Self-Determination, Nationalism, Development and Pan-Africanism Stuck on the Runway: Are Intellectuals to be Blamed?

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Abstract

Almost fifty years after independence that aspiration of regaining lost human dignity seems stuck on the runway – warranting 'the people's distress call' for a genuine take-off. The questions that come to mind given the plethora of problems plaguing the continent are many and varied. First, does Africa want to develop? Second, what kind of independence did Africa get? Third, through which means must Africa address its problems? What has been the role of its intellectuals? What are the responses of the international community, particularly the former colonial masters in structuring and influencing the destiny of the continent for good or bad? In short, what is the trouble with Africa?

This paper looks at the litany of national deficiencies that give the continent a bad image, leaving it unable to address the plethora of problems confronting the region. Why Africans have resigned themselves to their existing peril and why African governments must give content and meaning to the aspirations of the people under the canopy of the rising tide of globalization and the information communication technology age. This essay considers the dialectic of micro-nationalism, nationalism, development and globalization— which define the place of Africa within the world system—besides forcing a serious reflection on ways in which citizenship and development can be reconceptualised beyond the mere confines of the existing nation-state order.

This discussion addresses issues underpinning the struggles for self-determination, African renaissance and the unity of

the continent. It does so by looking into the role of intellectuals, leadership and habits which cripple the aspirations and inhibit the chances of Africa becoming a modern, democratic and attractive continent capable of transforming the lives of the poor and needy, instead of waiting for 'band aid[s] and other handouts' to improve the quality of living standards of the population.

Adopting a multidisciplinary analytical and discussional approach by tackling issues of the interface of self-determination, (under) development, marginalization, xenophobia, and exclusion, the wanton and colossal destruction of natural and human resources in the process of knowledge production, this essay probes efforts aimed at constructing a sense of belonging as the take-off to sustainable development. The descent into mere anarchy must be halted and reversed if Africa is to be part of the twenty-first century and beyond.

'What has become embarrassingly clear after three decades and more after the attainment of independence by the majority of African countries, is that the generality of our people have been excluded from any significant contributions to the determination of national directions'. Adebayo Adedeji (1991)

A turning point has now been reached in Africa's history. After years of patient effort to achieve the total political and economic emancipation of the continent by peaceful means, only limited results have been achieved, and it has become essential to adopt a more militant and positive strategy. Kwame Nkrumah (14 June 1966)

Foreword to Oginga Odinga *'Not Yet Uhuru'*

No idea is so generally recognized as indefinite ambiguous and open to the greatest misconceptions (to which therefore it actually falls victim) as the idea of liberty: none in common currency with so little appreciation of its meaning. Hegel's Philosophy of Mind Oxford (1894:238)

Unearthing the Salient Issues

These words of Adebayo Adedeji (1991), Kwame Nkrumah (1966)—
and those of Hegel (1894) written more than 100 years ago—still
retain their relevance. The vast literature on the problems of freedom
and quality living standards of people, in all languages of the world,
gives rise to endless questions and objections. Philosophers and
jurists and the ideologists and politicians who draw on their works
(especially those belonging to different cultural systems) repeatedly
fail to agree on the essence of the key concepts. What is more, the
extreme lack of clarity in the initial positions and principal definitions
renders discussions of freedom inefficient, if not impossible; the
diverse opinions express diverse views, with few possibilities for
intersection.

    To be sufficiently comprehensive, every new discussion should
take account of past failures and strive to avoid repeating them at all
costs. CODESRIA's 30th Anniversary celebrations in my opinion
fall with the realm of inter-related and interdisciplinary scholarship
in that it aims to:

(i)   to describe in rigorous terms the system of coordination –
      scholarship, objectivity, and freedom used to present a set of
      ideas;

(ii) to detail in the finest degree, the problem under analysis and
      discussion; and

(iii) to provide maximally rigorous definitions so as to move
      forward African social research and knowledge production in
      the age of the growing changes, challenges and opportunities
      offered by the information and communication technologies
      and globalization.

The theme of the anniversary celebrations 'Intellectuals, Nationalism
and the Pan-African Ideal' is an embodiment of the continent's
struggle for freedom, liberty, knowledge acquisition, social justice
and equitable sharing of the national wealth among the people.
The call by CODESRIA's leadership for the African academic
community for full 'engagement with such question(s) also suggest
the existence of a broad consensus that the basic principles and goals
that underpinned African nationalism and the Pan-African ideal
were impeccable, although the mechanisms and instruments for their

operationalization into a strategy for democratic development were open to negotiation and contestation' (CODESRIA Handout 2003). Negotiation and contestation thus provided a fountain of knowledge on which to fashion the development path of the continent.

Having leafed through almost half-a-century of independence, 'the struggle for a 'just war' – 'self-determination', or the quest for a valid political kingdom and power for nationalism and sustainable development—remains a struggle yet to be won. In other words, the just war—self-determination and inclusion—was derailed by an 'unjust war' (exclusion)—seeking first the belly kingdom, power, wealth and property accumulation for self and not for the common good. Why have things gone the way they have in Africa? Why has the just war for self-determination, nationalism and the Pan-African Ideal remained stuck on the runway? Could we see CODESRIA's 30th Anniversary as a distress call 'to move the continent forward through the collective efforts of the people'? Which role should the academic community play in this? Was the derailment of the just war—self-determination and unity—caused by the failure of the intellectual class and why? What has and continues to be the role of the individual to knowledge production?

Many questions abound. The problems are many and varied. Many answers are required to give a clear picture of what went wrong, how to address them, and how to move forward in the spirit of our founding fathers and earliest generations of African scholars who 'cut their teeth in the context of the nationalist struggles for self-determination and independence struggles underpinned by a broad-based quest for an African renaissance and the unity of African peoples'. More than fifty years after the granting of independence to the dependencies, the salient issue in African politics, socioeconomic transformation and development is that of: who gets what, when, where and how, and who gets left out? The two key words being the politics and policies of 'inclusion' and 'exclusion' What roles did the intellectual class play particularly during the colonial era in promoting the struggle for self-determination and social justice? How genuine were the intentions of the educated class for the self-determination of the people? What has been the significant role of the educated class after independence? Has the Pan-African Ideal been upheld or destroyed? Where is the continent headed?

It is time for stocktaking; to situate the causes and generate a new vibrant spirit and will to move forward in partnership with the broader populace for restructuring a new Africa capable and willing to withstand the challenges and changes. To use the opportunities offered by the twenty-first century and beyond for the socioeconomic, scientific and technological transformation of the region. While analyzing the notion of intellectuals, nationalism and the Pan-African Ideal, we should not strive for any single or final definition but rather for a series of 'shifting' issues that have influenced or retarded the direction of academic freedom, liberty and knowledge production in the continent. We depart from the premises of a full realization that our analysis will repeatedly lead us back to the point where we started, thus enriching the original, poor abstractions with more specific and varied content to better address the present and look into the future with hope and confidence that the social sciences have an indispensable role to play in knowledge production and the sustainable socioeconomic transformation of the country.

One outstanding input factor is that of the role of the individual, and how the individual collectively forged a vibrant front for the course of a just war. What we should be discussing is not the individual's ability to act but his/her possibility of acting. Action could be seen in respect of at least four inter-related areas:

- Individual's interest
- Individual's actions in accordance with his/her interests
- The cognised objective necessity
- Individual's actions in accordance with the objective necessity.

It is generally agreed (and the definition reflects this consensus) that freedom of the individual should be described through the positive, conjunctive ties between all these elements. Unfortunately, one's abilities are not enough to attain freedom; people require adequate conditions for its realization. Thus those social scientists who stood their grounds on (what the state perceived as) the wrong side of the divide because of their ardent adherence to moral ethics, professionalism and of the role of the university as the fountain of scholarship, knowledge creation and objectivity in building a strong

united and sustainable nation were forced to flee the country or seen as 'enemies in the house'.

Indeed issues were not helped or made lighter by the crystallization in the post-independence era of myriad political, economic, and social problems that manifested in direct challenges to post-colonial nation-statism by social movements of the disenchanted and to their claims or by those intellectuals who now were reaping the largest share of the nation's wealth at the expense of the suffering silent but large population. The intellectuals who stood their grounds became victims of the making of their colleagues who had acquired administrative, political and economic power in the new political constellation of the nation. The fleeing scholars were denied means and possibilities of advancing the liberalism of knowledge for socioeconomic transformation on grounds of *inclusion and not exclusion* of the people in the newly African independent countries. Thus a complex and contradictory situation and relationship emerged between university intellectuals and state functionaries (Farah 1990:7–10).

This state of divide between the two could be seen arising from a difficult relationship encountered during the immediate post-independence era from two perspectives–*collaboration* and *contestation*. Collaboration in the sense that the euphoria of independence generated a spirit of partnership between the state, civil society and the academic community; making the state enjoy immense popular legitimacy and credibility–the result of the nationalist struggles for nationhood. The ideology of the new state and that of the emerging educated class converged on the issue of nation building. As such, the state was able with the acquiescence of the educated class to fashion and push forward an instrumentalist agenda for knowledge creation and production.

That relationship did not last long. Bones of contestation soon emerged. Contestation and disagreement centered on problems of nation building – the pattern of socioeconomic transformation and development. It centered on the politics of inclusion and exclusion – the inequality in the distribution of wealth of the nation that was taking place. A few well placed had suddenly hijacked state property as personal or ethnic properties. Living standards were declining rapidly for the greater part of the population. Life more abundant

for the few was now the order of the day. In short, the state had failed. This greatly jeopardized the goals of self-determination and the Pan-African Ideal and the dream of African unity particularly in the process of knowledge production and identity formation. Governments had failed at the very early stages of nation building to give content and meaning to the nationalist and pan-Africanist goals and to improve the quality of living standards of the people. Society was on the verge of decay and collapse.

Critical scholarship soon emerged challenging the trend of development which now had fallen short of the expectations of the people in respect of 'partnership, participation, and responsibility sharing' between the state, civil society, individuals and the productive private sector. These scholars depicted and seriously questioned the ideological orientation and the emerging agenda of the state on nation building, development, and equitable sharing of the nations wealth. They saw the politics of 'exclusion' overtaking that of 'inclusion.' Here Zeleza (1997) notes 'it was hard for the latter to ignore the ethnic and regional imbalances in the distribution of the fruits of uhuru, or the appearance of corruption, incompetence, and intolerance among members of the political class. The social scientists could not ignore these realities for, besides being state functionaries, they were also the representatives and interpreters of the various constituencies of civil society which were jostling for place and privilege in the emerging post-colonial order'.

These developments could be seen in two ways: (i) a healthy sign of maturity for an emerging academic community through the product of growing radicalism in African studies. This gave birth to opposition to imperialism and neo-colonialism and preferences for socialist economics and political strategies (Waterman 1977:1). Commitment to withholding the inalienable rights of the custodians of power – the people: and (ii) the move by the state to clamp down any form of challenge on its development agenda and authority. The quest for academic democracy and independence had its repercussions for the wider national democracy, just as academic freedom had consequences for political freedom at large. The student revolution in the 1960s and the emerging critical writings of scholars at the period injected new momentum on fundamental issues of national priority, which sought to unravel the fundamental realities

of the *continent.* Publications like Chinua Achebe (1958) *Things Fall Apart*; Basil Davidson (1964) *Which Way Africa*; Demount (1965) *False Start in Africa*; Oginga Odinga (1967) *Not Yet Uhuru*, and many others elaborated on how things were moving in the wrong direction for the new African nations. The competing theories of dependency, Marxist and modernization approaches also generated greater debate and division within the social sciences and the academic community at large. This entrenched on an already fluid values and fragile institutions unable to hold itself. Ali Mazrui (1978) notes: 'the rhetoric of socialism is heard on one day, becomes silent and terrified the next day. A Parliament exists this year in effective action; it becomes a rubber stamp the next year; and perhaps dies out completely the third year'. Hence the need to seriously critique the different variants of the nationalist and pan-Africanist historgraphy that produced the different schools of thought offered by Marxism, the dependency school, the neo-patrimonialist / rent seeking approach, neo-liberalism and so on.

This fluid and fragile situation of the state placed the university community in a form of direct confrontation on issues of development: the location of universities; and other related issues that fuelled confrontation between the state and the academic world exposing upcoming intellectuals to the economic and political realities of nation-building that could not just be dismissed lightly.

No doubt we cannot deny the significant events and major contributions by so many scholars in piloting the independence struggle in the immediate post-colonial years. The out pouring of African intellectuals–virtually crying out for synthesis in mapping a scholarly approach to the many and varied problems the continent was to encounter. The momentum building for an African scholarship to address the problems of the continent was immense, intense and focused on giving Africa a new look for the future. The continent was to find its place within the world not as a passive bystander but as an active participant.

Self-determination, nationalism and development was a just war for the people: a cardinal part in the realization of fundamental human rights. At least three major fashionable political positions that masquerade under an academic facade that deserve particular attention and consideration which constitutes Africa's distress call

and why the continent is stuck on the run way unable to take-off to sustainable development and quality livelihood for the vast majority of the population.

The first is that African states have fallen or are falling apart; the basic problem facing African states is the need for stability or that 'Africa's current crises should not only be ascribed to the effects of colonialism and neo-colonialism, but also to the failure of leadership among African elites' (Houngnikpo 2000). The second is that African politics are essentially conflict less and classless, a view that originates from two very different sources: romanticism about the unity, the one-for-all and all. For one nature of the African people; and Western liberal and conservative social sciences that reject class interpretations in any context. The third, which stems from a bitter overreaction to wildly optimistic expectations at the end of the second World War that independence would bring some new panacea for mankind, is a devastating pessimism as to the possibilities for future African state building and economic development (Markovitz 1977).

These three scenarios intercept in one: that of the elite abandoning the just war by creating a passive civil society through what could be seen as 'the black-elite burden', who had taken over the 'Whiteman's burden' not for 'mission civilatrice' but through neocolonialism succeeded in inducing schizophrenia, ethnicity, witch-hunting, tribalism dictatorship, authoritarianism, disunity, xenophobia and institutionalized racism in the body politic of the society. It was a policy agenda that isolated individuals and ethnic groups in their own world of mundane concerns. Collective action for the common good became more difficult: and resistance harder to organize. The authoritarian state was now in full control. It did not condone any form of challenge.

Yet resistance to the colonial regimes appeared everywhere on the continent before independence. And independence for African students studying abroad implied 'life itself', the 'end of alienation', the raising of the standard of living, gained control of both personal and natural destinies of oneself and one's country (N'Diaye 1962).

To understand the perils of the African intellectual class one should look at the pushes and pulls of the academics within the body politic of the society. At independence the university, most of which were

created by the newly independent states as factories to churn out the new human capacity for the Africanisation of state apparatuses and as emblems of cultural modernity, enjoyed rosy relations with the new nationalist rulers. Two sets of intellectuals soon emerged the morning after independence; (i) those intellectuals who sought to reap the greatest benefits of their newly acquired positions as the new custodians of authority and power vacated by the departed colonial masters; and (ii) the educated class that remained within the university circles who struggled to maintain the liberal and critical structure of the university as a fountain of knowledge, objectivity and scholarship, as well as to maintain the liberal and independence of the university.

The latter saw the university as a liberal and independent institution void of political party rhetoric; in inspiration and aspiration, these scholars resisted turning the center of academic excellence and knowledge creation into a glorified school for political party ideology. Rather, they subjected the emerging new political rhetoric and dreams of nation building into critical and scientific analysis. This did not enamour them to the new impatient and insecure ruling elites who had obtained administrative positions or were in government as ministers, and who by now were unduly concerned by the trappings and realities of power. The goals of self-determination had escaped their minds. Seek yea the belly kingdom was the order of the day. Thus a new power struggle emerged between the two intellectual camps plunging the country and civil society into greater confusion.

The drive for centralization and control that this led to pitted the universities as vibrant mediators of civil society against the state which was increasingly flexing its authoritarian reflexes as the triumphs of nationalism were eclipsed by the challenges of independence. The universities came to be seen as potential saboteurs of the national mission, defined narrowly according to the shifting ideological, religious, ethnic, regional and class predilections of the incumbent regime (Zeleza 1997:11). The conflict relationship between the academic communities, a vibrant civil society and the new custodians of power could be visualized as Africa's distress call with the serious risk of the continent being forever grounded on the runway hoping to receive clearance for a take-off instead of finding its own way of becoming airborne (Houngnikpo 2000). To be air

born requires both a critical and objective mind-set including the commitment toward sustainable socioeconomic transformation.

Building up within this state of intellectual conditions, confusion, contradictions and constraints were also issues of poor leadership that had suddenly embraced the ideological orientation of centralized and accumulated power and authority not for the common good and genuine transformation of the nation, but for selfish interests.

A number of significant outcomes could be registered, namely

(i)   critical academics were increasingly accused of being purveyors of 'foreign ideology';

(ii)   such critical scholars were forced to migrate due to the hostile and unfavourable working climate they encountered;

(iii) the university could no longer play its critical and destined role of knowledge creation, and being a center of excellence; objective scholarship deteriorated, resulting in the acceleration of the brain drain phenomenon which raped the continent of its few human power capacity in the early stages of its transformation process;

(iv)   mediocratic scholarship took control. This helped to derail civil society and the development process. A derailment, which worked to the advantage of the failed regime to further consolidate greater powers in order to exert its legitimacy and authority.

Above all, the conflict situation only reflected the contradictory mandate of African universities as a vehicle of modernization and the transmission of western culture and value belief systems the wrong way, and on the other, as crucibles through which national cultures could be forged out. The few scholars who survived the hot pursuit or holocaust against critical and objective scholarship were soon to be caught up with Bayart's 'politics of the belly'. Sadly this turned the university into a haven of petit bourgeois ambitions aspirations and fantasies, engended a culture of careerism and fierce competition, fertile breeding grounds for the transmission of political repression and intellectual persecution (Zeleza 1997:12).

In Cameroon for example, the decline of objective academic scholarship started the day a presidential decree appointed a university don as a Minister. This move accelerated the conflict

and divide within the academic community. It created a climate of witch-hunting, backsliding and other unhealthy activities within the university environment. On the other hand, the move could be interpreted as (i) to bring the elite into the fulcrum of the development process, to help shape and strengthen the course of decision-making; and (ii) as a calculated move to silence criticism of the state by the educated class; and subsequently mould a passive and acquiescent civil society. The second objective was achieved. The academic community becomes an enemy of itself, failing to offer the kind of leadership that was expected of the academic community.

Conflicts within the intellectual class had the consequences of the intelligentsia losing sight of its noble, committed and obligatory mission to society. It impacted in creating a solid opening and sustained string of 'failed leadership'. With failed leadership the ruling elites and shroud politicians utilized their privileged position to amass wealth and authority. In turn, it contributed to them indefinitely clinging to power forever. Consequently and most unfortunately, " one of the dire consequences of holding to power by all means necessary turns out out to be the debasement of the office of the President and other leadership positions in Africa. Clientelism and corruption became the main techniques of political mobilization and control throughout the continent, creating harsh political and economic consequences. Given the economic and social advantages and benefits of being in power in Africa, it is not hard to comprehend why being involved in politics on the continent is so tempting" (Houngnikpo op cit.).

While the body politic of African states exhibits quantum leadership failure, the surviving minority of the intelligentsia continue to hold their grounds in social science research and knowledge production in the world. For example, The CODESRIA Symposium on Academic Freedom. Research and Social responsibility of the Intellectual in Africa, Uganda, November 1990 that objectively and critically revealed many painful problems entangled with academic liberty, scholarship and lack of effective leadership in post-colonial Africa. Or as noted in ACDESS Research Programme (Adedeji 1993) involved two interrelating core areas identified as (i) focusing on Africa's internal dynamics and aiming at developing strategies for overcoming the key obstacles to the continent's development and transformation; and (ii)

concentrating on scenarios for Africa's future within foreseeable global constellations, exploring in particular the continent's maneuvering space in the international economic and political system.

These and other related developments show the commitments African social scientists have for their societies or that their levels of social responsibility is low. Far from that. Mafeje (1990:55) stipulates, 'The writings of African intellectuals are preoccupied with problems of development to the point of sounding hysterical in the case of the left'.

Comparative legitimacy and credence

From the analysis of the kinds of elites, it is clear that intellectual freedom in Africa has been up against a dual tyranny, namely (i) domestic tyranny–the temptations of power facing those in authority since the early formation stage of the nation-state in Africa. Mazrui (1978:260) sees this as the political tyranny of governments as yet insensitive to needs and roles of education institutions and educated citizens in nation building.

For most of these governments, educational institutions and the academic community constitute a serious threat and challenge to the existence of the state. It should be pointed out that the established universities in Africa (Ibadan, Legon, Makerere, Senegal, Fourah Bay etc.) enjoyed greater credibility, autonomy and legitimacy than the new independent governments. These educational establishments were created long before the nation-state came into existence. In some cases, Fourah Bay in Sierra Leone for example, being older than the state by over one hundred years. The reality of indigenous African governments dates back to 1956 (Sudan), Ghana (1957) and Nigeria (1960). Most African states gained their independence in the 1960s.

Such a situation had its consequences in respect of comparative legitimacy and credence of the university as against the state. As centers of academic excellence, knowledge creation and human capacity building under colonial rule, these educational establishments had succeeded in penetrating civil society and accepted as credible and reliable body than the political parties and rulers. A conflict of interest over credibility and legitimacy could not be avoided between the state and the academic community.

To a large extent the state found itself vulnerable, weak and

failing in meeting its obligations and aspirations of the people. Promises were not fulfilled. The state had become the oppressor and not the liberator of the people. State sovereignty and authority were under surveillance, and facing serious challenges from civil society. Politicians showed signs of insecurity in the wake of a growing intellectual force. The situation compelled a fundamental interaction or rapprochement between the university environment and the political environment. The possible way forward for the state toward the intolerant of academic freedom was to coerce the academic community with the instruments of the carrot and stick. It paid off. The academic community split into factions paving the way for centralized and authoritarian governance system.

The second tyranny is largely external – the Euro centrism of academic culture. Should the African university be structured in the same pattern with Western values and as a medium of a transmission of European culture and value belief systems in non-European societies? The challenge is how to sustain universal academic excellence without westernizing the African cultural heritage, identity and values. But how to promote these values and give scientific meanings to the usefulness of the non-western cultures and belief systems? How could modernity be attained without succumbing to heavy dependency orientation? In the words of Mazrui (1978) external tyranny of Euro centrism may well be at least as obstinate as the domestic tyranny of African dictators. Both are likely to remain part of the general picture of academic life in Africa for much of the rest of this century.

Therefore creating an appropriate domestic political and economic climate and a sustainable international environment as well must be the main objective of the continent's strategy to ensure a place in the new world order. Towards this end, it is essential to have a vibrant civil society and an articulate intellectual community to give the necessary guidance, leadership and vision for the present and future. In short, partnership, participation and responsibility sharing among the different stakeholders is imperative and necessary to address the dialectic of micro-nationalism, nationalism, regionalism and Pan-Africanism which are forcing a serious reflection on the ways in which citizenship could be reconceptualized beyond the confines of the existing ethnic and national-territorial order.

The major thrust of these adjustments has to be a greater outward orientation for the common good–with increased scope for total inclusion. The most negative elements of exclusion must be rectified and destroyed and to prevent it to have a place in the body politic of the society. The different factions of the academic divide must converge instead of internalizing division and dependence in various forms, and to react in recognition of reality and the common good. The intellectual community should constitute itself into a force and focal reference point where many ideas flow together, fertilize each other and challenge each other, where the policy of relevance of research remains preminent and the common good a top most priority.

Fighting for the common good means fighting tyranny, injustice and bigotry so that when the history of the struggle for intellectual and academic freedom is written it should in the words of Nelson Mandela (1994) pivot on;

> A glorious tale of Africa solidarity, of Africa's adherence to principle. It will tell a moving story of the sacrifices that the peoples of our continent made. It will speak of the contributions which all Africa made, from the shores of the Mediterranean Sea in the North, to the confluence of the Indian and Atlantic Oceans in the South'.

The African intellectual community must find peace with itself so as to discover existing weaknesses and shortcomings, and sustain a shared sense of responsibility in advancing the course of social science research and knowledge production in Africa far beyond the twenty-first century. To achieve this goal, no single intellectual should claim him/herself a lone player in knowledge production. It has been grounded within the contour of joint and collaborative venture and of the collective efforts of the entire community of the intellectual body in forging a new socioeconomic transformation order for Africa.

CODESRIA's 30th anniversary should constitute a forum and a framework for the determination of the people to make a success of the new transition to a new African academic order in partnership with the state. An order that ensures majority-ruled, pluralistic democratic systems, a vision of the political leadership that ensures the interface of nationalism and Pan-Africanism in the process of knowledge production and identity formation. An order that ensures

and sustains relative peace and political stability and quality living standards for the greatest population possible. There is need for a holistic structural change, not only of the academic community, of the polity but also of the economy and the society through a constructive and consolidative process of partnership, participation and responsibility sharing among the stakeholder.

The push for development in the twenty-first century requires an urgent revisiting of the aspirations and expectations of the nationalist struggles for self-determination and independence, struggles underpinned by a broad-based quest for an African renaissance and unity of the African peoples. A revisit which should reawaken, inspire and stimulate a new fire of nationalism and Pan-Africanism in the minds of intellectuals to respond positively to the challenges of sustaining academic independence and forging broader interdisciplinary scholarship for the Common Home Africa. A Common Home Africa where the basic tenets of democracy, accountability, social justice, rule of law, adequate and equal opportunities for all and development for transformation become internalized and deep-rooted in every hamlet of the continent. A continent with an enabling environment for all. One that provides the empowerment of the people and the democratization of the development process are the moral, ethical and political obligation and commitment of the people. A continent that calls for visionary leadership evolving mutually beneficiary relationships between the people and improving the quality of livelihood of the currently marginalized poverty stricken population.

An agenda for intellectuals in the name of restitution and distribution

Thirty years may be a short period in the history of CODESRIA to transcend all barriers to knowledge production and place the social sciences firmly within the body polity for them to play a critical role in the democratic development of the continent. Indeed a society which neglects the instructive value of its past for its present and future cannot be self-confident and self-reliant and will therefore lack internally generated dynamism and stability.

Dispossession and dependence which when combined, amount to more than five hundred years have left a heavy imprint on Africa. Thirty years, or generation is a very short time in which to reduce their impact, let alone transcend this legacy. What brought us to Dakar was the fear that Africa is not moving further away from this legacy to more autonomy, but finds itself caught in the worst manifestations. (Adedeji 1993).

These wise words written a decade ago and coincidentally in Dakar, (within the framework of ACDESS seminar on Africa Within the World: Beyond Dispossession and Dependence) remain very factual today as CODESRIA celebrates its thirtieth year of social science research and knowledge production. No doubt CODESRIA has made tremendous efforts to respond to the challenges and goals it set to achieve some thirty years ago. Whilst these challenges provided scholars with a clear historical context for the definition of their identities and role, the record of the post-independence nationalist period, including especially that of the politicians who inherited state power, and the organization framework they adopted for the realization of the dream of Pan-Africanism left a great deal to be desired. From Kampala (1990) on the topic of Academic Freedom, Research and the Social responsibility of the Intellectuals, to Dakar 2003, CODESRIA's goal has been to bridge that gap, to fill the vacuum through scholarship and academic excellence for the rehabilitation of Africa's culture, traditions and value systems and the use of indigenous knowledge systems for the common benefit of the people in particular and in the general interest of humanity.

The African intellectual community must take this challenge by pursuing restitution policies if it is to transcend its protracted dispossession and loss of autonomy. A loss that plunged the continent into total disarray and decay. The lopsided equation of state authority and dictates stretching its muscles over the independence of the university and freedom of speech, and academic freedom, university independence and liberals in search of knowledge creation and human capacity building must be addressed to ensure the sustainable development of the continent. To achieve this end, both the political leadership and academic community must rediscover, acknowledge and act upon the continent's wealth of collective wisdom and resources – be it in the form of social, economic, cultural, and

political, or organization of knowledge, or ways of thinking – largely accounts for the endemic crisis that has confronted the continent since independence.

The emergence of the intellectual division among African scholars and the state was of course, not simply an imperialist scheme hatched by the latter. It arose out of the ideological imperatives of nation building in Africa itself, particularly following the failure of the nation-state to respond positively to the needs, aspirations and expectations of the people. The state transformed itself into a tyranny rather than a liberator and protector of the people.

Furthermore, the post-colonial nation-state established the boundaries of research and intellectual discourse. The scholars were expected to show commitment to the problems of their nation; to study its institutions and values: to provide solutions to the national problems of economic development and political integration. Following the positive responses of the intellectual community in advancing the ideology of nation building, the state equally feared the outspoken and articulate approach and exposure of its failures to address pertinent problems clammed down on intellectual freedom, liberty and excellence.

> Basil Davidson (1992) notes: The actual and present condition of Africa is one of deep trouble, sometimes a deeper trouble than the worst imposed during the colonial years. For some time now, harsh governments or dictatorships rule over peoples who distrust them to the point of hatred, and usually for good and sufficient reason: and too often one dismal tyranny gives way to a worse one. Despair rots civil society, the state becomes an enemy, and bandits flourish.

This attitude accentuated the descent of the African state into crisis and stagnation destroying the structural basis of the Pan-African Ideal and subjecting the people into abject poverty and misery in the midst of plenty. With the complacency of African leaders the industrialized world has continued to take its cut of Africa's dwindling wealth. Transfers of this wealth to the

> developed countries of Europe and America have annually expanded in value; in 1988, for example, to what was then a record figure, an immense figure paid out to "developed" creditors. And multitudes starved (Davidson op cit).

Today, resources rich nations are classified as highly indebted poor countries (HIPC). What explains this degradation from the hopes and freedoms of newly regained independence? How has this come about? Where did the liberators go astray?

No doubt failed institutions and bad leadership in partnership with human blunders blending with corruption can supply some easy answers. We live with human failures. And the continent's crisis of society derives from many upsets and conflicts with the root of the problem closely engraved within the social and political institutions within which decolorized Africans have lived and tried to survive. Primarily, as noted by Basil Davidson, this is a crisis of institutions. Which institutions? We are concerned here with the nationalism, which produced the nation-states of newly independent Africa after the colonial period, with the nationalism that became nation-statism. This nation-statism looked like liberation, and really began as one. But it did not continue as liberation. In practice, it was not a restoration of Africa to Africa's own history, but the onset of a new period of indirect subjection to the history of Europe. The 54 or so states of the colonial partition, each formed and governed as though their peoples possessed no history of their own, became 54 or so nation-states formed and governed on European models, chiefly the models of Britain and France. Liberation thus produced its own denial.

These developments reflect the problems the intellectual community is up to address, challenge and correct through scientific social science research and knowledge production. We find ourselves embedded in the wave of hatred, tribalism, xenophobia, and racism to name just but a few distracting attributes in the development process. This concepts flourishes on disorder. And remains utterly destructive of civil society, making hay of morality, flouts the rule of law which civil society undermined and finally brought down by decades of alien rule after Africa's imperialist partition in the 1880s.

Today the African continent is left with shells of a fragile and fallible civil society, and the intellectual community cannot deny being part of that creation. It is the intellectual community in partnership with failed governments or shroud politicians believing in the politics of the belly that continues to fan the ideological

orientation of 'tribalism, clientelism, patronage, ethnicity, and other family linkages and similar networks of local interest (see Rothchild and Chazan 1988, Young 1988, Davidson 1987).

The state of the art – Intellectuals, Self-determination, Nationalism and the Pan-African Ideal – is an analysis of Africa's troubles and an inquiry into the process of nationalism that has crystallized the division of Africa's many hundreds of peoples and cultures into a few dozen nation-states, each claiming sovereignty against the others, and all of them sorely in trouble with one another. In Cameroon like many other countries on the continent, a few persons or ethnic groups have confiscated state machinery and state property.

The invisible and neglected silent majority

Another shortcoming of social science research and knowledge production especially before and in the immediate post-independence period has been the inadequate representation or neglect of the African women and their contributions to the self-determination and independence struggles. The challenge therefore for the new intellectual order of the continent is to recover empirically the lives and roles of women in the independence struggle, their contribution to the transformation and development process and to restore their role and story to history.

There is an urgent need to redefine and enlarge the scope of female gender into reconstruction and reform of the African society in the twenty-first century, to make their roles more inclusive, more comprehensive and more coherent to the ultimate goals of a developed Africa of the present and future. Finally to articulate ways of gendering African history.

It is imperative for female scholars to take up the challenge and ensure the mainstreaming and gendering of their roles in the socioeconomic and political transformation and development of the continent. It is their obligation, for if they do not do it no one will do an honest job in this direction. It should be seen within the same context as only Africans can genuinely spearhead their development path. Though significant literature on African women has grown considerably in the past two decades, much remains to be achieved if restoring the input roles of African women in the nation-building

process of the continent. Today a good number of African universities now offer degree programmes in women studies. These developments are attributed to numerous factors, including the political impetus of the women's movement and the crisis of conventional development theory and practice, and the consequent rise of the women-in-development project. The biases against women must be addressed if the social sciences are to contribute significantly to knowledge production and the transformation of the African polity.

So far, there has been shewed coverage of women in the development process. This is evident in the total neglect of a group that constitutes more than 52 percent of the population of African states. A brief analysis does show this neglect. For example women are not mentioned in Ingham (1965), Ogot (1973) volumes 1 and 2 of the three volumes of the Oxford History of East Africa: Harlow and Chilver (1965). In volume 3 of the 691-page book, women are mentioned only in 10 pages. The same is true of Ajayi and Crowder (1976) in which women are mentioned only in four pages out of 649 pages of the book. There is considerable improvement with the 1978 edition with two additional pages. Birmingham and Martin (1983) Vol.1 allocates 59 out of 315 pages to women and vol.2, 53 out of 432 pages on women. Rotberg and Mazrui (1970) collection does not even index women. Gifford and Louis (1982) 654 pages make mention of women only once, not in the text but in the bibliographic essay. In Rodney (1982) women are mentioned only in six out of 312 pages. The same is the case of Feierman and Janzen (1992), where women are considered in 58 out of 487 pages, while Illife (1987) allocates 100 out of 387 pages on women.

The poverty or neglect of African women in social science not only shows the distortions in the study and recognition of women but poses serious challenges to the intellectual community to embark on effective components of research in situating the role of the African women in the mainstream development of the continent. It is a task that requires the collaboration of both men and women and requires an inter-disciplinary approach to critically advance social science research and knowledge production in the years ahead.

One must also admit that the prevailing socioeconomic conditions in African universities are not conducive to the production of knowledge; scholars situated in impoverished or beleaguered

institutions lack the time and resources to produce scholarly work; the few women scholars in African universities often lack a supportive environment to do critical feminist work (Signs 1991:645). Thus the situation and language of exclusion, of privilege and power, of intellectual imperialism should be adequately addressed.

A new landscape and visions of redistribution is the inspiration needed by all as items on the African agenda for social sciences and knowledge production. It is a challenge to all from educated establishments, the intellectual community, the political leaders, heads of state and government to all stakeholders to subscribe to at least two imperatives. The first being the determination by the African community to survive with integrity and to deploy all available opportunities to halt the ongoing crisis; and decay of the African polity must be nurtured with pride, and in the spirit of partnership, participation and responsibility sharing by all actors. The time has come when the people of this continent must articulate, develop and aggregate a culture of not just speaking but acting actively and positively for its own best interest, not in the interest which others perceive.

The people of the region must grapple with the existing realities of developing itself through its own efforts and on the basis of indispensable reliance on its own resources even though this may be difficult, and even though it cannot be based exclusively on domestic resources. Bearing in mind that we lack the means and guts to colonize or enslave other parts of the world as Europe and North America did, and which to a large extent, constitute the root of Africa's predicament, we must adopt the best possible alternative to attract foreign resources. That best possible alternative is to ensure the structures and functioning of a democratic governance system: a system that encapsulates the rule of law, social justice, transparency, accountability, freedom of speech among others.

The second imperative earlier mentioned is that of the continent in general, and the intellectual community in particular, pursuing restitution policies in order to transcend its protracted dispossession and loss of autonomy. The second strategic imperative must be an embodiment of both material and non-material restitution encompassing a moral and psychological dimension. Ethically and morally this entails the reinstitution of legitimacy, moral and political accountability and of

sources construed on trust and respect, which existed on the continent before the advent of the transatlantic slave trade and colonialism. On the psychological front, Africa must rediscover its self-confidence and self-respect and emancipate itself from mental dependence (Adedeji op cit.). There is the call, therefore, for the intellectual community to the rehabilitation of the continent's culture, traditions, value systems and indigenous knowledge systems as vital inputs to the transformation and construction of the nation-state.

Awareness of the complexities of the African political past and prevailing present should spur students of African political history and contemporary politics in researching, analyzing, integrating and advancing solutions for the continent's present problems with implications for the future. Social science research should be construed from the perspectives of looking back to understand the present and to address the future by avoiding existing known mistakes.

The bon-voyage accorded the Cold War by the world community is also required to bid fare voyage to authoritarian and dictatorial regime forms on the continent, to embrace academic freedom, liberalism and independence of the university as the fountain for thinking and knowledge creation, and as the pillars on which to reconstruct a new African nation on the golden principles of the basic tenets of democracy, rule of law, inclusion and quality livelihood for all. There is need for articulate scholarship to address the totalitarianism of megalomaniac leadership, self-styled Life President that has made it possible for the state to marginalize and suspend civil society like malevolent clouds. The grip of African leaders over their states widened the state-society gap, and with civil society forced into coma, the little pressure that existed vanished, and the result turned out to be catastrophic. Thus clientelism and corruption became the main techniques of political mobilization and control throughout the continent, creating harsh political and economic consequences. Politics becomes the quickest means of making money and uplifting ones social status in society.

There is need to revisit Achebe's *No Longer at Ease*, Dipoko's *Because of Women*, Nkrumah's *Dark Days in Ghana*, Dumont's *False Start in Africa*; and other similar publications by African scholars that did not escape the self-righteous wrath of the censors that had been put in place to silence critical thinking as instruments

and mechanisms for moving the country forward from a solid base. The solution to the problems facing the continent must emanate from within Africa spearheaded by the educated class. This is not the time to be hoping and waiting to be rescued from outside. Unless the people of Africa through the political leaders; intellectual class, and civil society realize that no help from outside will ever show up, Africa's problems will only get worse.

Three brands of elites

From the analysis, three brands of intellectuals emerged at the immediate post-colonial era; (i) the leftist; (ii) bridge builders and (iii) belly intellectuals (for lack of a better description). The belly intellectuals are those who failed victims of the one-party governance system the wrong way; opted to sacrifice ethics and professionalism for self-interest. In doing so, they succumbed to the whims and caprices of the shroud politicians. An act, which gave credence to these politicians to further the scourge of centralism, authoritarian and dictatorial governance system. The outcome has been legitimized corruption, abuse of fundamental human rights, underdevelopment and misuse of both human and natural resources. In short, failed, collapsed, shadow, quasi and military governments that littered the continent for the past four decades or more. They helped sustain the decline of the African state making it incapable of fulfilling its basic duties and obligations to the people.

The intellectuals of the left belong to the group that stood its grounds on academic liberty, the independence of the university as the bastion for knowledge creation, objective and advocating a vision for building a sustainable society of equal opportunities and quality living standards for the population. The propensity of this group has been to hold at the highest esteem self-confidence and self-criticism of African scholarship. These scholars stood firm in spite of all adversaries in discussing their countries, problems (See CODESRIA Bulletin 1990, and Mkandawire 1989:16; and 1995) who states; 'increasingly aware of their preeminent position in African studies, thanks in part to the paradigmatic crises of the social sciences in the metropolitan countries have contributed both to the de-fetishization

of African social reality and the de-mystification of metropolitan social science and opened new vistas to approaches that are more deeply rooted in African social reality'. The state machinery for voicing openly the shortcomings of the system detested the group.

The bridge builders are those who (i) attempt to maintain their academic militancy but are attracted by the trappings of the inherent force and privileges of power, sometimes not of their own choice. For example, forced into the situation by ethnic, social and other factors; or operated on the principles, if you cannot beat them join them; (ii) those who see the use of state machinery to fill certain missing lapses and to revenge though not de-linking themselves totally from the university environment; sometimes operating on the principles of you 'scratch my back I do the same in return'.

To bring sanity to a chaotic situation, the efforts of a certain category, the efforts of the positive bridge builders may be solicited without sacrificing ethics, moral rectitude, and professionalism that underscore the tenets of academic excellence and scholarship. In short, the academic community must rediscover its self-confidence and self-respect, and emancipate itself from mental dependency and belly politics for self. The ultimate goal is to look back in order to look forward with greater experience, zeal and vision, adopting measures that can best be applied to African systems of governance and accountability, traditional checks and balances of power as well as sanctions on flawed leadership.

It is the moral and ethical obligation of the intellectuals to bring down the apartheid wall of dictatorship, flawed leadership, impoverishment, poverty, ethnicity, xenophobia by building a constructive forum for the institutionalization of the basic tenets of democracy and good governance. Intellectuals are important for the success of the current struggles for democracy in Africa. They need to re-link with civil society through responsible education and scholarship. They are also responsible to design and develop the scientific content of the cultural heritage, indigenous knowledge and value belief systems of the people. It is their duty to continue to advance the role of social science research and knowledge production for the continent well beyond the twenty-first century.

However, to attain this vital and noble goal requires unity of the sciences and scholarship void of party politics, witch-hunting;

and cooperation across the different disciplines. Seen within this framework, "their contribution should begin with the democratization of their own priorities and the construction of academic structures and traditions that promote, support and respect African intellectual production. African intellectuals have to challenge vigorously the Eurocentricism that dominates Africanist discourses (Zeleza 1997). A relinking between home based intellectuals and African intellectuals in the Diaspora remain imperative to uplifting the knowledge production base of social science research in Africa.

Conclusion: Not at Ease – Our Burden

Is Africa ludicrously doomed forever? Are the miseries of malice and incompetence or greed to be blamed for 'the prime failure of the government', (Davidson 1992)? Where were the intellectuals as things fell apart? The absence of the intellectuals and failure of government are not the cause, they are the effects. The cause has to be located elsewhere. To a large extent, it lay in the 'failure of the rulers to reestablish vital inner links with the poor and dispossessed, civil society and the alienated intellectual class (see Achebe 1988:130–31). It was the failure of post-colonial communities to find and insist upon means and living together by strategies less primitive and destructive than rival kinship networks, whether of 'ethnic' clientelism' or its camouflage in no less clientelist 'multiparty systems' (Davidson 1974).

The intellectual has been caught between the trappings of state machinery and civil society drugged in coma and passiveness. If the founding fathers negotiated a bad independence hand over on grounds of 'seek yea first the political kingdom' the second-generation leaders have worse of badly brokered deal. And this constitutes the deepest wound inflicted upon the continent. What the continent requires now is a new breed of leaders and an articulate scholarship direction to give a comprehensive and concerted sense of direction to the new leaders. In the words of Lewis (1998:154) 'the assertion of civil society in Africa is a multifaceted process, entailing basic changes in the associational arena, the role of an emergent political society and the reconstruction of the state." The

issue at stake is for the intellectual community, in liaison with the state and civil society, to inject new blood and save the continent from further descent to decay.

Reform and reconstruction from the premises of partnership, participation and responsibility sharing among the different stakeholders remains the best way out of the current danger plaguing the continent. 'Any ground democracy has gained on the continent will be lost without the vigilance of both civil society and ordinary citizens. An African political and academic renaissance will have to go beyond quick fixes and slogans, and rather tackle, as soon as possible, the seemingly intractable problems of economic underdevelopment, the dilemmas of state weakness or the challenges of communal division the continent has been experiencing (Houngnikpo 2000). It should be noted that 'institutions that were established to promote participation, such as parliaments, political parties, local governments and independent print media, have either been legislated out of existence, or transformed into institutions which are clearly dominated by their executives' (Olowu 1989: 13).

It goes without saying that any grounds covered by social science research and knowledge production during the past thirty years of CODESRIA's inception has to be further intensified through scholarship, and above all, to restrain the leaders from crafting pervasive clientelistic networks, ethnic hegemony and patronage that further ensures the flow and retention of power by a clique totally alienated from society. What will get the continent out of its present crises and development stalemate is not clamping down of intellectuals and more government controls, but the release of the people's organizational genius at solving their problems. African governments must have the nerves and vision truly to accept the four levels of activities—*participation*, *partnership*, *responsibility and wealth sharing*—between the state, civil society, productive sectors and other actors.

The features of self-determination were necessary to the success of the Pan African Ideal. The intellectuals were needed to give a scientific objective orientation to the struggle and to map out the road map for sustaining and meeting the expectation and aspirations of the people. That intellectual input needed the practice of democracy, of criticism and self-criticism, the increasing responsibility of civil

society for the governance of the nation. In order to drive the benefits of development in terms of schools, health services, security to life and properties, social facilities and amenities designed to improve the quality of livelihood of the population. What Africa needs most urgently is a government that ensures and guarantees a culture of tolerant consensus, a culture able to promote a politics of self-development and self-criticism, and to put in place an enabling environment of inclusion not exclusion. The intellectual community is not asking too much for such a conducive environment from the state. It is asking for an enabling atmosphere to contribute its quota in moving the continent forward in the right direction.

To a large extent, one can also apportion blames on the continent's administrative intelligentsia who had sacrificed professional ethics and objective for Bayart's 'the politics of the belly'. 'Africa's descent into decay being attributed to the tragic failure of African leadership in the social, political and economic arenas, the personalization of rulership, the expropriation of social resources by the kleptocracy of the ruling classes in a patron-clientelist autocratic, coercive and dangerous intrusive state' (Anice op cit). People have to be educated to come out of the current stage of social dislocations centralized and authoritarian governance system has engendered and the mechanisms and attitudes that lie in the background of massive affliction caused by exclusion, alienation and bad governance. The challenge for the intellectual community and social sciences research is to address the absence of a clear political analyst that could break into the stagnation so as to set new ideas moving and new hopes stirring There is need for an ideological and scientific breakthrough under the canopy of participation and partnership between the different actors.

A new era in the mass participation in the political process and in social science research in Africa is about to begin. The feasibility of this social science research and a new politics of mind and capacity, a politics and research era that might at least be able to confront the real problems of the continent and to begin to solve them needs the support of all. What this paper advocates is the invention of a state appropriate to a post-imperialist or post dictatorial future for the continent and where social sciences would play an imminent role. As of now, the continent is plagued with among others the following:

- Rising frustration with the pace of development, intensified by industrialization, urbanization, and population growth, abject poverty and misery.
- Political and social instability, corruption and bad management,
- An increased tendency to turn to authoritarian or radical solutions.
- Continuation of the trend of the military to take power.
- Growing nationalism, racism, xenophobia, discrimination, hatred and exclusion, injustice, failed governments and descent to total collapse.
- Declining academic excellence due to poor input factors, dilapidated infrastructure, poor financial resources, poor functional environment and increasing demands for new entrants–students.

Proactive measures

Though the academic community has been faced with disappointment and disillusionment, it must forge ahead with a new lease of life for total reform and reconstruction with social sciences research playing the lead role. There has to be a fundamental commitment by the academic community to social science research and knowledge production in order to accelerate the genuine independence of the continent.

The immediate pursuit for scientific excellence and academic freedom in the pursuit of a collective self-reliance, national integration and the transformation of the continent for the common good of all.

Restructuring of the educational curriculum and the establishment of more centers of excellence to meet the growing demands of the population and to adequately address existing pertinent issues plaguing the society.

For the intellectual community to inculcate a work of ethical, moral and professionalism that does not compromise professionalism for belly politics.

Forging the imperative of scientific objectivity and consensus and collaboration among the major disciplines and actors in government,

civil society, and academic community including networking across national frontiers.

The articulation of a new educational order to take into account the modalities of promoting greater integration among the different disciplines, through sound and effective education curriculum and policies of economic and political cooperation, networking among the different educational establishments within and beyond the frontiers of the continent.

This proactive agenda is in no way comprehensive or exhaustive. It does not even pretend to capture the wealth of ideas and problems that confront the continent. The problems are immense. The proactive policy measures are only intended to stimulate further debate and discussion on the way forward for social science research and knowledge production in Africa. There is need to develop beneficial political and socio-economic research so as to establish a framework for popular participation in the democratization process and academic excellence for the future of the continent.

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