ulfelder, 2003. *Beyond Democracy*, submitted to the Combat Political Violence Competition, Institute of War and Peace Studies, Columbia University, February 28.
- Greenpeace, 2000. *Plundering Cameroon's Rainforests*, www.greenpeaceusa.org/media/publications/forests/cameroon.pdf, September 7.
- Haas, P. 1992. 'Introduction; Epistemic Communities and International policy coordination' *International Organization*, 46, 1-36.

- Habermas, J. 2004. Interview in *Le Monde Diplomatique*, Février, 17.
- Hegel, G.W.F. 1952. *The Philosophy of Right*, Oxford:Oxford University Press.
- Heidegger, M. 1977. 'The Question of Technology' in M. Heidegger (ed.) *The Question of Technology and Other Essays*, New York: Harper.
- Hill, D.M. 1994. *Citizens and Cities: Policies in the 1990s*, New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf.
- Hirschman, A. 1967. *Development Projects Observed*, Washington DC: Brookings Institution.
- Hirschmann, A. 1982. *Shifting Involvements: Private Interest and Public Action*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Hofstadter, D.L. 1969. *The Idea of a Party System*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Hunt, A.and G. Wickham, 1994. *Foucault and the Law*, New York: Pluto Press, .
- International Monetary Fund, 2003. 'Cameroon: Joint Staff Assessment of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper', *Country Report* NO. 03/255, August.
- Bouveresse, J. 2004. 'Les medias, les intellectuels et Pierre Bourdieu', *Le Monde Diplomatique*, Février 28.
- John-Nambo, J. 1994. 'Parodie d'élection présidentielle au Gabon', *Politique Etrangère*.
- Jua, N. and P. Konings (forthcoming), 'Occupation of Public Space: The Anglophone Problem in Cameroon', *Cahier d'étude africaine*.
- Jua, N. 1988. 'The Petty Bourgeoisie and the Politics of Social Justice' Leiden: African Studies Center.
- _____. 2001. 'Democracy and the Construction of Allogeny/Autochtony in Postcolonial Cameroon', *African Issues* Vol. 29, Nos.1and 2, 37-42.
- _____. 2004. 'Ethnicity, Agonism of Difference and National Imagining on Postcolonial Africa' in Mbaku, J.M and S.C. Saxena, (eds.), *Africa at the Crossroads: Between Regionalism and Globalization*, Westport, CT: Praeger.
- _____. 1991. 'Cameroon: Jump-starting an Economic Crisis' *Africa Insight*, Vol. 21, No. 3, pp. 162-170.
- Kamarava, M. 1993. 'Conceptualizing Third World Politics: the State-Society See-saw', *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 14, No. 4,
- Knight, J. and J. Johnson, 1994. 'Aggregation and Deliberation: On the Possibility of Democratic Legitimacy', *Political Theory*, Vol. 22, No. 2, May.
- Konings, P. and F. Nyamnjoh, 2003. *Negotiating an Anglophone Identity: A Study of the Politics of Recognition and Representation in Cameroon*, Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill.
- Lamb, D. 1986. *The Africans*, London: Methuen.
- Lytard, J-F. 1993. 'The Other's Rights in Shute, S. and S. Hurley (eds.), *On Human Rights*, London: Basic Books.
- Machiavelli, N. 1994. *The Prince*, New York: Barnes and Nobles.
- Mbembe, A. 2001. *On the postcolony*, Berkeley: University of California Press.
- von Mettenheim, K. 1990. 'The Brazilian Voter in Democratic Transition' *Comparative Politics*, October
- Mezom, M. 2000. 'Overview of the Internet Development in Cameroon' www.itu.int/africainternet2000/Documents/doc.57_e.htm.
- Migdal, J.S. 1994. 'The State and Society' in Migdal J.S. *et al* (eds.), *State Power and Social Forces*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Naim, M. 1994. 'Economic Reform and Democracy-Latin America: The Second Stage of Reform' *Journal of Democracy*, Vol.5, October.
- Ngoh, V.J. 2004. 'Biya and the Transition to Democracy' in Mbaku J.M and Takougang, J.

- (eds.), *The Leadership Challenge in Africa: Cameroon under Paul Biya*, Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press.
- O'Donnell, G. and P.C. Schmitter, (1986), *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Oyono, P. R., C. Kouna and W. Mala, 2003. 'Benefits of Forests in Cameroon. Global Structure, Issues Involving Access and Decision-making Hiccoughs'. *Forest Policy and Economics*.
- Palma, G. 1990. *To Craft Democracies*, Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Prezowski, A. and L. Karl, T. 1990. 'Dilemmas of Elections in Latin America', *Comparative Politics*, October.
- Putnam, R. 1994. *Making Democracy Work*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Roberts, H. 1992. 'The Algerian State and the Challenge of Democracy', *Government and Opposition*, Vol.27, No.4, Autumn.
- Rosenfeld, H. 1971. 'A Clinical Approach to Psychoanalytic Theory of the Life and Death of Instincts: An Investigation into Aggressive Aspects of Narcissism' *Journal of International Psycho-Analysis*, 532, 169-78.
- Said, E. 1976. *Orientalism*, New York: Vintage Books.
- Shumway, D. 1992. *Michel Foucault*, Charlottesville: University of Press of Virginia.
- Stocpol, T. 1985. 'Bringing the State Back In: Strategies of Analysis in Current Research' in Evans, P., D. Reuschmeyer and T. Stocpol (eds.), *Bringing the State Back In*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- United States Embassy, Yaounde, 2002. *Rapport du Département de l'Etat sur les droits de l'homme au Cameroun*.
<http://usembassy.state.gov/yaounde/www.pol-fr-droitshomme.html>.
- Villalon, L.A. 1993. 'Democratizing a (Quasi)Democracy: The Senegalese Elections of 1993', *African Affairs*, 93.

Briefings

TOWARDS A HUMAN RIGHTS APPROACH TO CITIZENSHIP AND NATIONALITY STRUGGLES IN AFRICA: THE REGIONAL QUANDRY¹⁶⁰

By J. Oloka-Onyango¹⁶¹

I. Introduction

Three-quarters of the reason I came to Addis relate to the fact that it was Akwasi Aidoo who invited me. I actually hate workshops. And a couple of months ago I was raked over the coals by my activist and academic colleagues for suggesting that workshops in Uganda should actually be banned! However, I must confess that I am extremely happy I came because this event has brought home to me in a fashion that no other occasion has ever done, how the personal and the political are inextricably linked. My last name is Oloka-Onyango, and immediately tells those familiar with Eastern African history where I am from. I belong to the Luo Nation that stretches from the south of the country the colonialists called Sudan, through Northern Uganda, into Western Kenya, and ending in the upper tip of Tanzania. My community is called the Jopadhola - the people of the wound - who were left behind in the great trek south because (you guessed it) one of the brothers developed a wound that forced him to stop. On the Ugandan side we are a tiny community, but closer in every way to our larger Kenyan Luo cousins who lie across the border that split us apart.

Every third Kenyan Luo is called 'Onyango,' understandably so because it means 'born in the morning,' and reflects the division of the day into three; those born at daytime or in the afternoon are named 'Ochieng' or 'Achieng,' (for women), those born at night are called 'Owor' or 'Awor.' Onyango is my father's name.

My own name - given at birth - is Oloka, which means 'born away from home.' I will not tell you where I was born, but the place and the fact of my birth haunted me whenever I came to my country of birth and sought entry. My Ugandan passport would be scrutinised with double efficiency. I would be asked, 'were you

¹ Presentation made at the Ford Foundation Special Initiative for Africa (SIA) workshop on 'Citizenship and Identity in Africa', Addis Ababa, 10 June (2003).

² Dr Joe Oloka-Onyango is the Dean of Law and Associate Professor at the Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda.

really born here?’ ‘what was your mother doing here?’ ‘are you sure this is not a forgery?’ But the straw that broke the camel’s back came when I was requested to produce my birth certificate as proof that I was actually born in their country. My response was to request the Immigration Officer if she travelled on holiday with hers! This earned me a 3 hour detention at the airport. In a fit of youthful pique, I returned home determined to fully lay claim to my birthright – the passport that would put an end to these travails. I duly applied and filled in the necessary papers, did the interview, hauled my mother in to verify that she was actually there when she gave birth (presumably because I wasn’t), and went through all other manner of humiliating tests and verifications. Having received a clean bill of health, the day came for me to collect the passport of my birth-country. I arrived at the Embassy, and was asked to surrender my Ugandan one! I hadn’t realised that this was the meaning of the bar against dual nationality. I turned tail and fled, promising to surrender my passport on a later date, and never went back. It is probably the best thing that happened to me.

I want to focus on some general themes relating to the regional response to citizenship and nationality issues. This is in particular regard to both the situation of citizens and non-citizens on the African continent, and especially about the following groups of peoples: minorities, ‘so-called’ indigenous peoples, forced migrants of varying kinds, i.e. refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), and voluntary migrants. In my view, the following questions are important to this inquiry:

1. What has been the response of regional mechanisms, instruments and institutions?
2. How adequate is that response?
3. What loopholes remain to be filled by civil society actors, states and regional organisations, and how can we who are gathered here go about filling them?

In particular, I would like to adopt a human rights perspective, especially that exemplified in the various instruments (regional and international) that focus on the place of both individuals and groups who may be particularly marginalised by the dominant culture or by discriminating socio-economic and political conditions. Here I would like to enter some preliminary points.

The quest for regional frameworks of governance and economic development in Africa has been fraught with several tensions, not least of which is the colonial legacy that led to the balkanisation of what would otherwise have evolved as natural regional groupings. In this respect Africa is forced to start afresh, moreover from very different assumptions dictated by the colonial arrangement. Thus we are boxed into the Anglo/Franco/Luso legacy, when instead we could have been talking about a Luo, Bantu, Hausa, or Fulaniphone arrangement, or other, more endogenously-reclaimed arrangements derived from different considerations.

In light of this colonial legacy, contemporary regional groupings carry forward many of the tensions that African states inherited at independence, among them

the following:

- (i) Conflicting conceptions of self-determination, both in terms of geopolitical space, as well as in relation to self and community;
- (ii) The imposed phenomenon of statehood, and a marginal place for the citizen therein;
- (iii) The meaning of 'peoples' and the essential disconnect between the notion of peoples and the states in which they live, and
- (iv) The dilemma between positively recognising the notion of ethnicity, while ensuring that its negative effects (e.g. hate speech, ethnic cleansing, and discrimination) are minimised.

It thus follows that most of the regimes established to bring regional groupings into force (especially the African Charter), duplicate these tensions. From a human rights perspective regional groupings are affected by additional tensions. For example, there is a tension between oversight and self-regulation, manifested in the doctrine of non-interference and the protection of state sovereignty, and the desire to prevent the occurrence of violations of an Amin/Nguema/Bokassa, or Rwandan genocide scale. There is the well-known tension between the individual and the state. Lastly, there is the tension between what is described as 'African culture' and western conceptions, or between self-determination and imperialism.

But one tension that is so often evaded in discussions about citizenship and nationality is that between 'protecting' the rights of women and ensuring that women are able to effectively assert their autonomy and equality. There is a particular need to focus on the gendered fashion in which notions of citizenship and ethnicity operate, because they adversely affect women more than they do men. In other words, the notion of citizenship as we know it is not gender-neutral. For women, we must extend the assertion of citizenship to freedom from sexual, physical and gender violence. It also covers the ability to travel, work, settle and be identified as an autonomous human being; the right to be registered and acknowledged as heiress to familial and even public resources, and the right to confer citizenship on their children. Finally (and by no means of least importance), there is the right to engage in direct political activity and contestation (including for the highest offices in the land). Whereas for men, these have been the basic tenets of citizenship since political independence, in many countries across the continent, the same cannot be said to apply to the situation of women. It is odd that while women are easily vested with control and stewardship of that most complex of social units - the family - they are denied management of the state.

My last preliminary point is that there is a proliferation of regional and sub-regional groupings, institutions and mechanisms on the continent, which add to the complexity of addressing the issues of citizenship in terms of competence, competing jurisdictions, divided loyalties, and inadequate capacities. At the last count, there

were at least 13 sub-regional groupings, among them:

NORTHERN AFRICA

Arab Maghreb Union (AMU)

Community of Saharan and Sahelian States (CEN-SAD)

WEST AFRICA

Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

Manu River Union (MRU)

Union économique et monétaire ouest africaine (UEMOA)

CENTRAL AFRICA

Economic and Monetary Community of Central African States (CEMAC)

Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS)

SOUTHERN AFRICA

Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)

Southern Africa Development Community (SADC)

Preferential Trade Area (PTA)

EASTERN AFRICA

East African Community (EAC)

Inter-governmental Authority on Development (IGAD)

Kagera Basin Initiative/Organization (KBI/O)

Many of these organisations have developed specific programmes and initiatives designed to address issues concerning the rights of citizens, migrants, women, refugees, etc., and part of the strategy we should discuss is how we can best engage them. It is impossible to engage in a blow-by-blow account of each institution in this paper, but suffice to make the following general points:

- The overwhelming majority of these institutions are state-created and state-centred (or statistocratic) with minimal popular involvement in their formation or their operation.
- Their predominant focus is economic development issues, within the framework of integrated markets and devoted to the faster movement of goods, with attention paid in some cases to conflict prevention and intervention mechanisms.
- References to the individual or to individual or group rights are only scanty. As such the scope for the assertion of citizenship, nationality and identity questions is limited. Access to the institutions and mechanisms by non-state actors varies.

- Most of them give rhetorical attention to the idea of free movement within the region, and (in some instances) to freedom of residence. The degree of actual realisation of these rights is of course the subject of constant debate.

The premier pan-continental organisation today is the African Union (successor to the Organisation of African Unity (OAU)), about which there has been considerable discussion regarding the degree to which its formation represents a new wind, or simply a change in the wind's direction. In examining this question, it is impossible to divorce the present from the past - to speak of the AU without looking back to its predecessor, the OAU. This will help us understand both the possibilities portended by the new institution, as well as the limitations dictated by its history.

From inception, the main concentration of the OAU was on the liberation of the continent, a preoccupation that marked both its founding charter and its major activities. In this respect, with the final liberation of South Africa in 1994, the OAU could be said to have achieved its primary objective: the removal of colonial domination and control from the continent. More complex, was the OAU's approach to the internal protection of human rights and by implication, the defense of the rights of both citizens and non-citizens from state abuse of a non-colonial character. Thus, the OAU was largely silent or non-committal on the issue of intervention in order to correct situations in which either law and order had broken down, or where human rights violations had reached a peak. Paradigmatic of this approach was the very negative reaction of the OAU to the Tanzanian retaliation and eventual removal of Idi Amin from the Ugandan presidency in 1979.

Nevertheless, it was the OAU that oversaw the promulgation of two instruments that have a radical potential to reinvigorate the approach of both states and peoples to the violation of the rights of citizens and non-citizens. These were the 1969 Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of the Refugee Problem in Africa, and the 1981 African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (The Banjul Charter).

II. Re-Reading The African Charter and the Operations of the African Commission

There has been considerable debate and commentary about both the Charter and about the operations of the African Commission - the basic institutional mechanism designed to give effect to the rights and duties of citizens and non-citizens in the African context. The negatives have focused on issues such as public awareness and knowledge about the body; the considerable period of time it takes for issues to be resolved, the lacklustre response of states, its minimal resources, and especially, the influence of African heads of state and government and the lack of enforcement power behind its decisions. Although I am usually a critic of both the

Charter and the Commission, here I want to focus on the more positive aspects of their existence. First, although on initial examination the African Charter may demonstrate that it leans inordinately in favour of states, there is great potential to read the provisions of the text in a subversive (non-state, pro-peoples) fashion. Take for example, the guarantee of the right to property (contained in Article 14) a right that is usually associated with the protection of privilege and corporate (or even colonial) wealth. In fact, in conditions of mass impoverishment, structural adjustment and marginalisation and sex-based discrimination, the assertion of the right to property can be a powerful tool in the quest for economic liberation, and against property dispossession, especially for the landless, for minorities and for women.

There is also the issue of the right to self-determination, usually associated in the literature with self-determination from colonial control and hegemony. However, a reinterpretation of the idea of self-determination could be effectively deployed to protect the rights of pastoralists, hunter-gatherers, forest peoples and other indigenous peoples. Lastly, although the African Charter has only one article that speaks directly to the issue of women's human rights (Article 18.3), that provision is perhaps the most far-reaching and broad of any in the instrument. The obligation on states to ensure the removal of 'every discrimination against women' is potentially a powerful instrument of breaking down the artificial divide between the personal and the political and taking serious steps to eliminate both gender and sexual violence. African activists therefore need to review the Charter and engage it as an instrument with considerable potential for the protection of both citizens and non-citizens.

Concerning the issue of citizens' rights specifically, although the African Charter does not mention either nationality or citizenship explicitly, there are several provisions that speak directly to their protection. Among them we can cite Article 2 on non-discrimination; 3 on equality; 5 on respect for human dignity, protection from torture, inhuman and degrading treatment; 6 (on liberty and security of the person), 9 on freedom of expression, 10 (on freedom of association), and 13 (on the right to participate in government). But the Charter also makes a fundamental contribution with regard to issues that have caused considerable problems to migrants and refugees (non-citizens). These relate particularly to the freedom of movement, the quest for asylum, and the issue of expulsion. Article 12 of the Charter guarantees freedom of movement and the right of every individual when persecuted, 'to seek and obtain asylum.' More fundamentally, it stipulates that the expulsion of a non-national can only follow due process stipulations. The provision expressly prohibits mass expulsions. In giving effect to these provisions, the Commission has made several decisions that are of relevance to this debate. For example, on the issue of the expulsion of immigrants, on claims to citizenship, and in relation to the denationalisation and deportation of citizens.

At a minimum, these decisions illustrate that the African Commission is

acutely aware of the manner in which states use the issues of nationality and citizenship in order to deal with political dissent and opposition. In sum, the African Charter today, can be read very differently and more progressively than when it was first written in 1981. The challenge thus shifts to us to begin re-reading this instrument more aggressively.

III. Refugees, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPS) and Voluntary Migrants

Within the international regime of the enforcement of refugee rights, the 1969 OAU Convention is often cited as a path-breaking and even revolutionary instrument. This stems from its definition of the term 'refugee.' Beyond the international definition of a person who has a well-founded fear of returning to his or her country, the OAU Convention extends it to persons who have fled situations of generalised violence, including 'external aggression, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order....' In this respect, the Convention not only expanded the refugee definition, but by implication, the scope of protection afforded to refugees in the African situation.

However, despite the general framework of hospitality exuded by the Convention, there are still many outstanding problems. For example, the Convention is silent on the specific issues of refugee women and children. It is also affected by a security paradigm that seeks to ensure that refugees do not engage in activities that may be considered 'subversive,' and which may ultimately have the effect of stifling their autonomous existence in the country of refuge. In and of itself, the Convention does not include a categorisation of the rights that refugees actually have (with the exception of the right against return).

In this respect, the point of reference is the Geneva Convention. What this means is the need for the co-extensive reference to human rights instruments (and especially to the African Charter) in terms of seeking the realisation and enforcement of refugee rights. This is particularly important because the OAU Convention lacks a mechanism for enforcement. The Commission on Refugees is confined to resource mobilisation and sensitisation and hardly plays the monitoring function that would have been the continental equivalent of the UNHCR. On its part, the division of Humanitarian Affairs, Refugees and Displaced Persons is severely constrained in its operations. Once again, we need to revert to the African Charter in order to secure the enhanced protection of the rights of refugees. Many of the sub-regional instruments and mechanisms do not even make reference to refugees.

If the situation of refugees is tenuous, IDPs are in a double bind in the African situation. In the first instance, there is an absence of a legal framework (at the regional level), either defining who an IDP is, or outlining their rights or entitlements to protection. Existing international guidelines provide only a descriptive identification. In contrast to refugees, who have certain legally defined

rights such as the right to international protection, '... an IDP may not claim any additional rights to those shared with his or her compatriots.' In sum they are in a legal limbo, and also, judging by the (in)action taken by human groups on IDPs, a political Siberia, especially with respect to regional strategies and action. In sum, there is not only a lack of legal status, but also, the mechanisms of monitoring are poor, and the extent of state accountability with respect to the situation of IDPs is ill-defined. Nevertheless, the African Commission has not been silent on the issue of IDPs and their rights. Thus, in *Malawi African Association and Others v. Mauritania*, the Commission stated that Article 23.1 of the Charter (stipulating that 'all peoples have the right to national and international peace and security') included the responsibility for protection of nationals. Quite clearly, however, there is still a great deal that remains to be done at the continental level with respect to the unique situation of IDPs.

While IDPs and refugees are compelled to leave their countries, a phenomenon of concern in the debate about citizenship and nationality relates to those who voluntarily migrate, either in search of work or for other reasons. Africans have migrated since time immemorial. However, voluntary migration has become an issue of considerable concern today, as xenophobia is on the rise, and states erect ever more insurmountable barriers to entry. The provision in the African Charter concerning freedom of movement (Article 12.1) is both imprecise and vague, because it constrains such movement to actions that fall '... within the law.' Unfortunately, there is not much by way of Commission jurisprudence on this subject, and thus we need to look elsewhere. Several sub-regional mechanisms and instruments that we can examine such as those of ECOWAS and SADC provide some guidance. Both regimes (and many of those which are emerging) profess a strong commitment to the free movement of goods and people. The actual reality is different, but this simply means that we must force the rhetoric to more closely meet the reality, and again if non-state actors don't do this, states will continue to neglect their commitments and responsibilities. We also need to pay attention to issues such as trafficking, the rights of migrant workers, and residency rights within these regional groupings.

IV. The Situation of Minorities and Indigenous Persons

Despite being a continent of several minorities and indigenous persons, none of the instruments referred to and indeed none of the mechanisms in existence at the continental level attempt to address the situation of minorities or indigenous persons in any explicit or comprehensive fashion. Aside from the broad reference to non-discrimination in Article 2, the African Charter does not use either the term 'minority' or 'indigenous peoples'. The same is true of even newer instruments such as the Women's Protocol which in its substantive provisions speaks of elderly, disabled and widowed women (as specific categories of women requiring special attention),

but does not make reference to either minority women, or to women belonging to indigenous groups, or even to women refugees and IDPs. This partly emerges from what I have elsewhere described as the African schizophrenia about these categorisations: 'we are all minorities,' or 'in Africa who is not indigenous?' Indeed, it is only by the use of creative interpretation that the Commission has in several instances, come to the aid of persons who would be defined as minorities or indigenous persons in international law. The need for attention to issues such as land rights, to the debilitating consequences of bio-piracy and to the appropriation of the cultural rights of indigenous peoples does not require emphasis, particularly in the face of the rampaging forces of globalisation.

Connected to the issue of minorities is the phenomenon of hate speech. In contrast to both the American and European instruments, the African Charter does not specifically provide for hate speech restrictions. And yet, as was clearly demonstrated in the Rwandese genocide, hateful speech and invective can be the precursor to serious human rights violations against the citizenry. While restricting speech may run counter to the Charter right guaranteeing the free dissemination of opinions, an issue for discussion should be the nature and character of a strategy that seeks to ensure that the use of media (like Radio Mille Colline) in the promotion of ethnic hatred, xenophobia and racism, is prevented.

Finally, with respect to the issue of minorities and identity is the controversy in many countries around the continent concerning sexual orientation, and specifically the situation of gays and lesbians. Although the African Charter does not specifically refer to the issue of discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation, a question for consideration would certainly be the response of the African Commission to a petition by a sexual minority (gay or lesbian) on the grounds contained in the Charter. Given the forms of persecution that people of alternative sexual preference have faced in Zimbabwe, Namibia, and Uganda (to name only a few countries on the continent), citizenship and identity issues are clearly implicated in the discussion on sexual orientation.

The conclusion that arises from the above observations is that despite the absence of any reference to minorities in the Charter, there are sufficient provisions to which the Commission can have recourse in ensuring that their rights are protected. Perhaps the case that best exemplified the potential of the Commission in this regard, is the SERAC/CESR v. Nigeria case concerning the Ogoni peoples of the Niger Delta. In that case, the Commission found that the Nigerian government had extensively violated the rights of the Ogoni people to life, a healthy environment, shelter and food, among others, through its activities of oil exploitation in the delta region. The decision is important for several reasons, including the articulation it made of the stipulation in the Charter that states that '... all peoples have ... the right to a general satisfactory environment favourable to their development.' Also, for the first time it, provided a more defined interpretation to the notion of peoples' rights in general. Many of the rights that the Commission

asserted were violated are not explicitly mentioned in the Charter. Although the Commission stopped short of stating that the Ogoni have the right to self-determination, the Commission decision can be said to be a major advance on both the interpretation of the notion of 'peoples' in the Charter, to the rights of minorities marginalised by adverse conditions of development and political exclusion.

V. New Regional Developments: The African Court, NEPAD and the Protocol on Women

Several recent developments on the regional scene deserve critical attention. For example, in contrast to the OAU, the AU has sought to mark conceptual distance with the doctrine of 'non-interference' and has incorporated provisions relating to intervention in the event of 'grave circumstances.' On the face of it, the AU is more attuned to human rights issues, given that it now speaks about respect for democratic principles, human rights, the rule of law and good governance. Among the many structures that will be crucial in this regard is the Central Organ for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution. Although predating the establishment of the AU, in line with the stated commitment to ensuring that human rights violations do not go unchecked, this mechanism has a crucial role to play. Provision for an Economic Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC) at the AU will also effectively provide for the first time, an avenue for activists within civil society to engage the continental institution. The protocol for the African Court is yet to come into force, but for the first time it will mean that there is a continental mechanism that will provide the necessary enforcement power behind the principles enshrined in the African Charter. It is also hoped that the protocol on the Rights of African Women will be adopted by the ASHG this year, paving the way for a more comprehensive approach to the enforcement of women's human rights via continental mechanisms. Finally in this regard, the 'New Partnership for African Development' (NEPAD) has arrived on the continental scene. Although coming mainly from a developmental and economic perspective, NEPAD incorporates several provisions that will be crucial in the struggle to ensure the respect for citizenship and nationality rights. Most prominent among these is the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) by which the standards of African countries on democracy and good governance are to be evaluated.

VI. A Very Broad Conclusion

In human rights struggles, the local is key, but the regional is becoming crucial. The preceding survey illustrates that there is a plethora of regional instruments and mechanisms that can be engaged in a quest to better address the many citizenship and nationality questions with which we are concerned. It is nevertheless a mixed bag and African states and peoples have been much better at creating, than they

have at implementing. While remaining fully aware of their limitations, there is a great need for concerted collaborative action by civil society and academic activists in engaging these institutions at the regional level. My focus has principally been the African Charter and Commission because, in the final analysis, dealing with the issues regarding citizenship and nationality in any fundamental and comprehensive fashion requires to some extent, the adoption of a rights perspective. In my view, the Commission (and eventually the Court when it comes into existence) is the regional institution strategically best placed to achieve these goals. Consequently, it will be crucial to monitor the progress towards the establishment and the eventual operation of the African Court which will supplement the Commission's work. Our focus should also review the sub-regional institutions that not only address these issues in their founding instruments, but which have taken the issue further, whether through protocols or other subsidiary instruments. A particular concern should be the activation of these institutions with regard to the plight of the internally displaced, and the situation of a variety of minorities, and to force them to honour commitments they have made, for example, with respect to free movement and residence.

But the African Commission is quite clearly not the only institution of relevance. We therefore need to perform a thorough value-for-effort audit of what engagement with the various regional and sub-regional initiatives (including new ones like NEPAD, and the ECOSSOC of the AU) will ultimately mean in terms of achieving the goals of reducing xenophobia and combating the effects of negative ethnicity. In doing so we need to be careful about the danger of proliferation and duplication that is manifest. Finally, I would like to suggest that in our attempt to reinvigorate the promise of regional action on citizen and non-citizen rights, we must reconnect with some of the pan-regional instruments that adopt a much more people-centred (as opposed to a statist) approach to the problems Africans have experienced with the assertion of their citizenship rights. I am thinking particularly of instruments such as the Algiers Declaration on the Rights of Peoples, 1976, and the African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation of 1990.

References

- Baimu, E. 2003. 'The Right to Intervene in the recent amendments to the Constitutive Act of the AU: A Shift from Human and Peoples' Security to Regime Security', *African Human Rights Journal*, Vol. 3, No. 1.
- _____. 2003. 'Human Rights in NEPAD and its Implications for the African Human Rights System', *African Human Rights Journal*, Vol. 2, No. 2.
- Berman, E.G. 2002. 'African Regional Organizations' Peace Operations, in *African Security Review*, Vol. 11, No. 4, pp. 33-44.
- Beyani, C. 2000. *Human Rights Standards and the Movement of People Within States*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Cilliers, J. 2002. *NEPAD's Peer Review Mechanism*, ISS Paper 64 (November).
- Louw, L. 2001. 'Hate Speech in Africa: Formulating an Appropriate Legal Response for a

- Racially and Ethnically Divided Continent with Specific Reference to South Africa and Rwanda', in Christof Heyns (ed.) *International Yearbook of Regional Human Rights Master's Programmes*, Pretoria: Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria.
- Mamdani, M. 1997. 'Understanding the Crisis in Kivu', Dakar: Report of the CODESRIA Mission to the Democratic Republic of Congo.
- Mugwanya, G.W. 1999. 'Reinvigorating Universal Human Rights Norms Through Regional Human Rights Mechanisms: Reinvigorating the African System', *Indiana International and Comparative Law Review*, Vol. 10, No. 1.
- Odinkalu, C.A. and M. Zard 2002. 'African Regional Mechanisms that Can be Utilized on Behalf of the Forcibly Displaced', in Joan M. Fitzpatrick (ed.), *Human Rights Protection for Refugees, Asylum-Seekers, and Internally Displaced Persons: A Guide to International Mechanisms and Procedures*. New York: Transnational Publishers.
- Oloka-Onyango, J. 2003. Reinforcing Marginalized Rights in an Age of Globalization: International Mechanisms, Non-State Actors and the Struggle for Peoples' Rights in Africa, *American University International Law Journal*, Vol. 18, No. 2.
- _____. 2000. 'Gender and Conflict in Contemporary Africa: Engendering the Mechanisms for the Promotion of Human Rights and Conflict Prevention', *La Revue de la Commission Africaine des Droits de l'Homme et des Peuples*, Vol. 9, No. 1.
- Oloka-Onyango, J., and S. Tamale, 1995. 'The Personal is Political' or Why Women's Rights are Indeed Human Rights: An African Perspective on International Feminism', *Human Rights Quarterly*, Vol. 17, No. 4.
- Organization of African Unity 2001. Report of the OAU Commission on Refugees, DOC/OS (XXX) Item 10f.
- Salomon, M.E. and A. Sengupta 2003. *The Right to Development: Obligations of States and the Rights of Minorities and Indigenous Peoples*, London: Minority Rights Group.
- Sturman, K. and J. Cilliers, 2003. 'ECOSOCC: Bringing People's Power to the African Union?', Vol. 12, No. 1, *African Security Review*, pp.71-78.
- UNHCR 2001. Discussion Paper by the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees on Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance towards Refugees.
- Vincent, M. 2000. IDPs: Rights and Status, *Forced Migration Review*.
- Zard, Monette (with C. Beyani and C.A. Odinkalu) 2003. Refugees and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, *Forced Migration Review*.

AFRICA IN 2015: INTERROGATING BARBIE DEMOCRACY, SEEKING ALTERNATIVES¹⁶²

By Francis B. Nyamnjoh¹⁶³

The Africa of 2015 will be more assertive and critical of certain orthodoxies as Africans seek to harness their distinctive creativity, adaptability, sociality and conviviality in relationships and encounters. This essay focuses on democracy, a domain in which, paradoxical as it may seem, Africa would have much to teach the rest of the world by 2015.

The world is currently hostage to a very uncreative idea of democracy informed by a very narrow idea of what it is to be beautiful, healthy, successful and free. Nowhere is this narrowness better exemplified than in the colossal investment that consumer capitalism has made in slimness, the greatest icon of which is Barbie. This image is made and sold aggressively around the globe to be consumed as the ideal to which all must aspire, if they are to emerge from the vicissitudes and drawbacks to the good life. Barbie-like celebrities are recruited to endorse slimming diets, which more ordinary people are then persuaded to follow, and the results varying degrees of disappointment.

Seen in terms of democracy, Barbie (slimness) is imbued with the mission of freeing the individual of relationships or the excess bulk (obesity) of responsibilities standing in the way of personal consumer success. Salvation is to be found in slimness, and the slimmer an individual's burden of relationships and responsibilities the better his/her life chances. Instead of encouraging the rich to get fat with responsibilities and relationships of support to the hungry and searching poor, consumer capitalism systematically invests in the rich to be thin and unburdened, as it fattens the poor with unfathomable responsibilities, dependencies and a pounding sense of worthlessness and self-persecution.

This Barbie model takes the form of a dictatorship that makes misery of ordinary lives, cultures, communities, solidarities and sociality across the globe. But *Barbie-sation* is at best a bazaar to which millions are drawn but few rewarded or given real choices. Just as obesity is considered an abnormality, so are relationships and sociality seen as dangerous if not watched at close range. A real or false sense of success means that people need not be obsessive about coping with deprivation. In the words of *The Economist*,¹⁶⁴ 'People are perfectly tuned to store energy in good years to see them through lean ones. But when bad times never come, they are stuck with that energy, stored around their expanding bellies.'¹⁶⁵ And persuading people to get thinner becomes an obsession to be supported with public-health warnings and media pressures.

In America for example, the risks notwithstanding, obesity-related stomach strapping operations are on the increase, as people desperately seek to lose weight.¹⁶⁶ According to Dr. Trisha Macnair, the despondency of many people who are overweight 'means that they will go to extremes to reach their goal, try wacky diets which defy common sense, pay large amounts of money for dubious 'quick fix' remedies and even turn to drugs from anonymous clinics, in the hope that somewhere there is an easy answer.'¹⁶⁷ It seems so easy: if only ordinary, overweight or overburdened consumers could follow the slimming menus prescribed by those who know best, they just might realise their dream body, beauty, health, comfort and freedom. In this way, relationships or ties with others are seen as fat that stands in the way of a perfect dream, and that must be burnt out of existence with health foods, slimming pills, fitness exercises, etc. The bulk and bulky are, at the end of the day, mostly disillusioned and disaffected, as the more they strive, the little the satisfaction that comes their way. Instead of learning meaningful lessons on how to bear the burdens of life, they are being schooled on how to shed the burdens of life.

If Barbie has been sold to the rest of the world as an American icon, to most Americans, she remains a distant dream and a constant source of embarrassment. Obesity is the messy order of the day, a big business that generates billions of dollars from fat and billions more on how to keep fat in check. According to a recent article on 'the obesity industry',¹⁶⁸ nearly one-third of adult Americans 'are thought to be obese', and 'American girls today shop for clothes that are roughly two sizes bigger than those worn by their mothers'. While 'most Americans are well aware of the risks of obesity' and believe themselves 'personally accountable for their weight', and while 'miracle slimming drugs and the latest dieting fads become best-sellers', 'people are not prepared to give up taste as their solution to this problem'. They refuse to translate Barbie into reality through embracing 'more healthy lifestyles', even if they would rush to try out new 'easy and tasty ways to lose weight' proposed by those seeking 'fat profits in fat people'. Sales of healthier foods may be booming, but few are getting thinner as a result. As *The Economist* observes, 'once people get fat, it is hard for them to get thin'.¹⁶⁹ The future, far from being one of slim Americans paying tribute to Barbie in their fantasies or realities, *The Economist* foresees 'a growing herd of fat people' providing 'lots of demand for firms supplying everything from bigger towels to bigger beds and, alas, bigger coffins' into 'an early grave'.¹⁷⁰ Everywhere, bulk seems to be winning over slimness, with global

¹ This is an updated version of an earlier paper in Dutch published in *Internationale Samenwerking* (Publication of Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Development Cooperation), No.12, December (2003), pp.28-30.

² Associate Professor and Head of Publications and Communications, Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA).

³ *The Economist*, December 13, (2003), p.11.

⁴ I would extend it beyond people to include communities and solidarities of various kinds.

estimates rising from 200 million adults in 1995 to 300 million in 2003. Whether motivated by culture or by gene, Americans, like everyone else, are, to quote *The Economist* once more, 'constantly trying to pack away a few more calories just in case of a famine around the corner.'¹⁷¹ The same is true of communities and cultures, hence the resilience of relationships and responsibilities even amongst those individuals, communities and cultures most rigorously committed to shedding the burdens of life.

Barbie may well not be anyone's reality after all, even as she is projected, celebrated, appropriated, and aggressively marketed as an icon by certain localities more than others. Indeed, the few that come through successfully in the pursuit of the Barbie ideal, quite paradoxically, never really come through as Barbie at the end of the day. If they don't simply grow into a muscular Ken as global gendarme and police pregnant with imperial dogma, they are either sickly (from anorexia, for example) – because of all the sacrifices they have made, and are hardly, at a closer look, worth all the investments, torture and deprivations endured.¹⁷² The pursuit of Barbie is at best a mirage, at worst a consumer misadventure. If Barbie epitomises consumer capitalism, obesity can be compared to the community of ties, which individuals are under sustained pressure to break in order to realise consumer success. But since individuals, even in the worst of circumstances, are social beings above all else, shedding relationships and responsibilities is seldom an easy option, and very few succeed to be happy when their ties with others are dead and buried.

Barbie Democracy in Africa

What lessons has Africa learnt from its encounters with the Barbie import labelled 'liberal democracy'? It is commonplace to claim that liberal democracy and Africa are not good bedfellows, and how apt! Implementing liberal democracy in Africa has been like trying to force onto the body of a full-figured person, rich in all the cultural indicators of health Africans are familiar with, a dress made to fit the slim, de-fleshed Hollywood consumer model of a Barbie doll-type entertainment icon. But instead of blaming the tiny dress or its designer, the tradition has been to fault the popular body or the popular ideal of beauty, for emphasising too much bulk, for parading the wrong sizes, for just not being the right thing. Not often is the experience and expertise of the designer or dressmaker questioned, nor his/her audacity to assume that the parochial cultural palates that inform his/her peculiar sense of

¹ www.asbs.org/html/rationale/rationale.html.

² www.bbc.co.uk/health/features/obesity_surgery.shtml.

³ *The Economist*, September 27, (2003), pp.68-69.

⁴ *The Economist*, December 13(2003), p.11.

⁵ *The Economist*, September 27, (2003), pp.68-69; December 13, (2003), p.11.

⁶ *The Economist*, December 13, (2003) p.11.

beauty should play God in the lives of regions and cultures where different criteria of beauty and the good life obtain. This insensitivity is akin to the behaviour of a Lilliputian undertaker who would rather trim a corpse than expand his/her coffin to accommodate a man-mountain, or a carpenter whose only tool is a huge hammer and to whom every problem is a nail. The history of difficulty at implementing liberal democracy in Africa attests to this clash of values and attempts to ignore African cultural realities that might well have enriched and domesticated liberal democracy towards greater relevance. This call for domestication must however not be confused with the ploy by opportunistic dictatorships that have often hidden behind nebulous claims of African specificities to orchestrate highhandedness and intolerance.

The greatest shortcoming of liberal democracy is its exaggerated focus on the autonomous individual, as if there is anywhere in the world where individuals are capable of living their lives outside of communities or in total absence of relationships with others. Losing the weight of community, solidarity and culture is not an easy feat even to the most dedicated of disciples of the Barbie model. By investing so much rhetoric on the rights of the independent, liberal democracy is left without a convincing answer pertaining to the rights of the dependent. Although in principle liberal democracy promises rights to all and sundry as individuals, not everyone who claims political rights is likely to have them, even when these are clearly articulated in constitutions and guaranteed legally. The American democratic system which champions the Barbie model, offers some interesting examples of how Americans, assumed to be autonomous individuals by law, find themselves bargaining away their political, cultural and economic freedoms in all sorts of ways under pressure from the consumer capitalist emphasis on profit over people.

Notwithstanding the Barbie rhetoric, *The American Dream* does not come true for everyone who embraces it. The citizenship and consumer sovereignty promised all Americans, can in reality be afforded only in degree and by those who manage to harness the limited economic, cultural and social opportunities that translate into reality, legal and political rights or abstract notions of the autonomous individual. The rest, to get by, must negotiate themselves into various levels of subjection and alienation, often with devastating costs to their humanity and that of their dependents or others. Being a rights-bearing individual ceases to be as automatic in reality as is claimed in principle, and/or for hegemonic purposes. For those who succeed after hard struggle, the tendency is to monopolise opportunities,

¹ Just by way of a quick example, the UK *Daily Mail* of 22 October 2003, pp. 24-25, carried the confessions of five women who tried celebrity diets for six weeks, and all complained about the disturbing unseen effects on their bodies. One found the diet a nightmare that didn't seem healthy, made her feel nauseous, and gave her stomach pains all the time. To another, her diet was horrible, tiring and difficult to follow because too prohibitive. A third branded the diet an expensive hassle, and a fourth, who was 'incredibly tired and desperately missed tasty, easy food such as pasta and rice', wondered if 'anyone could live like this for long'.

since it is, quite paradoxically, only by curbing the rights of others that advantages are best guaranteed in effect. Like with fighting obesity, the majority are those who struggle on a daily basis to fulfil themselves, with varying degrees of failure, which, under consumer capitalism, is blamed on the individual to the extent that he or she has failed to sacrifice *others* through the sacrifice of history, memory, relations or community. Many do not quite make even the barest minimum, and much alienation, inequality, violence, cultural and social malaise, psychic and emotional disorders and exploitation in America today (and increasingly elsewhere) is linked to the suffocating grip by consumer capitalism on the throat of human imagination and creativity. These limitations of Barbie democracy in the American context may well appear a more palatable form of subjection to some Africans by comparison, but the need to address the rights of the casualties of independent success is no less compelling in America.

Since Barbie democracy appears uncomfortable with salient relationships, community and creative diversity, Africans who subscribe to its rhetoric as leaders find themselves reduced to a Jekyll-and-Hyde democracy: tolerant in principle but muffling in practice. Such African leaders, whether in government, the opposition or civil society, are forced to keep up appearances with Barbie democracy in a context where people are clamouring for recognition and representation as cultural, religious and regional communities. The competing claims for their attention by internal interest groups and external forces explain the apparent contradictions, hypocrisy and double standards when their actions are appreciated exclusively from the standpoint of Barbie democracy.

Africa's Alternative to Barbie Democracy

Despite the noted shortcomings of Barbie democracy, the quest for the missing cultural link in African democracy requires serious negotiation and flexibility, to avoid throwing the Barbie baby out with the bath water. It requires creativity and nuance that emphasise interdependence between the individual and the community, and between the state and the various cultural configurations in their flexible diversities. The vision should be a democracy that guarantees not only individual rights and freedoms, but also the interests of communal and cultural solidarities, big and small.

A compelling argument can be made to the effect that the problem in Africa has been undomesticated Barbie democracy, not democracy in all its forms, nuances

and possibilities. For democracy to be meaningful to all and sundry by 2015, there is need for honesty about the limitations of the Barbie model, and for recognition of the complex realities, interconnections, diversities and negotiability that animate the lives of social actors everywhere. The direction and quality of democracy by 2015 would depend on an *open* marriage or conviviality between individual aspirations and community interests, since individuals continue to belong to solidarities despite attempts at conversion by Barbie. It is a fact of life that most people are committed to primary forms of belonging, to which state and country are only secondary, and promoters of Barbie democracy ought to be more honest about this, to avoid opportunism. It is in acknowledging and providing for the reality of individuals who straddle different margins of identity and belonging, and who are willing or forced to be both 'citizens' and 'subjects' that democracy stands its greatest chance anywhere. If harvesting rights and entitlements often entails denying rights and entitlements, then the only democracy that would make sense by 2015 is one that reconciles autonomy with dependency, citizenship with subjection. And as the most subjected continent where opportunism has blossomed, Africa should play a leading role in bringing about a democracy that is more in tune with the rights of dependents.

Book Reviews

Sierra Leone: Diamonds and the Struggle for Democracy, by John L. Hirsch. Boulder CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000, 173 pages, Pbk, ISBN 1-55587-698-6, Price £12.95.

John Hirsch, a former US ambassador to Sierra Leone (1995-1998), has written a concise narrative of the country's civil war and the attempts to broker a peace. The book is organised chronologically: chapter one considers the war's origins; chapter two examines the NPRC military regime (1991-96) and concludes with an account of the 1996 elections; chapter three looks at the Kabbah presidency, its overthrow by rogue elements of the army and the subsequent formation of a junta with RUF rebels (1997-1998); chapter four considers attempts to negotiate an end to the conflict, in particular the Lomé Accords, and chapter five assesses the prospects for peace. The book's main strength is its ability to impose a clear chronological order on a conflict whose twists and turns have made it difficult, sometimes, for an outsider to comprehend. As a participant and observer in the diplomatic efforts to end the war, Hirsch was well-placed to read the motivations of elite actors to the drama, an advantage periodically revealed in the referencing of insider interviews. The book is humanely written, and no-one can doubt that the author identifies with the plight of the people he knew in Sierra Leone.

As might be expected from such a source, this is very much an account of the country viewed from Freetown; the experiences of the rural population, the principal victims of the war, or of the combatants themselves, are not addressed in any detail. By contrast, there is a rather long section in chapter three about the international community's efforts to evacuate its own nationals at the time of the AFRC coup. For those involved, this was undoubtedly a nervous if not terrifying affair; but, as a sideshow to the country's civil war, it could have been profitably excluded from this book.

The introduction is organised around some rather bold analytical statements. The author avers that, 'Sierra Leone offers a prime example of an internal conflict where economic aspirations for control of valuable mineral resources, especially diamonds, have been largely responsible for its inception and protracted duration' (p. 15). He believes that 'the sources of Sierra Leone's collapse were political, attributable to specific leaders and their coteries' (p. 17). While there is some truth to both of these assertions, they seem to this reviewer to represent a rather simplistic view of the conflict, which is not supported by the remainder of the book's analysis. In particular, chapter one reviews the existing literature on the origins of the war, pointing to the multiple causes of this complex process. One wonders, then, why Hirsch chooses to foreground the role of unprincipled, money seeking politicians and rebel leaders. Understanding the role of individuals is

undoubtedly important, however, it creates the dangerous possibility that careless readers might believe the conflict to be 'all about diamonds', or that by neutralising a select number of individuals the causes of war will be not just reduced, but removed once and for all.

Also questionable is the subtitle of the book: 'Diamonds and the struggle for democracy'. Though this has an undeniably catchy ring, it scarcely describes the content of the study. The role of diamonds in the conflict is repeatedly asserted but never analysed in any depth. The term 'struggle for democracy' is also deeply ambiguous. Ironically the RUF initially represented itself as an organisation struggling against authoritarian rule, a pamphlet entitled, 'Footpath to Democracy' representing its ideological agenda (though the provenance of this pamphlet is as unclear as its sincerity is in doubt). The struggle for democracy on which Hirsch concentrates, meanwhile, is not in the bush but in Freetown, centring on civil society groups, elections organised by the international community, and former United Nations bureaucrat Ahmed Tejan Kabbah.

In 1996, Kabbah was elected president in an election reportedly characterised by massive irregularities in the south, though the complaints of his political opponents were thrown out by the electoral commission and ignored by the international community. An academic writer might have taken these events as the point of departure for reflection on the authenticity of the SLPP's democratic credentials and on the commitment of the international community to democracy; a more ambitious study might have probed understandings of democracy among Sierra Leone's political players and marginalised groups. But Hirsch sidesteps these tricky questions, effectively giving the Kabbah government (1996-1997) his seal of approval and a 'democratic' epithet. He does so, perhaps, because he believes Kabbah is ultimately the best man for the job (a belief shared, not insignificantly, by most Sierra Leoneans). Here we might observe that it is a characteristic of the diplomatic mindset not to allow abstract ideals, such as 'free and fair' electoral procedures, to stand in the way of 'facts on the ground'. Even in the current 'age of democratisation', the international community regularly turns a blind eye to electoral irregularities committed by those regimes it likes, while using them as a lever against those of which it disapproves.

What Hirsch's book addresses best is the struggle not for democracy, but for peace. In addition to chronicling the Abidjan and Lomé Agreements, Lomé's breakdown and the subsequent strengthening of UNAMSIL, the book has a number of recommendations for consolidating peace. These involve excluding the RUF from governance (at least until they have disarmed), prosecuting war criminals, pressurising Charles Taylor to desist in his support for the RUF, and strengthening West African security capacity. Over and above this, 'peace and stability will require the transformation of Sierra Leone's political culture' (p105). Hirsch laments the fact that the international community did nothing to prevent Sierra Leone's political and economic institutions from crumbling in the post-independence period, neglecting

to mention the role of a Structural Adjustment programme in this very process. He welcomes the recent ban on conflict diamonds, but stops short of demanding a re-examination of Africa's economic relations with the West.

His argument amounts to a manifesto for supranational governance, with regional organisations and the international community being granted increased authority and resources to intervene in the internal affairs of ostensibly sovereign states. UN interventions in Korea (1950) and Kuwait (1991) are noted approvingly. From the vantage point of Sierra Leone it is impossible not to take such a manifesto seriously. No one could doubt that the UNAMSIL presence, which has brought peace by acting on the type of recommendations made by Hirsch, is welcomed in the country. But the manifesto brings with it its own dangers, not least the seeds of trusteeship or even a revived colonialism. In this context it is worth bearing in mind that Sierra Leone is one of several extremely unfortunate cases in Africa; it is *not*, as the author would like us to think (p. 95), a microcosm of the continent over the past ten years.

Tim Kelsall, PhD, Lecturer in Politics

School of Geography, Politics and Sociology, University of Newcastle, UK

The African Stakes of the Congo War, edited by John F. Clark. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002. ISBN: 1-4039-6723-7, Price: \$22.95.

A variety of African security challenges, most notably the emergence of collapsed states beset by ethnic, religious, and political conflicts, have fostered renewed debate over the role of foreign intervention in African conflicts. It has been estimated, for example, that at least forty-five percent of Africa's fifty-three countries experienced some degree of civil strife during the 1990s. The lack of an African consensus over how to respond to these conflicts has invariably fostered a variety of military interventions by at least four sets of actors: (1) the United Nations, as demonstrated by its approval of sixteen peace-keeping missions in Africa since 1989; (2) African regional organisations, such as the decision of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to sponsor a series of Nigerian-led military operations in Liberia; (3) foreign powers, most notably France, the United Kingdom, and the United States, which have recently intervened in Cote d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, and Liberia, respectively; and (4) African powers, which is the topic of John F. Clark's timely edited volume. From the perspective of pan-Africanists, such ad hoc military interventions, especially those undertaken by foreign powers without the consent of either local or international communities, are ultimately undesirable; rather than representing an African consensus opinion, such interventions are theoretically driven by the self-interests of the intervening country.

The African dimension of this evolving interventionist equation is captured by two developments during the 1990s. First, a series of successful guerrilla insurgencies

fostered the rise of what was often called a 'new bloc' of African leaders that included Isaias Afwerki of Eritrea, Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia, Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, and Paul Kagame of Rwanda. Successful in the pursuit of power primarily due to their control over strong, disciplined, and battle-tested guerrilla armies, this new generation of elites shared a commitment to create 'responsive and accountable' but not necessarily democratic governments that significantly reordered the foreign policy relationships pursued by their predecessors. A second development of the 1990s was the greater willingness on the part of African regional powers, such as Nigeria, Senegal, and South Africa, to flex their military muscle within their regions. Critics have noted, for example, that South Africa's self-anointed role as leader of the 'African renaissance' – the strengthening of democratic practices and economic liberalisation throughout Africa since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 – is part of a conscious effort among South African policymakers to underscore their country's unique position as an intermediary between the African continent and leading foreign powers in all other regions of the world. An important outcome of these two trends has been the rising tendency of African countries to militarily intervene in their neighbours.

One of the most dramatic case studies of this trend, which is the subject of this book, was the transformation of internal civil conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Congo-Kinshasa; former Zaire) into a series of military conflicts that foreign observers now commonly refer to as Africa's 'First World War' (hereinafter referred to as the Congo war). At its height in 2002, the Congo war was marked by the introduction of thousands of ground troops by at least five African countries: Angola, Namibia, and Zimbabwe, which fought on the side Congo-Kinshasa's government; and Rwanda and Uganda, which were seeking to topple the government. Although the individual stakes of African countries dispatching troops to the Congolese battlefield were extremely varied, together they underscored an emerging reality of African politics at the dawn of the twenty-first century: the rising importance of regional military balances of power and the political-military and economic interests of regional actors. Africa, having provided a battlefield for superpower interests during the cold war, provides another for rising African powers intent on dominating the international relations of their respective regions.

Most of the chapters here were originally presented at a conference on 'Conflict and Peace-Making in the Great Lakes Region', that was held in Entebbe, Uganda, July 10-12, 2000, and funded by the American Center, the cultural arm of the U.S. Embassy in Uganda. John Clark, one of the foremost specialists of the politics and international relations of Central Africa, especially Congo-Brazzaville where he has carried out considerable field research, agreed to take on the role of the academic organiser for this conference while serving as a Fulbright lecturer at Makerere University in Uganda during the 1999-2000 academic year. He is the co-editor, along with David E. Gardinier, of an earlier outstanding volume, *Political Reform in Francophone Africa* (1997), and has published widely on the region. To round out

the overall coverage of *The African Stakes of the Congo War*, which was completed in October 2001, Clark solicited several chapters in the conference's aftermath. The net result is a very insightful, thirteen-chapter book that brings together a unique mix of scholars from the northern industrialised democracies (Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States) and the African continent (Congo-Kinshasa, Kenya, Zimbabwe, and South Africa).

An insightful introductory chapter written by Clark sets out some key theoretical debates (although it is stressed that the contributors were not asked to follow a specific theoretical framework) and assesses the relative importance of the internal, regional, and international dimensions of the Congo war (with the regional dimension being deemed central to the project as a whole). This is followed by an excellent chapter by Crawford Young that examines the Congo war against the broader universe of African conflicts during the contemporary independence era, especially the 1990s, when the human toll of conflicts has been immense. According to Young (pp. 13-14), the Central African region has been particularly hard hit, leading to the loss of at least 3,000,000 lives:

- The Rwandan 1994 genocide and its aftermath took well over a million lives (800,000 to a million in the initial genocide, plus 300,000 Hutu refugees, militia and civilian, slaughtered in Congo in 1997);
- At least 200,000 lives were lost in Burundi since the 1993 coup ousted an elected, Hutu-dominated government;
- And there have been an estimated 1.7 million Congo fatalities since 1998 attributable to the dislocations of internal war.

A subsequent chapter by Jermaine O. McCalpin on the 'historicity' (i.e., origins) of the Congo war rounds out the introductory section. One ideally wishes that his historical analysis would have carried through to at least the assassination of Laurent Desire Kabila on January 16, 2001, and the assumption of the presidency by his son, Joseph Kabila, rather than ending with the overthrow of the Mobutu Sese Seko regime in 1997.

The next two sections of the book provide detailed analyses of the involvement of some of the major military contestants in the Congo war. The first section focuses on the 'post-Mobutu regimes in Congo and their supporters', including the Kabila regimes in Congo-Kinshasa (Chapter 4 by Kevin C. Dunn), the Angolan regime of Jose Eduardo dos Santos (Chapter 5 by Thomas Turner), and the Zimbabwean regime of Robert Mugabe (Chapter 6 by Martin R. Rupiya). Dunn's analysis of the Kabila regimes is particularly insightful, although his heavy emphasis on the international dimension, most notably the fact that Joseph Kabila 'shows signs of having learned the lessons of external reliance even better than his father' (p. 70), appears to underscore the overriding importance of the international dimension (as opposed to the regional dimension, the presumed focus of the book). Indeed, many of the chapters at times seem to suggest the primacy of international factors in influencing events on the ground, whether in the form of international financial institutions

such as the International Monetary Fund or great powers such as the United States, leaving the reader with the distinct impression that the original contributors should have been asked to weigh the varied impacts of these influences while they were writing their papers. The least informative (and credible) chapter of this group (and the volume as a whole) is that related to Zimbabwe, in which the author presents what essentially serves as an apologia for the interventionist rationales offered by the Mugabe regime, rather than a balanced analysis that gives more weight to the self-interested economic factors behind that intervention. One also wishes that a chapter would have been included on the intervention undertaken by the Namibian regime of Sam Nujoma, which sent significant numbers of combat troops and served as an important ideological ally.

The flip-side of the interventionist equation involves the military involvement of the 'contestants of the Kabila regimes', including the multifaceted guerrilla opposition in Congo-Kinshasa (Chapter 7 by Osita Afoaku), the Rwandan regime dominated by Paul Kagame (Chapter 8 by Timothy Longman), and the Ugandan regime of Yoweri Museveni (Chapter 9 by Clark). Longman provides an especially good analysis of the multifaceted reasons that potentially prompted the Kagame regime to intervene in Congo-Kinshasa. 'Their stated justifications for intervention - to eliminate threats to Rwandan security posed by Hutu rebels based in Congo, to protect Congolese Tutsi, and to promote democracy - did play a role,' explains Longman (p. 130), 'but the war seems also to have been inspired by other motives less defensible in international circles: the need to quell domestic unrest, opportunities for personal and national enrichment, and the desire to be a regional power'. The most fascinating chapter of this section, written by Clark, offers an historical analogy between Uganda's intervention in Congo-Kinshasa and United States intervention in Vietnam. 'The evocation of this analogy is self-consciously intended to serve as a warning to the government of Uganda and is meant to be prescriptive', explains Clark (p. 145). 'The United States entered the Vietnam conflict as a self-confident great power, secure in its purposes and values and economically vibrant; it withdrew, some fifteen years later, weakened, conflicted, self-doubting, and morally and financially diminished'.

A final section of the book focuses on the positive diplomatic role played by South Africa under the leadership of presidents Nelson Mandela and Thabo Mbeki (Chapter 10 by Chris Landsberg), as well as three issue areas that are crucial for understanding the evolution of the Congo war and its ultimate resolution: arms proliferation (Chapter 11 by Augusta Muchai), socio-economic impacts of war (Chapter 12 by Mungbalemwe Koyame and Clark), and refugees and internally displaced persons (Chapter 13 by Jude Morrison). As the authors demonstrate, the Congo war, fuelled by the proliferation of regional and international arms networks, has had a devastating impact on Congo's socio-economic development, not least of all by unleashing enormous waves of refugees and internally displaced persons. This conflict, in turn, has dramatically affected Congo-Kinshasa's neighbours in Central

Africa, not to mention countries in the neighbouring regions of East and Southern Africa. As a result, it is no hyperbole to note, as does Young (p. 13), that Congo had become the 'veritable epicentre of conflict in Africa', the resolution of which will serve as the starting point for the socio-economic and political-military resuscitation of the region. Toward this end, Clark and the other contributors to *The African Stakes of the Congo War* provide us with a valuable, necessary first step - understanding the interventionist motivations of regional actors - on the path to conflict resolution and the promotion of an enduring peace in the Great Lakes region.

Peter J. Schraeder, **Professor**

Department of Political Science, Loyola University Chicago

Multilateral Institutions: A Critical Introduction, by Morten Boas and Desmond McNeill (eds.). London: Sterling, VA: Pluto Press, 2003. ISBN: 0-7453-1920-3, Price: £14.99, pbk.

This book is an account of the history, functions and problems faced by multilateral institutions. The bulwarks of these multilateral institutions are the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (established 1944), the UNDP (1965) and the World Trade Organisation (1995). The book offers the larger public an account of the institutional designs, activities and dynamics that characterise the day-to-day running of these institutions.

M. Boas and D. McNeill start off claiming that after fifty years, the work of IMF and the World Bank has inspired the slogan 'fifty years is enough'. Marking this anniversary, instructively, were violent clashes between demonstrators and police in Seattle, a development showing an unprecedented rise in the power and status of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) as international actors. It has since become normal for every major meeting of multilateral financial institutions to be spiced with intermittent, mass protests (by NGOs) that purport to offer an alternative perspective to development issues.

The book begins with the premise that a lack of proper understanding of the functions of these multilateral institutions is at the root of the mass protests they tend to provoke. However, the authors ignore any discussions of the issues raised by many NGOs as part of their protests. Instead, they claim that many of the NGOs critical of multilateral organisations do not have a united purpose and front: they have a '... transitional character ... that provides the ground for not one agenda, but many - some of them contradictory in traditional political terms.' (p.136).

This introductory work is reasonably critical and provides the reader with a broad idea of the general activities surrounding multilateral institutions. However, it does not answer many questions such as those raised by Deepak Nayyar,¹⁷³ who raises pertinent questions about the in(ability) of institutions to adapt to the changing world. Why are some laws selectively enforced and tailored to meet the needs of

the rich? Why is it that democracy and the independence of multilateral institutions cannot be fully achieved? Why are these institutions, created to govern globalisation, unable to check the excesses of globalisation? How can the IMF redefine its role to address not only crises management, but also crises prevention? Lastly, why is the IMF so marginalised in the management of capital flows and exchange rates, even as they become more and more volatile as the Asian crises showed?

The book is divided into five major chapters, each with an introduction and conclusion. It also includes a list of tables, a list of abbreviations, a brief guide into multilateral institutions, notes, a list of internet resources, a bibliography, and a very useful index. In the first chapter, the authors argue that it is inappropriate to describe multilateral institutions as unitary actors. 'We argue that it is not fruitful to treat multilateral institutions as unitary actors' (p.3), a statement re-emphasised on page 137 where they state that 'we cannot treat multilateral institutions as unilateral ... these (institutions) are not monolithic organisations'. Through this model, the authors try to advance the view that decisions made in these institutions are a result of a broad-based consultation process that involves multiple stakeholders, including donor and recipient countries, the institutions themselves and lastly NGOs. Thus, the chapter sets the tone for the authors' subsequent discussion of the internal interactions, deliberations and dynamics that produce organisational decisions with underlying consensus or lack of it. Chapter one is correctly positioned to capture the readers' attention and interest as it introduces all the various elements, reasons, and thoughts of the authors. Besides, with sufficient illustrations, it provides an excellent background for the discussions and arguments advanced in subsequent chapters.

The second chapter, titled: 'Structural Design of Multilateral Institutions', starts with a look at the World Bank, its history, board composition, and the role of the president, which includes interpreting degrees of consensus and drawing conclusions as voting in these institutions are rarely done (p.18). Other useful elements concerning the World Bank include its capital configuration, finance and lending, and the relationship between the United States and the World Bank. The IMF, UNDP and regional banks are also analysed in a similar mode. The other main elements analysed in this chapter include the doctrine of political neutrality by multinational institutions, the relations between multinational institutions, and their capacities in their three main roles of technical assistance, programme lending, and policy advice. In sum, the chapter provides a useful framework for understanding the internal dynamics and deliberations that characterise the decision making process.

Chapter three describes the significant changes and transformation of the initial priorities of Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) over the years. Using

¹ Deepak Nayyar, ed. *Governing Globalization: Issues And Institutions* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2002).

subtitles such as 'Modernisation Through Technical Assistance', and 'The World Bank: From Structural Adjustment to Good Governance' to reflect such changes in focus and priorities, the authors proceed to highlight areas of failure, including, but not limited to, structural adjustment policies. However, the book concedes that in spite of these changes, '...the institutions' understanding of development and definition of the relevant knowledge frame is still very narrow' (p.88). Thus, though their agenda has been enlarged to accommodate certain world changes, this accommodation is still inadequate and more could still be done.

Chapter four dwells on the advent of NGOs as international actors, especially through their forceful campaign for the inclusion of environmental issues in development thinking at major international fora. The chapter also associates the rise of NGOs as international actors with the emergence of powerful 'Inspection Panel' and 'Environmental Impact Assessment' of policy within these institutions. These two reasons, amongst others, led the authors to conclude that multilateral institutions are not unilateral actors, but rather that decisions are made as a result of several interacting forces and policies.

Chapter five discusses the future of these MDBs in relation to the prospect of privatisation, as well as the continuing relevance of civil society, and the often-underestimated tension between multilateralism and regionalism. The authors call for substantive reform, rather than closure, given that these institutions are an invaluable catalyst of the process of globalisation. They conclude that multilateralism is about social order in a changing world; without it, bilateralism or unilateralism will result, and developing nations will suffer (p.141).

The front cover of this book depicts a man with a clenched fist raised in front of a blood-stained WTO banner (perhaps implying bloodshed). However, this impression may not be appropriate as it implies a sense of conflict between protesters and multilateral institutions; yet this book is not about protesters and multilateral institutions, but rather about repackaging these institutions, and presenting them in a more clearly defined manner.

The book is very useful in the sense that it introduces the reader to the internal processes that precede decisions in these institutions. It is also quite effective in criticising some of the program (policy) lapses of these institutions. One such criticism can be found on page 73, wherein the authors assert that '.... what was important was the overall rate of growth of the economy. Who would benefit from growth, how growth would affect poverty and equality, were questions almost never asked in these institutions.' This re-echoes some of the criticisms made by NGOs monitoring policy formulation.

This book is a real eye-opener to hidden interactions within multilateral institutions. However, its analysis is limited to just one aspect of the huge debate concerning multilateral institutions. It concedes that a variety of forces are constantly interacting within and outside the multilateral development banks. Such forces include: tensions between the global and the local, market and civil society, private

firms and the multilateral development banks, and NGOs and the MDBs. The book however stresses that it is mainly individual states of the world that will determine the future of the MDBs and other related institutions. Anyone looking to increase their knowledge about multilateral institutions should read this book.

Patrick Dela Cofie,

African Security Dialogue and Research (ASDR), Accra

The Future of Africa: A New Order in Sight? By Jeffrey Herbst and Greg Mills, Adelphi Paper 361. Oxford: Oxford University Press, for the International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2003. 86 pp.

Africa is not a place, or even a state of mind, it is a problem. It is poor and getting poorer, sick and getting sicker. Life there is bad and getting worse. What's more, it is not the plight of the African people that poses the real problem, it is the concomitant instability – a threat to the prosperity and security of the rest of the world – that is so troubling.

Sounds familiar? If so, this monograph will likely add little to your understanding of the continent and its condition. Africa's re-emergence as a topic of conversation within the West of late tends to follow a trend: Africa is worthy of our attention because the consequences of neglecting it are dire *for us*. And that is what is so unsatisfying – not to mention unsettling – about the current discourse. While there is a great deal of data displayed highlighting the plight of sub-Saharan Africans (pp. 11-20), the case for action *does not proceed* from the point of view of a categorical imperative. Rather, Africa is an area where other agenda can be furthered; let's make Africa stable enough that it poses (and harbours) no threat. Change should not come in Africa for Africans' sake, but ours.

The clue is in the title: Order over Peace

Herbst and Mills begin by setting a foundation made up of statistics detailing that the continent's 'overall record is poor' no matter what indicator is used: health, poverty levels, and GDP growth – especially when compared with the massive amounts of aid that have poured in since the 1960s. From this foundation, they construct the almost *de rigueur* argument: poverty leads to desperation and desperation leads to violence. It is the potential for that violence to spill over or radicalise that acts as the lightning rod. The suffering and hopelessness of the population is not even hinted at as a reason for concern. Whether or not this is a rhetorical reaction to the perceived failure of attempts in the past is unclear, but any 'humanitarian' discussion is palpable by its absence. If the plight of the inhabitants of the continent enters into the discussion at all, it is only after it has been thoroughly securitised. The objective for the West is not peace or justice, but *order*.

But where are the Africans? What is missing throughout most of this monograph is an African voice. Instead, the reader is bombarded by the word 'they'. Even the chapter dealing with NEPAD and the AU refers to the political leadership at the state level. Nowhere do we hear 'real people'; even NGOs - the erstwhile representatives of civil society - are silent. This absence makes our hearts grow fonder, perhaps, but it is all the more disappointing given the first half of the title of the monograph: somehow we are discussing 'The Future of Africa' as if Africans themselves play a subsidiary role at best.

And indeed, this subsidiarity does form much of the piece. The lack of African capacity, especially at the bureaucratic and managerial level, hampers political reform at the state level, reduces the effectiveness of Western aid, and restrains enthusiasm for the success of pan-African projects such as the AU.

New thinking...but is it any good?

However, there are features of the paper that are worth the read, some good reminders, and some downright controversial. For instance, the authors are cognisant of the heterogeneity that is Africa. Because it is a 'region of regions,' plans that fail to recognise the diversity of the continent are doomed to fail. Herbst and Mills point out that Western aid has not dried up; they state, 'the international community never abandoned Africa; indeed, what is most striking is the willingness of Western countries to keep pouring money into Africa even though it was obvious that it was having little effect' (p. 15). The money coming in is not the problem, they claim, but rather shortages in two commodities: a) willingness to embrace neo-liberal conditionality and b) new ideas. The fact that both NEPAD and the AU appear to contain elements of the former, but perhaps a dearth of the latter, informs their less than rosy opinion of these developments. Furthermore, they despair that Western (mainly American) efforts, despite grand promises has tended to be 'more of the same just with greater energy' (p. 38).

The kind of new ideas that the authors suggest forms some of the most controversial aspects of the monograph. For instance, they take the politically incorrect point of view that some African conflicts would do well if the notion of 'victory' were (re)introduced. Protracted conflict, elongated in part perhaps by the fact that 'countless NGOs and mediators' focus more on process and less on outcome. As Herbst and Mills would have it 'many...rebel/bandit movements in Africa simply need to be defeated' (p. 70), pointing out that the progress made in Angola has only been possible with the MPLA's military defeat of UNITA. This is not orthodoxy in today's international relations.

Perhaps the best example of such heresy comes in the form of delivering 'the states Africa needs' (p. 71). Here, the authors really do dare to speak the unspeakable in the African context: they advocate new thinking on sovereignty, including the possibility of redrawing boundaries. Despite being the cornerstone of the OAU and now the AU, they believe that maintaining the status quo is part of the

problem and not necessarily part of the solution to establishing order in Africa. The authors, perhaps emboldened by the fact that they broke such a long-standing taboo, go beyond mere cartographic suggestions. At one point they advocate the possibility that 'some kind of security zone in eastern DRC might be established. This zone, which might be similar to that which Israel created in southern Lebanon, would allow Rwanda and Uganda to defend their interests...' (p. 73). It is not everyday that such extreme measures are proposed. Similarly, and perhaps more palatably to some, they call for areas to be internationalised, rather than relegated to lawlessness under the increasingly fallacious assumption of territorial control exercised by state capitals. If judged on the basis of 'is what is in place now working?' then perhaps they are on to something. However, one wonders how such 'complex power-sharing arrangements' (p. 75) might be implemented given the lack of capacity highlighted throughout the rest of the paper.

Finally, one would be remiss not to comment on the authors' assertions concerning the search for partnership in African affairs. They believe that current thinking, based on the assumption that the African giants (Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa) can form the basis of an African future, is wrong-headed. They highlight the tension inherent in this perspective: while some of the large states may be failing or unwilling to take the lead, 'the performance of [smaller countries such as Botswana and Mauritius] is to be applauded, it barely matter in global terms' (p. 37). Given this kind of choice, it is no wonder that there is confusion as to how to best proceed.

The monograph alternates between a re-stating of the 'same-old' (World Bank statistics, call for South African leadership) and an injection of the new and unusual (looking to the small and not the large African states and calls for a new political geography). It is disappointing, however, that in neither case do we get a feeling that it is Africa we are discussing. Instead, we read plans that attempt to make a continent more convenient for the rest of us. A new order may well be the future of Africa, but whose order will it be?

Christopher Ankersen, **doctoral candidate**
London School of Economics and Political Science, London.

Religion and Politics in the Developing World: Explosive Interactions, edited by Rolin G. Mainuddin, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002, 180 pp, ISBN: 0-7546-1507-3, Price: \$99.95/£50 hbk.

This book attempts to understand the complex relationship between religion and politics, especially how the ensuing dynamics lead to violence in the third world. It investigates the historical moments when the relationship between religion and politics have broken down and exploded into violence. For the author, the 1979 Iranian Revolution repositioned religion to the epicentre of politics, locally and

internationally, long after its presumed dismissal by the forces of modernity and secularism. It examines the interaction between the state and dominant religious movements, that is, the rise of 'religious nationalism' against the state.

The book also attempts to expand the argument beyond the orthodox focus on political Islam: the chapters cover Judaism, Christianity and Islam across nine different case studies. The first three chapters explore the dominant role of Catholicism in the political space, such as the rise of Liberation theology and its impact on the political processes in Nicaragua; the role of anticlericalism in the independence struggle and the subsequent armed resistance by the *Cristero* (followers of Christ) Movement and the opposition Zapatista Army in Mexico; and the triangular interaction of Catholicism, Voodoo practices and Protestantism in post-Duvalier Haiti. This was followed by two case studies illustrating the role of non-orthodox, Protestant missions in the anti-colonial and post-independence resistance to the Banda dictatorship in Malawi; and the strong and complex role of the synagogue and ultra-orthodox Jewish political parties in Israel. The last four chapters focus on the struggle between secular and political (radical) Islam in Egypt (with the emergence of several armed Islamic groups and attendant political violence); the birth of HAMAS and the strong religious dimension it introduced to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, as much as its role in the internal political dynamics of the Palestinian struggle; the symbolism of Jihad and Sufism in the mobilisation of fighters by the Chechnya separatist against Russian rule; and the struggle between the forces of secularism and state religion in Bangladesh.

A number of arguments are developed. First, that violence is not exclusive to a particular type of religion - Islam in Algeria, Bangladesh, Chechnya and Palestine, and Christianity and Protestantism in Haiti, Malawi, Mexico and Nicaragua. In all, the propensity for violence is found to be high where there is a clear-cut dominant religion. Second, there is a dialectical relationship between religion and politics: it is both a source of legitimation as well as opposition to political regimes. The choice between legitimation and opposition is contingent upon historical experiences, situational factors and ethno-cultural complexities as evidenced by the use of religion (Christianity and Islam) to resist colonialism and the subsequent use of it again to undermine post-independence political regimes in Malawi and Algeria (respectively). Third, the imposition of a crusading spirit of state secularism on an unwilling population is a form of imposition of religion from 'above', a development that creates social schisms that ultimately results in violence. Finally, religious violence barely takes place in a vacuum; it is often mediated by a mixture of underlying political factors. In fact, the author, echoing the views of social movement theorists (Charles Tilly, Sidney Tarrow and others), identifies political leadership (organisation) as the trigger for religious violence in Algeria, Mexico, Nicaragua and Egypt.

The book's major strength lies in its good array of case studies and impressive organisation of chapters along thematic and geographical lines. Second, the book

queries the tendency in a majority of extant literature to focus on, and even associate religious violence solely with, political or radical Islam, when in fact, there are other instances of 'faith-based' violence in the third world. Third, its focus on intra-religion dynamics (struggles) and how they feed into the power calculus reinforces the view that no religion is a monolith.

However, certain problematic assumptions could be identified across the chapters; first, a majority of the chapters expressly equate religion with religious institutions and the religious actors purporting to represent the religion in question. Christianity (Catholicism or Protestantism), for example, is hardly differentiated from the Church or Priests. This is most evidenced by the chapter on Haiti. This monolithic view of religion, religious institutions and religious actors obscures the important role of human 'agency' as exercised by political actors, who are often 'double-hatted' as religious actors depending on historical, socio-economic and political contexts. Acknowledging the agency of religious, or politico-religious actors would permit an exploration of how religion and religious principles and practices are exploited for political ends. Besides, the interaction between religion and politics is not always explosive or negative. There are instances of positive interaction; apart from helping in the process of independence (liberation theology), some have used religion for political (national) integration in ethnically diverse societies. Only the chapter on Algeria pinpoints this, although in a fleeting manner. Refocusing research on the positive roles of religion in the political process in the third world would contribute significantly to reducing the predominantly negative image of religion in the third world.

Moreover, there is assumption of a unidirectional as opposed to a multidirectional relationship between religion and politics. A majority of the chapters see the explosive interaction between religion and politics as originating from the penetration of politics by religion or religious forces as evidenced by the struggle between secular and revolutionary vision of religions and how it is manifested in political outcomes in Israel, Bangladesh, Palestine and Algeria. Yet empirical evidence suggests that politics and political actors equally penetrate religion. In fact, the line separating religion and politics is often blurred and extremely complex.

In all, the book will be useful to researchers, academics, students, and media practitioners alike - especially in the context of the post-September 11th 'War on Terror'. It will contribute to a timely refocusing of attention to other theatres of conflict between religion and politics beyond radical Islam.

Olawale Ismail, **PhD student**

Department of Peace Studies, University of Bradford

Demilitarizing the Mind: African Agendas for Peace and Security edited by Alex de Waal, Trenton, NJ: African World Press, 2002, ISBN: 086-5439-88-5, Price £15.99 pbk.

This is the second book in a series initiated by Justice Africa's 'Regional Peace and Security in Africa' programme. Originally conceived as a 'seminar diplomacy' initiative to help build common understanding of key issues amongst an informal group of African civil society actors and policymakers, the debates of the consultations in Kigali and Dar es Salaam have been reproduced in book form to disseminate their findings to a larger audience. This particular volume seeks to encourage public debate and reflection on national and regional security issues in Africa. As such, it should be of great interest to a variety of readers, not only those in academia, but also those in policymaking and civil society milieus, as well as others in humanitarian and advocacy groups.

'Demilitarizing the Mind' builds on the discussion of how to establish a framework and institutions to promote peace and security in Africa, introduced in the first book in the series entitled 'Who Fights? Who Cares? War and Humanitarian Action in Africa' (Africa World Press, 2000). It follows the unconventional format of the first book by basing the chapters on unsigned contributions, guaranteeing the authors' anonymity. This unusual approach is quite appropriate given the stated objective of increasing public dialogue on often sensitive and 'no-go' topics of regional and national security in Africa. Each chapter attempts to lay bare the main themes and issues of a particular theme, presenting and evaluating the various arguments of the debate, using historical and contemporary examples. However, as is the case with most intellectual debates, there is no definitive resolution to the issues raised. Instead, the reader is invited to reach their own conclusions based on the arguments presented. The editor, Alex de Waal writes in the preface 'We pose questions rather than positing answers'. And indeed, in many chapters, several unanswered questions are sprinkled throughout the text to highlight the most difficult and controversial aspects of the various topics. This methodology has the benefit of presenting the problematic of demilitarisation in Africa in a holistic manner, never attempting to shy away from the complexity of such a far-reaching security and development agenda. However, the dialogic style leaves very little in the way of bibliographic information to indicate the source of the arguments or relevant literature, and indeed the final bibliography is surprisingly weak given the richness of the discussion.

In general the book argues that 'demilitarization is more than the removal of armed men from the political scene. It also entails a profound change in (African) political culture, so that violence is delegitimized' (p.158). The chapters are broadly organised around the different components of militarism, conflict and society, and how change can be induced at the regional, national, communal and personal levels.

The brief first chapter argues that 'conflict has become a fact of life in many parts of Africa and cannot be regarded as an aberration' (p.11). Militarised governance exacerbates and utilises conflict for its own ends drawing on a particular military, political and economic logic. The chapter then summarises in chart format the various actions that can be taken at the grassroots, civil society/private sector,

national, regional and international levels before, during and after a conflict. This brief section, meant to provide a framework for the discussion on demilitarisation, is the weakest in the book, and arguably unnecessary. Perhaps a more in-depth introduction to the concept of militarisation and demilitarisation would have been more useful. This comes much later in the book as the theme of Chapter Four. It presents the various types of militarism: right wing; left wing; liberal; reactive; and commercial/opportunistic militarism and their effects on various social groups such as women, youth and the poor. The discussion focuses overwhelmingly on ideologically-led forms of militarism; however in the post-cold war era, the most interesting literature on conflict in Africa, such as William Reno's *Warlord politics and African states* (Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998), has attempted to explore other non-ideological aspects including the links to resource extraction and warlordism.

Chapter Two suggests that the current predominance of militaristic governance in Africa prevents the emergence of what Karl Deutsch called 'security communities', communities that share a political culture where the use of force to settle disputes is unacceptable. Largely because of the weakness of the state, the dearth of strong inter-governmental institutions, and the lack of motivation by African governments to develop such institutions, conditions to develop a robust framework for regional peace and security on the continent based on OSCE or ASEAN models are not auspicious. 'African solutions to African problems', such as the recently founded African Union, should instead focus on 'developing the subjective conditions for security cooperation, namely developing common understandings of security and enriching the moral consensus against armed conflict and unconstitutional means of acquiring power' (p.48).

In the next chapter, it is argued that constitutional rule has the potential to avert or contain conflict by managing change, the peaceful transfer of power and grievances of citizens, as well as promote transparent decision-making by the executive branches of government. It is generally in opposition to militaristic forms of governance. However, by declaring exceptionality or emergency rule, constitutions can be subverted or abused. Thus, increasing civic education, and participatory and inclusive processes of adoption, revision and implementation of constitutions are essential to ensuring that constitutions become the means by which good governance and human security are guaranteed for communities (including minorities) and countries in Africa. Chapter Five on the social mobilisation for peace, further develops what roles civil society can play in relation to social progress and change in issues of peace, governance and human rights. In particular, this chapter forcefully questions the roles that women, youth and the poor, should or could play in opposing the militarisation of society, thus engaging recent debates in the relevant literature.

Although most chapters in 'Demilitarizing the Mind' adopt an overtly non-normative approach, the piece on mercenaries and the military-commercial complex is much more prescriptive. By tracing the trends of the 'mercenarization' of conflict in Africa, it argues that the recent phenomenon of international private military

companies (IPMCs) is embedded in the current political and economic crises of the continent. Furthermore, while military-commercial complexes are highly prevalent in Africa, 'a fundamental principle of good government and democracy should be the separation of the military from commercial activities, a linkage that leads inevitably towards corruption, meddling in politics, and conflict' (p137). The chapter argues that on ethical and legal principles, mercenaries should be outlawed, although the banning of IPMCs is inadvisable; a more practical approach would entail restricting particular mercenary activities and questioning the role that they have in complex humanitarian emergencies and post-conflict reconstruction.

The last chapter highlights some of the complex challenges of the post-conflict period, including disarmament, demobilisation, reintegration and rehabilitation of combatants and those associated with violent conflict. In doing so, this last section nicely summarises the main argument of the book: 'Demilitarization is not an agenda of completely dismantling armies and despising soldiers and their values...The problem is the military in excess: in excessive numbers and elevated status, and a militaristic mode of conducting political and social affairs' (p.156). The great challenge for African political culture is how to ensure that political programs are pursued using civilian and non-violent means (p. 158). This book does an admirable job of introducing the phenomenon of the militarisation of governance in Africa, presenting how it influences the way power is exercised and decisions made, and therefore, why demilitarising the mind should be of wider public interest in Africa and beyond.

Christina M. Yeung

Department of International Politics, University of Wales, Aberystwyth

Paradox of Gender Equality in Nigerian Politics, edited by Solomon O. Akinboye, Lagos: Concept Publications Ltd 2004, ISBN: 978 8065 13 9.

This is an interesting and remarkable publication for various reasons. It is a welcome addition to the growing bibliography on gender studies in Nigeria and a reinforcement of the continual need for fresh ideas, analysis and intervention in the noble and necessary task of mainstreaming gender dimensions and values, as a central plank for extending the frontiers of global and national humanism. The book is located in a historical and biographical context that is instructive for its own purposes. It is essentially a collection of essays in honour of late Dr. (Mrs.) Veronica Adeleke, a senior lecturer in the Department of Political Science and Sociology at the Babcock University, Ilishan-Remo, Ogun State, who died a year ago. Dr. Adeleke's research interests included gender studies, a field of inquiry in which she contributed two articles to the academic bibliography. The editor of the book, Dr. Solomon Akinboye further draws attention to Dr. Adeleke's consuming passion for gender studies as part of her post-doctoral research work.

In a sense, this book is a form of tribute, an appraisal, and the acknowledgement of the value of a work-in-progress. An assessment of Veronica Adeleke's contributions to Gender Studies by Solomon Akinboye strengthens the impression of this work-in-progress; to the extent that her efforts were not necessarily seminal, but useful. For this reason, Adeleke's scholarship becomes a platform for a continuing debate for the exploration of a major issue. But there is an even more significant sense in which her exemplification takes us to the centre of gender discourse. One of the central concerns of the women empowerment project in Nigeria has been the need for the identification of role-models, whose lives can be sign-posted as expressions of individual possibilities, as projects of identity, self-assertion and occupational triumph, against the limiting, pervasive patriarchal, phallogocentric and misogynist socio-political environment, culturally and deliberately structured against the womenfolk. Veronica Adeleke's work and profile, as reported in chapter 14, in Appendix 1 of the book, and also in a tribute by Adewale Adeeyo in Appendix 2, fit into this framework. She was a self-made woman in a challenging society; she was an achiever in male-dominated situations; she was a woman of substance in a cynical, prejudiced society which considers women to be inferior. The extractive logic is that in spite of the 'paradox of gender equality' in Nigerian politics and society, the challenge for women seeking transportation, a flight perhaps from the marginal land to the centre of the scheme of things, begins at the level of attitude. Power reconstruction contests cannot be pursued at the level of charity or benevolence. Women who seek power and space cannot afford to stand by, and moan; they must make an effort.

Veronica Adeleke not only made an effort, she exploded at a personal level, the myth of female inferiority. And she is not alone. She is here celebrated through intellection, by her former colleagues in the academia. But a book of this nature, apart from drawing attention to her example, ought to extend the positive note, by devoting more ample space to the giant strides that the Nigerian woman has made, and there are many instances of these stories of personal and collective triumphs in the face of oppression, intimidation, and male-engineered gender violence. The stories of achievement provide a much-needed balance and a more complete picture towards a proper auditing of the place of the Nigerian woman in society and politics.

The recurrent tone in this collection of essays however, is that of lamentation; the standard image is the image of dispossession and disempowerment. There are 14 chapters in all, an introduction by the editor, and two appendixes, all dealing with different aspects of 'the paradox of gender equality in Nigerian politics'. The various contributions restate, rather repetitively, the same premises. The central argument is that the Nigerian woman is in every context, historically, socially, culturally, economically and politically, the victim of a politics of exclusion which works to the advantage of men, who exploit established cultural, social and religious prejudices to marginalise, disempower and dispossess women. The immediate effect is that the Nigerian woman's potential is limited; she is consigned to the marginal

land, to the periphery, to a place outside the centre. Male-domination of processes and instruments of power and decision-making has facilitated this situation. It is argued variously, however, that gender politics is society-based, contextual and informed by power relations. Even inside Nigeria, given the multi-cultural, heterogeneous nature of the society, there are variations from one ethnic group to the other. But on the whole, what predominates is the devaluation of the rights of women, as human beings.

The ancillary argument is that this is in every sense, paradoxical. One, women constitute about half of the world's population and in Nigeria, they are half of the population. It is reasoned that the exclusion of half of a country's population from the development process is not only unreasonable but unjust, as society denies itself the opportunity of operating at full capacity. Two, despite this situation, the Nigerian Government is a signatory to many international conventions on human rights and women empowerment. There are provisions as well in Chapters Two and Four of the Nigerian Constitution which forbid any form of discrimination on the grounds of either gender or sex. There is equally an array of public policies which over time, have been designed to empower women. Three, economic, historical and social indicators have shown that women are not subordinate agents in the development process but capable human units with identity and potential. In contemporary times, an increasing percentage of households is headed by women; the informal trade sector is dominated by women as entrepreneurs and managers of wealth. Still, women remain shut out of the decision-making centre.

What has strengthened this is the failure of public policies; the feminisation of poverty and disease, the domestic oppression of women; the masculinisation of the discourse of power, and the extent regime of violence against women in cultural situations, and equally in media representations. Law and justice are further structured against women, and ironically, personal pronouns in the Nigerian Constitution are all male. By the same token, political processes do not favour women. Women's representation in public affairs amounts in effect to sheer tokenism or at worst, a form of charity. The third, central proposition derived logically from the foregoing is the persistent demand for change and progress, in form of recourse to gender equity leading to gender equality. The contributors ask for gender empowerment, the recognition of the due place of women in the development process, the enhancement of the status of women, the de-masculinisation of political processes, the de-feminisation of poverty, disease and the public sphere, a proactive gender policy in form of affirmative action for women, and the introduction of a 'gender character' into the Nigerian Constitution. The assumption is that the empowerment of women will liberate and deepen society's potentials.

This is a challenge to be effectuated at both policy and civil society levels. Students of politics and sociology, and of the development process in Nigeria will find these arguments illuminating; especially in terms of the treatment of the various aspects by this carefully chosen set of contributors, each with a passion for the

subject, backed by considerable intellectual talent. It is to be noted, nonetheless, that the various chapters are full of recommendations, without any useful focus on strategies. The recommendations that are offered are more or less familiar; they are already well articulated as part of the discourse in this field of inquiry. What remains to be resolved therefore is: what kind of strategies can best achieve the desired objectives? Why is it that other strategies, earlier adopted by Non-Governmental Organisations and governments at various levels, have failed? Are there new options and possibilities that can bring women closer to the centre? How can the various recommendations be effectuated to achieve the progress that is sought? Or is it that the Nigerian situation is too peculiar?

What is not stated in any of the chapters is that women disempowerment or gender politics is an aspect of the general politics of exclusion in the Nigerian society, an extension of the contradictions of the Nigerian state, and reflection of our development status. The achievement of gender equity/equality cannot be realised in isolation of the overall human rights crisis in Nigerian politics, and the official disregard for Constitutional provisions. Nigeria is a problematic country not just for women but for every citizen. Lifting the burden of retrogressive patriarchy involves a direct confrontation with the larger development practical instances that could have provided useful case studies. Abigail Ogwezy's 'The Press, Gender and Politics: The Nigerian Perspective' (Chapter 7) provides perhaps a ready opportunity for practical and original analysis, but like other chapters, she limits herself to mere description of existing literature. Akachi Ezeigbo's 'Literature: A Tool for Gender Activism in Nigeria' is original and detailed, but her supposition that only women writers 'are using their writing to promote gender equality' is dent, the reader still manages to gain a fairly comprehensive view of the subject.

Eno Ikpe's 'The Historical Legacy of Gender Inequality in Nigeria' is a detailed and even-handed survey of gender politics in Nigerian history and life. In Chapter 3, Risikat Dauda offers an interesting analysis of 'the economic context of Gender Equality in Nigeria', but part of the data here is repeated in Chapter 6 dealing with 'Public Policy and Gender Politics in Nigeria' by Iyabo Olojede. Chapters 4 and 5 focus on the legal framework for Gender Equality and the search for Gender Justice, but beyond the description of the problem, no attempt is made to examine the effort by individuals and civil society groups to test the law and insist on justice. In Molokwu's case for example, the court upheld a widow's right to inherit her husband as an expression of natural justice and human rights. In 1999, a coalition of NGOs on gender issues prepared 'A Political Agenda for Women' and tried to register a political party. These are practical instances that could have provided useful case studies. Abigail Ogwezy's 'The Press, Gender and Politics: The Nigerian Perspective' (Chapter 7) provides perhaps a ready opportunity for practical and original analysis, but like other chapters, she limits herself to mere description of existing literature. Akachi Ezeigbo's 'Literature: A Tool for Gender Activism in Nigeria' is original and detailed, but her supposition that only women writers 'are using their writing to

promote gender equality' is not borne out by the truth. Male hegemonic affirmation is not the central preoccupation of Nigeria male writers, to the extent that there is ample evidence of gender activism, in favour of women in Nigeria male writing as well. How for example would Ezeigbo classify Iyaloja in Soyinka's *Death and the King's Horseman*, Segi in Kongi's *Harvest*, the three old women in *Madmen and Specialists*; or Femi Osofisan's *Morountodun*; Elechi Amadi's *Woman of Calabar*, Wale Ogunyemi's *Queen Amina*, or the women in Festus Iyayi's novels, or Tunde Fatunde's plays?

The gender argument need not necessarily be constructed in an oppositional sense: the long-term objective is not a conflict of the sexes, but the expansion of the frontiers of human rights in a society that is truly open and just. Aderonke Karunwi's 'The Role of NGOs in Gender Awareness' deals with an interesting aspect of the subject but it shies away from an evaluation of the problems and politics of NGOs in Nigeria which significantly limit their capacity. Her list and categorisation of NGOs on Gender issues are incomplete. She overlooks for example, Women in Nigeria (WIN). On the whole, *Paradox of Gender Equality in Nigerian Politics: Essays in Honour of Dr (Mrs.) Veronica Adeleke* is an eminently useful contribution. Gender politics is at the heart of Nigerian politics. The 'inferiorisation' of women on cultural and religious grounds raises questions of equity and justice. The search for a functional democratic system can only be best realised in an operative environment under which there is a collective sense of ownership and belonging. The politics of exclusion in any form defeats the democratic ideal. In addition, this book offers a fine and detailed articulation of the central issues and challenges of gender equality in Nigerian politics. It is at once a stimulating and engaging call to action, and a fitting tribute to the life and work of a scholar and intellectual whose example advertises the virtues and glory of womanhood. The place of this publication in gender discourse is, without any doubt, assured.

Reuben Abati, **Chairman / Editorial Page Editor**
The Guardian Newspapers, Lagos, Nigeria

Scarcity and Surfeit. The Ecology of Africa's Conflicts edited by Jeremy Lind and Kathryn Sturman, Pret

oria: The Institute for Security Studies, 2002, 388 pp. Hbk. ISBN: 1-919913-18-1. Ce livre a l'ambition de présenter une lecture fondée sur la compréhension du poids des ressources de la nature dans la dynamique du déclenchement et/ou de la perpétuation des conflits en Afrique. Cette approche écologique de l'étude des conflits armés en Afrique est ainsi développée à travers huit chapitres bien structurés. Nous parlons de huit chapitres car l'introduction et la conclusion constituent dans ce livre collectif deux points d'ancrage dont la valeur n'a d'égale que la limpidité de la lumière que leurs auteurs jettent pour saisir l'économie générale des autres

chapitres qui sont, eux, des études de cas de conflits spécifiques qui embrasent l'Afrique. Ces études de cas couvrent l'arc des crises qui s'incruste à partir de grands lacs africains (le Burundi, la République démocratique du Congo et le Rwanda) en remontant le lit du Nil en passant par la Somalie, l'Éthiopie et le Soudan. Une bibliographie abondante clôture sur plus de vingt pages ce livre.

Le premier chapitre, disons l'introduction au livre, présenté par Joao Gomes Porto procède au défilement de la littérature consacrée à l'analyse des conflits armés. Le survol de la littérature permet à cet auteur de considérer deux conjonctures historiques et subséquentement la variation des tentatives d'explication de conflits armés en relations internationales. Pendant la période de la guerre froide, les études sur la guerre gravitaient autour de la grille systémique, soit l'orientation et l'intérêt pour des guerres globales ou des grandes guerres ou encore des guerres interétatiques et l'on espérait qu'une meilleure compréhension des causes de ces guerres augmentera la possibilité de les prévenir. La deuxième grille considérait les autres conflits comme des guerres par procuration, soit des petites guerres ou des conflits de faible intensité découlant de l'affrontement de deux Titans. Dans cette conjoncture, les analystes de la question de guerres étaient plus sensibles aux grandes guerres, les guerres par procuration, même si elles faisaient rage ne les préoccupant pas tellement. Ainsi lorsque la fin de guerre froide arrive, un triomphalisme théorique prévoit la réduction sensible des menaces à la paix et à la sécurité internationales : on subsume que le monde va profiter des dividendes de la paix. Vite, l'ère post-bipolaire contredit ces espérances (la fin de l'histoire est reportée à plus tard !) et le regard se focalise sur des conflits précédemment négligés. L'occurrence et l'amplitude de ces conflits (intra) sociétaux démontrent en fait que les analystes manquent d'outils opératoires pour les cerner.

De ce fond du constat de la transformation structurelle de la guerre, Porto rappelle et critique différentes théories élaborées pour comprendre ce phénomène en insistant sur la valeur de la théorie de l'envie et de la frustration dont il présente les variations théoriques. Ceci le conduit à mettre de l'ordre dans ce débat et il élabore un cadre analytique de la guerre. Ce cadre analytique veut comprendre le conflit armé en le disséquant en plusieurs niveaux car le conflit a un cycle de vie et on peut le considérer dans ses conditions de déclenchement ou bien en tant que processus. Il est ainsi aisé de déceler les différentes causes qui peuvent créer le conflit ; de même lorsqu'il est déjà déclenché, le conflit subit d'autres causes qui l'emballent. Recourant au triptyque des niveaux d'analyse de la source des conflits armés que Waltz, Scott, Levy et Sandole ont dégagé, Porto entrouvre des perspectives de réflexion sur la résolution des conflits.

Cette entrée en matière permet ainsi de comprendre le socle de la perspective écologique qui préside à l'articulation des différentes études de cas de conflits constituant les six chapitres. Ce socle peut se résumer ainsi : les conflits armés peuvent être déclenchés par de multiples facteurs ; dès lors qu'ils naissent, les conflits peuvent avoir d'autres dynamiques fondées sur des facteurs écologiques,

soit les ressources naturelles dont le contrôle ou le déni de contrôle deviennent le moteur entretenant ou auto-entretenant les situations belligères. La première étude de cas, présentée par Jean Bigagaza, Carolyn Abong et Cecile Mukarubuga, porte sur le conflit au Rwanda. En mettant dans l'intitulé de leur étude la rareté de la terre et la distribution, ces trois auteurs fixent clairement le cadre dans les interstices duquel ils veulent examiner le conflit rwandais. Si la « demande » de la terre est forte par rapport à son « offre » en ce pays, le pouvoir et l'exercice du pouvoir deviennent l'interface au niveau duquel s'articulent l'accès à la terre, soit aux ressources, la distribution des ressources du pays et l'emballement du conflit. Cette étude écologique sort ainsi du cadre de la valorisation de l'ethnicité comme source du conflit rwandais. Cet exercice est réussi par une approche historique et politique globale qui déconstruit la trajectoire du Rwanda de l'époque précoloniale à la période post-coloniale. Le conflit rwandais peut bien être présenté comme fondé sur la rivalité entre les deux groupes, les Hutu et les Tutsi ; au-delà de cette réalité ; se trouvent des questions écologiques liées à l'inégale distribution (ou accès) à la terre, cette évidence souvent négligée dans des discours ethnicisants du conflit permettant d'en entrevoir des perspectives de règlement. Ainsi suggèrent-ils que le gouvernement rwandais prenne ses responsabilités en vue d'engager ce pays sur la voie des réformes agraires et foncières.

La deuxième étude de cas signée par Johnstone Summit Oketch et Tara Polzer porte sur le Burundi. Elle veut relire le conflit burundais pour en apprécier le poids des variables écologiques. Dans ce pays secoué par la guerre civile depuis l'indépendance en 1962, le contrôle du café (celui-ci contribue pour plus de 80% aux recettes de l'Etat) et des autres filières d'accès aux richesses de cette formation sociale constitue un des aspects importants qui expliquent l'affrontement des individus, le port du masque (et le discours) ethnique étant partie prenante du régime du simulacre dont parle un africain en ce qui concerne les sociétés africaines postcoloniales. Ces deux auteurs convainquent bien à la lecture de leur texte car ils démontrent que le Burundi est jusqu'à ce jour dirigé par une oligarchie politico-militaire qui contrôle tout l'appareil de l'Etat, dirige le pays et s'en approprie toutes les ressources sans répondre aux attentes de la population. Pour contenir et discipliner les citoyens dont le gouvernement est incapable de satisfaire les besoins, les prédateurs burundais au pouvoir utilisent la répression et la violence. Les structures injustes et les politiques de gestion de l'environnement prédatrices de la classe dirigeante au Burundi sont justiciables du conflit dans ce pays.

Le conflit en République Démocratique du Congo est exploré dans le quatrième chapitre par Céline Moyroud et John Katunga. La relecture de ce conflit conduit les auteurs à présenter très brièvement l'histoire politique de ce pays de l'Etat Indépendant du Congo à l'actuel régime. C'est dans le contexte de fin de règne du Président Mobutu que le conflit s'installe en ce pays. Si la conjoncture et les conditions dans lesquelles le conflit a été déclenché sont rappelées, les auteurs veulent insister sur le rôle de l'exploitation du coltan dans la perpétuation de la situation belligère

dans la partie Est de la RDC. Aussi, une analyse serrée est-elle faite pour présenter l'économie de l'exploitation du coltan en commençant par le cycle d'extraction de ce minerais et en en disséquant le marché jusqu'aux conséquences de son exploitation. La compréhension des enjeux du contrôle de l'accès à ce minerais rentre dans le cadre dans le cadre général d'analyse écologique des conflits armés et permet de situer les sites au niveau desquels on peut agir en vue de la résolution de ce conflit qui se déroule dans un pays devenu une jungle, un pays dont les richesses attirent la convoitise des pays voisins. Ceux-ci sont ainsi des trouble-fête dans ce pays. Il convient de tenir compte de la dimension externe et des aspects internes pour asseoir une stratégie de la résolution du conflit en RDC.

Le 5^e chapitre est une analyse du conflit au Soudan. Ce pays de 36 millions d'habitants ayant une superficie qui le fait classer parmi les deux premiers vastes territoires africains est secoué par la guerre pendant plus de 35 ans. Cette guerre a entraîné plus de deux millions de morts. La préoccupation de Paul Goldsmith, Lydia A Abura et Jason Switzer qui signent cette étude se dégage dès que l'on aborde ce chapitre par la question qu'ils se posent, à savoir quelles sont les politiques et les mesures de droit envisageables pour aider à la résolution de ce conflit interminable. C'est en fonction de cette préoccupation que les trois auteurs se mettent à analyser ce qu'ils appellent « le cycle du conflit soudanais ». La revisite de ce cycle les conduit à recourir à l'histoire du pays en en situant les aspects structurants distinctifs ; de même, ce détour par l'histoire du pays leur permet de dessiner la carte des éléments systémiques et des dynamiques cycliques constitutifs de la trajectoire de ce conflit.

Cette analyse veut dépasser le discours binaire à l'aune duquel s'explique souvent le conflit soudanais, ce discours binaire voulant insister sur la division entre le Nord et le Sud ou bien la fracture entre les Arabes et les Africains. Pour non moins pertinentes que soient ces deux divisions, cette étude explore le fondement et les enjeux d'ordre écologique qui entretiennent le conflit soudanais d'autant plus que le Soudan précolonial a fait l'expérience d'invasions étrangères ayant pour incidence « le pillage des ressources naturelles et la capture des ressources humaines en vue de la traite des esclaves ». La lecture écologique du conflit soudanais se décrypte à l'analyse de trois cas empiriques, notamment le conflit autour du canal de Jonglei, ensuite la violence entre les Nuer et les Dinka (les deux premiers cas de conflit démontrent l'enjeu de la rivalité autour de l'eau), enfin le dernier cas étant la compréhension du rôle du pétrole dans ce conflit. Le style limpide de l'analyse permet à la lecture de découvrir la justesse du récit écologique dans la généalogie de ce conflit et de dégager l'effort de ces trois auteurs qui insistent la voie de la bonne gouvernance (administrative, politique et environnementale) en vue de créer les conditions du règlement durable de ce conflit... qui a trop duré.

Fiona Flintan et Imeru Tamrat sont les deux auteurs du sixième chapitre qui analyse le cas de la conflictualité en Ethiopie en insistant sur la problématique de la gestion de l'eau comme enjeu de conflits. Pour l'évidence de l'analyse, deux bassins

d'eau sont pris en compte comme site d'analyse des conflits en ce pays. Il s'agit du bassin de la vallée d'Awash (située au nord-est de l'Éthiopie près de l'Érythrée et de Djibouti) et du bassin du Nil. L'Éthiopie en tant qu'une formation sociale millénaire est secouée par une structuration belligène de ses rapports aussi bien internes qu'externes. Cette réalité est donnée à travers le rappel du contexte historique de l'évolution de cet Etat des temps immémoriaux jusqu'à l'actuel régime qui a instauré « la politique du fédéralisme ethnique et de la décentralisation ». A ce jour, l'Éthiopie est impliquée dans deux conflits l'opposant à la Somalie à l'Est et à l'Érythrée au nord. Sur le plan interne, l'Éthiopie est souvent secouée par des affrontements entre les différents groupes ethniques. L'approche écologique amène ainsi Flintan et Tamrat à passer en revue la situation conflictuelle dans le bassin de la rivière Awash, un espace couvrant 70.000 km² et représentant 6% de la superficie totale de ce pays. Cet espace est occupé par plusieurs groupes ethniques parmi lesquels les Afar constituant le groupe majoritaire sont à côté des Issa, Kerreyu, Jille, Arsi, Ittu et Argoba. Dans cette région pauvre, il y a des affrontements ethniques entre les Afar et les Issa, dont l'enjeu est essentiellement fondé sur des rivalités écologiques de l'accès à l'eau et aux zones de pâturages. Le deuxième cas est celui du bassin du Nil dont l'enjeu mettant aux prises trois Etats, soit l'Éthiopie, le Soudan et l'Égypte repose sur le contrôle/l'accès aux sources d'eau du Nil. Il existe souvent des tensions entre les trois pays sur cette question, ce que rappèlent les auteurs de cette étude qui décrivent ainsi les efforts communs entrepris pour la promotion de la coopération dans le bassin du Nil.

L'avantage de cette étude est de démontrer ainsi les perspectives qui s'offrent lorsque les aspects écologiques sont intégrés dans l'analyse des trajectoires de conflits : l'engagement politique et surtout le succès de la gouvernance environnementale jouent et réduisent le conflit dans un tel contexte. Pour preuve, l'insuccès des initiatives du gouvernement éthiopien explique alors la continuation du conflit dans la vallée d'Awash tandis que la coopération entre les trois Etats riverains du Nil écarte le conflit ouvert entre ces pays.

Le septième chapitre est une étude de cas du conflit en Somalie. Elle est signée par trois auteurs : Ibrahim Farah, Abdirashid Hussein et Jeremy Lind. La Somalie est située dans la partie orientale de la Corne de l'Afrique dont elle couvre 637.540 Km² de la superficie. C'est un pays à climat semi-aride propice au nomadisme pastoral. L'eau y est rare. D'une population estimée entre 9 et 12 millions, la Somalie est constituée d'un stock humain des gens partageant une même langue (la langue Somalie), ayant une même religion (l'islam sunnite) et une même origine ethnique (les Somali). Ce pays ethniquement homogène est secoué par une guerre civile depuis l'effondrement du régime de Siad Barre. Cette guerre civile oppose de clans à d'autres et des sous-clans les uns aux autres ; elle a mis sur le devant de la scène belligène des chefs de guerre. Pour bien conduire leur analyse du conflit somalien sous le prisme écologique, les trois auteurs s'intéressent au conflit tel qu'il se déroule dans le Jubbaland, une province située dans la partie du sud-ouest

de la Somalie ; sa capitale, Kismayo occupe l'extrême sud du pays sur la côte de l'Océan Indien. Dans cette région, l'exacerbation du conflit rend celui-ci complexe et protéiforme. Au centre de ce conflit dans cette région, se trouve la question de la propriété et du contrôle de la terre, le *deegaan* et la compétition entre clans et sous-clans pour le contrôle de *deegaan* peut se lire comme une autre face de la plus large compétition nationale pour le contrôle de l'Etat somalien.

Dans leur conclusion sur le conflit dans le Jubbaland somalien, les auteurs en reconnaissent l'importance des questions foncières et s'orientent vers la réflexion sur les perspectives de sa gestion et de sa résolution, ces perspectives étant bien utiles pour les gestionnaires de conflits et les faiseurs de la paix. Ils trouvent une source d'inspiration pour la résolution du conflit somalien dans la coutume du pays, coutume qui met en avant la négociation et la réciprocité pour l'établissement des liens sociaux et économiques durables. Un tel projet pour la paix en Somalie devrait être fondé sur l'inclusion de toutes les fractions aussi bien celles de l'intérieur que celles évoluant dans des pays étrangers de manière à fonder des structures étatiques respectueuses de l'équité, du sens de la solidarité et de l'intégration de toutes les forces vives du pays sans exclusive, y compris les femmes, les jeunes et les militants.

Le dernier chapitre est la conclusion du livre. Présenté par Richard Cornwell, ce chapitre est destiné à confirmer la justesse de l'approche globale adoptée pour rendre compte de certains conflits armés qui secouent les deux zones de conflit en rappelant certaines leçons à tirer. A cet égard, il rappelle la responsabilité de ceux qui dirigent les institutions étatiques puisant les ressources de l'Etat en s'en servant au gramme du bien-être de la population ; il cite la présence des compagnies multinationales étrangères et d'autres intérêts étrangers à côté desquels se trouvent les *entrepreneurs de la violence*. Ce dernier élément est, du reste, présenté dans un autre contexte par un auteur qui parle des conflits africains comme des guerres de rapine, nées de l'avatar de la mondialisation sauvage (voir *Boyla, l'Afrique, le maillon faible*).¹⁷⁴ C'est cet enchevêtrement des intérêts et des agents sans scrupule (la mafia globalisée) qui complique les perspectives de résolution des conflits. Mais dit Cornwell, reconnaître et nommer les instigateurs et identifier ceux qui perpétuent et profitent des conflits concrets est un bon premier pas. L'ensemble de ce livre le fait bien, même si on peut reconnaître que l'approche écologiste que l'ensemble des auteurs veulent mettre en évidence ne dit pas de choses nouvelles, mais présente des choses d'une nouvelle manière.

Nantang JuaNantang Jua

Germain Ngoie Tshibambe, **Professor and Head**
International Relations Studies Department, University of Lubumbashi, D.R. of Congo

When Peace Comes: Civil Society and Development in Sudan edited by Alex de Waal and Yoanes Ajawin, Asmara; Lawrenceville, NJ: The Red Sea Press Inc, 2002,

pp. 308, ISBN: 156-9021-65-1 price £17.99 pbk.

This is not a book about civil society. It is, in fact, a book about the run-down history of complex political emergencies in Sudan, which mirrors how Sudanese society has been fragmented and tormented by the civil war precipitated mainly by the military and political leaders for their own vested interests in the name of ethnicity, regionalism and religious belief. 'When Peace Comes' draws on the proceedings of the second Kampala conference on human rights, democracy and development in the transition in Sudan so the book evinces neither academic rigour nor a theoretical approach to the topic. It primarily deals with the different facets of socio-economic and cultural and political rights in Sudan in the light of civil war.

The essays in the volume argue that there is no hope of building a viable civil society in Sudan, especially in the foreseeable future, if the current political ambiguities and anomalies are not addressed. The book as a whole also recommends some policy options to the transitional government as how to confront post-war traumas in a country that has been embroiled in war for nearly thirty years. It also takes on the issues of internally and externally displaced persons (invisible citizens), land rights, land reform and natural resources - which have been instrumental in the outbreak of war, and the issue of widespread famine due to mistaken economic policies, all of which pose a great threat to the survival of any sort of peace agreement. It also attempts to change the public notion that famine is an act of god (p.153).

The authors in successive chapters enthuse on the importance and temporality of the civil society's role in the multi-causal crisis and attempt to posit solutions as to what should be done when peace finally comes for it not to recur again. Paradoxically, however, they fail to establish a distinct link between the gravity of the problem that Sudan is facing and the role civil society could play. Some of the chapters are very basic and generalist in nature and do not offer much on the subject matter as set out in the introduction. They therefore fail to advance intellectual debate in terms of the magnitude of the Sudanese political crisis and the issues raised in the book. For example, the chapters on economic and social rights, the rights of children and Sudan's economic plight merely give an overview of the current situation in Sudan. Chapter four discusses the different ways of tackling both urban and rural poverty through decentralisation and fair distribution of natural resources such as water and oil within Sudan; increasing food security, curtailing bureaucratic corruption; minimising the gender gap, and dismantling military-commercial linkages. It recognises market economy, a private sector and foreign investment as tools of boosting national economy in a globalised world. Although these are paramount issues to alleviate poverty and uplift Sudanese economy, it remains doubtful if any of these would ever be achieved unless democracy and peace are installed in the country. Therefore, contributors rightly emphasis on

¹ Boyla, *Afrique, le maillon faible* (Paris: Le Serpent à Plumes, 2002).

addressing poverty and extreme inequality a long term political project as well as economic project (p.62). What is also clear from these chapters is that they do recognise the sense of urgency in the society to address the issue of socio-economic inequality based on religious and ethnographic lines, which are inextricably bound up to the search for sustainable peace in post-conflict Sudan.

Chol Gidion Gakmar's essay on disarmament and demobilisation is an eye opener as it rightly depicts how ex-combatants can restart conflict even after the peace agreement is signed by giving the example of Anya-nya demobilisation of 1972 and how it caused resentment among some Anya-nya members who refused to disarm, thus breaching the agreement of absorbing them into armies and civilian jobs by the government. He therefore emphasises the need for rightful reintegration of ex-combatants and militias specially NIF (National Islamic Front) and SPLA (Sudan People's Liberation Army) in the society by including special rights and just policies for their permanent and secure integration into the civilian life. In his own words, one of the commonest causes of war in Africa in recent years has been mutiny or insurrection by soldiers who feel betrayed or frustrated by the deal they have in a post-war settlement (p.91).

Moreover, the chapter on women's movement concedes to the role of women as natural peacemakers in society and explains the eagerness of Sudanese women to stop war. The classic example in this regard is how Sudanese women collectively withheld sex from their menfolk to try to compel them to stop war (p.192) nevertheless; the existence of extreme Islamic laws prevents them from playing any significant role in the society. The authors elucidate the tribulations women are going through in Sudan such as female circumcision, discrimination in every respect and treatment of women as an object but fail to come out with any clear policies in the post-war Sudan for the transitional government. The question of self-determination and related issues of devolution of power, cultural and community rights and race relations is another complex and controversial issue that has rocked Sudanese society over the years. This is covered under the chapter on nationalism, federalism and self-determination. The authors elaborate on the different thoughts of school with regard to the issue of self-determination in Sudan but offer no future policy guidelines.

When Peace Comes also debates the issue of Islam and politics - arguably the most divisive issue in contemporary Sudan. Authors debate two key points. The first is whether or not religious belief and experience is an intrinsic part of human life and whether the separation of religion from the politics can be achieved only by force. A second point is whether Islam or any religion can be the basis of politics or the state and whether religion should be confined to the private sphere and public life governed by a secular ethos. Overall, the book addresses socio-economic and political problems that Sudan is grappling with and considers some policy implications for a transitional government.

Chandra D. Bhatta, PhD Student

Department of Social Policy, London School of Economics and Political Science

Bound by Tradition: The World of Thabo Mbeki by Lucky Mathebe, Pretoria: University of South Africa, 2001, ISBN: 1-86888-169-5, price UK£12.70/ US\$19.50 pbk.

This volume complements the expanding literature on the South African president and his presidency.¹⁷⁵ What is new about Lucky Mathebe's contribution is the introduction of a new subject: the media. Mathebe seeks to critique the '...media representations or images of Mbeki.¹⁷⁶ He sets out to prove that Mbeki has instead been shaped by what he is given to referring to as the 'institutional tradition of the ANC,' that Mbeki is a 'man of tradition.'¹⁷⁷

Mathebe starts off with a critique of two media constructions of Mbeki, that of the 'Victorian Prince' and the 'Machiavellian Prince.' He provides a lengthy critical account of these two media narratives on Mbeki when he was in exile, his presidency, his deputy presidency during the period of the Government of National Unity, and his role in the ANC in exile. Chapter Two, *Media's first 'official story': a Victorian Prince*, critiques the media's construction of Mbeki. As a 'Victorian Prince', he was viewed by the media as a moderate, intellectual, reconciliatory, urbane and sophisticated figure within the ANC, in contrast to the hardline Africanists, socialists and communists. He was perceived as such against the background of his middle-of-the-road and visionary handling of thorny racial questions, the question of the lifting of sanctions against the apartheid state, the cessation of armed struggle, and the shaping of the new relations between the ANC and the Afrikaner political elite and business magnates. These, indeed, were visionary and courageous stances to take at the time of the transition to democracy and the preparations for the first ever national democratic elections in South Africa.

The third chapter, *Media's 'second official story': a 'Machiavellian Prince'*, offers a construction of Mbeki which is in stark contrast to that of the 'Victorian Prince'. The Machiavellian Prince narrative depicts Mbeki as a sly, manipulative and a behind-the-scenes calculating figure determined to elbow out potential rivals

¹ Before the publication of this book, see also, Hadland, A. and Rantao, J. *The Life and Times of Thabo Mbeki* (Rivonia: Zebra Press, 1999); Corrigan, T. *Mbeki, His Time Has Come: An Introduction to South Africa's New President* (Braamfontein: South African Institute of Race Relations, 1999); Spence, J.E. (eds.) *After Mandela: The 1999 South African Elections* (Southern Africa Study Group: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1999); Mufemfo, M. *Thabo Mbeki and the African Renaissance: The Emergence of a New African Leadership* (Pretoria, 2000). Arnold, G. *The New South Africa* (Basingstoke: MacMillan, 2000). After the date of the publication of this book, see, Jacobs, S. and Calland, R. (eds.) *Thabo Mbeki's World: The Politics and Ideology of the South African President* (Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press; London: Zed Books Ltd., 2002); Lodge, T. *Politics in South Africa: From Mandela to Mbeki* (Oxford: James Currey, 2003). Thabo

and threats within the ANC in an attempt to heighten his political prominence and augment the vastness of his influence. Mathebe cites a newspaper article describing the Machiavellian in Mbeki:

The stereotype depicts Mbeki as a man who uses political sleight of hand to eliminate competitors for the leadership of the ANC and subsequently, the country. Grist to the mill of this theory has been the litany of top ANC leaders who have taken a hit since 1994. There were the firing of Pallo Jordan, the demotion of Jay Naidoo, the overlooking of Tito Mboweni for the finance portfolio, and the withdrawal of Cyril Ramaphosa from politics. The only man left behind is Mbeki himself, leading to the conclusion that he has been behind the purge of the senior leadership for selfish reasons.¹⁷⁸

Further developing the Machiavellian Prince media narrative, Mathebe enquires whether Mbeki acquired 'the secretive traits of an exile beset by fears of betrayal',¹⁷⁹ a poser he answers in the affirmative. However, he bothers little to paint the correct atmosphere and nature of the ANC in exile. He depicts a simplified and periodically monolithic nature of exile. Indeed, it is correct that the ANC in exile was organisationally weak and in crisis organisationally. Adrian Hadland and Jovial Rantao, the first biographers of Thabo Mbeki, explain that, 'The late 1960s and early 1970s were an extremely bleak period for the movement. Inside South Africa, the ANC had been crushed and humiliated, outside, they squabbled over strategy and ideological preference.'¹⁸⁰ The 1970s had been particularly wearisome for the ANC inside South Africa, as the movement's underground cell structures had almost completely broken down. It was not visible as a mobilising movement, and was further eclipsed by Biko's Black Consciousness Movement (BCM).

The ANC's organisational crisis came to a head with the advent of the 1969 Morogoro Consultative Conference in Tanzania. The ideological rifts between the 'worker-ists' and the African nationalists further threatened the unity of the movement. Less than a dozen workerists and other leftist factions were expelled from the ANC (predominantly white), and the Strategy and Tactics document was drafted partly to strengthen the ANC organisationally. Therefore, Mbeki at that time:

Mbeki himself has published a number of his own writings and speeches. For an insight into Mbeki, his policies and his presidency, see also, Mbeki, T. *Africa - The Time has Come: Selected Speeches* (Johannesburg: Mafube Publishers, 1998); Mbeki, T. *et al. The African Renaissance* (Johannesburg: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, 1998); Mbeki, T. *The African Renaissance: Africa and the World* (Tokyo: United Nations University, 1998); Mbeki, T. *Africa Define Yourself* (Cape Town: Tafelberg; Johannesburg: Mafube Publishers, 2002).

¹ Mathebe, L. *Bound by Tradition: The World of Thabo Mbeki* (Pretoria: University of South Africa Press, 2001), (p. vii).

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*, (pp. 50 - 1).

⁴ *Ibid.*, (p. 1).

...was immediately aware of the danger. Power in those days was about position, allies and knowledge. Thabo had knowledge, and people feared him because of it. It meant he was a threat to their positions and to the perks and patronage that went with it. Thabo had the ear of Tambo but needed to protect himself in the same way everybody else did: with trusted, loyal allies. Whether or not they were good, or able or clever was unimportant. If they could be relied on, if they could warn him of the ghoul in the shadows or of the conspiracy afoot, if they could protect his back, they were more to be valued than a sackful of docstorates.¹⁸¹

The major problem with Mathebe's account of the ANC in exile is that he has constructed a simple and unproblematised perception of exile. Second, his narrative of the ANC in exile is without any periodisation. The unsuspecting reader is therefore led to believe that the ANC was in organisational crisis throughout its period in exile. However, it was mainly in the late 1960s and early 1970s that the ANC experienced organisational problems, and mainly in the West. From the 1970s, the ANC's military wing experienced massive disciplinary and infiltration problems that came to a head with the mutiny of its MK (Umkhonto we Siwe) guerrillas in Angola (referred to as *umkatashingo* in ANC parlance). The author therefore does not even begin to properly describe, let alone critique, the complicated and intricate nature and atmosphere of the ANC in exile in different periods of time and in different places, of different ranks and files of cadres, and what these experiences meant for them in post-apartheid South Africa.¹⁸² These conditions of the ANC in exile need to be explained more clearly.

That said, the book is partly incoherent, incomplete and ill-researched on the very narrative vehicle that it sets out to critique: *the media*. Mathebe randomly intersperses his analysis of the media's perceptions of Mbeki with chunks of quotes from newspaper clippings without grounding them in any form of analysis. Thus,

¹ Hadland, A. and Rantao, J. *The Life and Times of Thabo Mbeki* (Rivonia: Zebra Press, 1999), p. 33.

² *Ibid.*, (pp. 33-4). For a more concise though detailed account of the ANC in exile, see, Lodge, T. *Black Politics in South since 1945* (London: Longman Group Ltd., 1983). See also, Ellis, S. and Sechaba, T. *Comrades against Apartheid: The ANC and the South African Communist Party in Exile* (London: James Currey; Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992).

³ Different bases were set up for various reasons. Zambia was the headquarters, Tanzania was an educational base, and was initially the base of the ANC. Angola, Mozambique and Zimbabwe were military bases. Lesotho, Swaziland, Botswana were transit route camps to other bases further north of Africa and in Europe, the US and the USSR, etc. These different bases carried their own experiences, and the varying highly politicised and the suspiciously apolitical loafers (especially those who left South Africa for exile in the late 1980s when there was a moratorium placed on the armed struggle already) experienced different conditions of exile. For a searing account of exile of South Africans in the UK, see, Mphahlele, Es'kia *Afrika My Music: An Autobiography* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1984).

right from the beginning of the book, the reader is saddled with a series of simple but unanswered questions: 'who wrote these newspaper articles?', 'what newspapers do they come from?', 'where do these newspapers come from?', 'what is the history of these newspapers?', 'where do they stand on the political fulcrum?' Merely stating as an endnote the name of the newspaper and when the article was published does not do justice to the obligation of providing a thorough examination of the politics and history of the media in South Africa, as well as the media from outside that has reported, and reports, on South Africa. Also, Mathebe comfortably argues about the media's constructions of Mbeki in exile, despite the fact that the South African apartheid state had been quite successful in its banning of media commentary on the liberation project and its leaders in South Africa. Indeed, there was a great deal of media reportage of the ANC in exile, but the author leaves the reader clueless about which sources of the print media in particular he is talking about.

Worse still, Mathebe offers a historically distorted history of the black media in South Africa. In a few sentences, he discusses the beginnings of the black media in the late nineteenth century. He argues that attempts at setting up a 'black' media were crushed by the state before World War II. As a matter of fact, the black press was set up by black bourgeois activists and professionals and was published in African languages. It collapsed mainly because of ideological rifts among the black bourgeois political elites, partly as a result of associations with white liberal Cape politicians and philanthropists. Mathebe also argues that black-patronised magazines such as *Drum*, which thrived in the 1950s and boosted legendary black journalists such as Can Themba, Henry Nxumalo, Nat Nakasa, Casey Motsitsi, Ezekiel Mphahlele, Bloke Modisane and Todd Matshikiza, failed to provide any critical political reporting. Instead, he insists, they focused on subject areas concerned with celebrity gossiping, crime, entertainment, calendar girls, witchcraft and sport. However, Mathebe is incorrect because there were radical newspapers which featured serious political and social commentary, although they were consistently harassed by the state.

There are also a few factual errors. To name just one, in the beginning of the book, Mathebe points out that Anton Lembede was one of the members of the breakaway faction of the ANC that eventually founded the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC) of Azania. The fact is that Lembede was the rallying point of the radicalisation of the ANC Youth League, and in 1949, along with Mandela, Sisulu and Tambo, radicalised the ANC's mobilisation techniques.

Buntu Siwisa, D.Phil.,
St. Peter's College, University of Oxford, UK.

Books Available for Review

Readers are encouraged to request for copies of these books for review or review articles in subsequent editions of the journal.

- Adekson, A.O. 2003. *The 'Civil Society' Problematique: Deconstructing Civility and Southern Nigeria's Ethnic Radicalisation*. New York; London: Routledge.
- Adeshina, R.A. 2003. *The Reversed Victory: Story of Nigerian Military Intervention in Sierra Leone*. Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books.
- Berg-Schlosser, D. and N. Kersting (eds.) 2003. *Poverty and Democracy: Self-help and Political Participation in Third World Cities*. London: Zed Books.
- Boer, J.H. 2003. *Nigeria's Decades of Blood 1980-2002*. Studies in Christian-Muslim Relations. Belleville, ON (Canada): Essence Publishing.
- Boulden, J. (ed.) 2003. *Dealing with Conflict in Africa: The United Nations and Regional Organizations*. New York, NY; Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Bradley, M.T. 2003. *Nigeria Since Independence and the Impact of Non-Governmental Organizations on Democratization*. Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press.
- Bøås, M. and D. McNeill. 2003. *Multilateral Institutions: A Critical Introduction*. London: Pluto Press.
- Darkoh, M. and A. Rwomire (eds.) 2003. *Human Impact on Environment and Sustainable Development in Africa*. Burlington, VT; Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Forrest, J. 2004. *Lineages of State Fragility: Rural Civil Society in Guinea-Bissau*. Oxford: James Currey; Athens, OH: Ohio University Press.
- Jackson, M. 2003. *In Sierra Leone*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Johnson, D.H. 2003. *The Root Causes of Sudan's Civil Wars*. Oxford: James Currey; Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Kalu, K.A. (ed.) 2004. *Agenda Setting and Public Policy in Africa*. Aldershot; Burlington, VT: Ashgate.
- Kane, O. 2004. *Muslim Modernity in Postcolonial Nigeria: A Study of the Society for the Removal of Innovation and Reinstatement of Tradition*. Leiden; Boston,
- Lamptey, C. et. al. 2004. *Liberian Women Peacemakers: Fighting for the Right To Be Seen, Heard, and Counted*. A publication of the African Women and Peace Support Group. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press.
- Lockyer, A.; B. Crick and J. Anette (eds.) 2004. *Education for Democratic Citizenship: Issues of Theory and Practice*. Aldershot; Burlington, VT: Ashgate.
- Lugan, B. 2003. *African Legacy: Solutions for a Community in Crisis*. New York, NY: Carnot USA Book.
- Mgbeoji, I. 2003. *Collective Insecurity: The Liberian Crisis, Unilateralism and Global Order*. Canada. University of British Columbia Press.
- Omitoogun, W. 2003. *Military Expenditure Data in Africa: A Survey of Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and Uganda*. SIPRI Research Reports 17. Oxford; New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

- Peet, R. 2003. *Unholy Trinity: The IMF, World Bank and WTO*. London and New York: Zed Books; Johannesburg: Wits University Press.
- Roose, P.M. and D.M. Bondarenko, 2003. *A Popular History of Benin: The Rise and Fall of a Mighty Forest Kingdom*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang AG.
- Salih, M.A.M. (ed.) 2003. *African Political Parties: Evolution, Institutionalisation and Governance*. London: Pluto Press.
- Skard, T. 2003. *Continent of Mothers, Continent of Hope: Understanding and Promoting Development in Africa Today*. London: Zed Books.
- Wanyeki, L.M. (ed.) 2003. *Women and Land in Africa: Culture, Religion and Realizing Women's Rights*. London: Zed Books.

Subscriptions

Annual subscription for corporate bodies: £75 for UK; €124 for EU; \$112 for other countries (special rates apply for Africa); and
for individuals: £30 for UK; €52 for EU; \$48 for other countries.

Single copy rate for corporate bodies: £40 for UK; €67 for EU; \$59 for other countries; and
for individuals: £17 for UK; €30 for EU; \$27 for other countries.

Cheques should be made payable to Centre of Democracy and Development

Subscription orders can be emailed to cddnig@cddnig.org with *journal subscription* as the subject or by filling in the following

Subscription form

Please fill in the following subscription form and return to:

Centre of Democracy and Development,
Unit 6 Canonbury Yard, 190A New North Road, London N1 7BJ, UK; Fax: +44 (0)20 7288 8672

or: 2 Olabode Close, Ilupeju Estate, P.O. Box 15700, Ikeja, Lagos, Nigeria, Fax: +234 (0)1 555 6812

Name:	_____
Organisation:	_____
Address:	_____

City:	_____ Zip (Post) code: _____
Country:	_____

I have enclosed a cheque in the amount of _____ made payable to Centre for Democracy and Development

Tick box to receive more information about CDD

My email address is: _____