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Reforming Foreign Aid to African Development: The Politically Autonomous Development Fund Model

GORAN HYDEN

INTRODUCTION¹

The purpose of this paper is to introduce a novel proposal for how foreign aid can be made more productive in the current context of sub-Saharan Africa. The basic assumption is that foreign aid must be adapted to the specific challenges in these countries: high levels of external dependency; weak public institutions; pressures to democratize; and, low levels of trust. The politically autonomous development fund, that is being proposed here, serves as an intermediary between the donors, on the one hand, and the operative recipients on the other, thereby promoting greater local responsibility and accountability and motivating Africans to take important steps towards improved governance. By helping to aggregate incoming donor finances into sectorial funding mechanisms, these funds reduce the administrative burdens on both donor and recipient sides.

This paper is written as a background paper for discussion. It introduces the challenges and the rationale for these funds and continues to outline their basic features. It ends by raising a number of questions that need to be further addressed before the proposal can be put into operation.

THE CHALLENGE

The next ten years may become a period of make or break for much of sub-Saharan Africa. Slow economic growth, deteriorating terms of trade, the burden of debt servicing, and stagnating flows of external financing make social and economic development in that region particularly difficult. Projections for sub-Saharan Africa, according to the 1992 World Development Report are sobering: given present trends in productivity and population growth, per capita income by year 2030 would reach only \$ 400, lower than the \$ 440 recorded for 1957! Africa's decline stands in contrast to the projections for other regions of the world. While capital flows to developing countries, especially from private sources, have grown rapidly in recent years, they have been directed primarily to Asia and Latin America. "Africa has been bypassed", concluded the UN Secretary-General in his 1993 assessment of the progress of the UN New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (adopted in December 1991).

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<http://www.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v2/v2i2a1.pdf>

This grim predicament requires work on many fronts. There is no one approach that will work; no one solution to the many problems. There is reason, however, to pay special attention to the role of foreign aid. Official development assistance (ODA) has played, and still continues to play, the dominant role in development financing in sub-Saharan Africa. In 1992, it constituted 80 per cent of all external finances to the region. Aid flows to Africa, however, are under threat. For sub-Saharan Africa, ODA in 1992 fell by 22 per cent from 1991. To a large extent, this decline reflects the fall-off in bilateral aid from the largest donor countries, especially the member-states of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Instead of approaching the organization's aid target of 0.7 per cent of Gross National Product, member states are falling further behind. The average for these countries in 1992 was 0.34 per cent, less than half of the approved target. Only the three Scandinavian countries and the Netherlands were above the 0.7 mark. This decline in bilateral aid is accompanied by a reduction also in multilateral aid. Support from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank increased during the late 1980s, but has since tapered off and it may continue to slow down in the second half of the 1990s.

This downward trend is not likely to change as long as the African state remains incapable of putting external finances to good use. What was in the first years after independence -- in spite of inadequate staffing -- a reasonably reliable implementation machinery has in the 1990s turned into a corrupt, inept and inefficient "good-for-nothing" kind of institution in many countries on the continent. Donors are unlikely to continue pouring money into what many of them perceive as a bottomless pit. Without serious reform and improvement, African governments are going to find less and less money go their way. The writing on the wall is quite clear.

The donors, however, find themselves in a difficult situation. They already finance more than 50 per cent of the national budgets (both development and recurrent expenses) in many countries of the region. Many donors want to reduce their funding but their involvement in the affairs of these countries is so extensive that a sudden withdrawal, apart from its diplomatic repercussions, would cause severe economic and social havoc in these places. Many donors perceive themselves as hostages of their own past generosity. Their money flow into these countries but produce little or nothing, at least in terms of sustainable progress.

Is there a constructive way out of this difficult situation that would be beneficial for donor and recipient alike? In particular, how can the money that is being transferred to Africa be converted into more lasting development activities? That is the challenge facing Africa and the global community in the second half of the 1990s. It is a big one that calls for an approach other than "business-as-usual". It calls for new thinking on the part of both African governments and international donors. At a juncture as critical as this, such rethinking is hopefully possible.

The African Association for Public Administration and Management (AAPAM) has devoted much of its activities over the years to issues of how the public service in Africa can be improved. It recognizes that many of the issues relating to public service reform go beyond the conventional issues of public administration and management. In that perspective, it devoted its 1993 annual roundtable to governance and democratization issues. The Association's involvement in this project is another acknowledgement that the issues of development

management in Africa today have to be tackled holistically by African governments and donors alike.

Five years ago, the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation organized a conference on "The State and the Crisis in Africa" in which a cross-section of African politicians and intellectuals analyzed the problems facing the continent on the eve of its present move to democracy. This time, attention is also being turned to the donors, not because the assumption is that the Africans committed to reform have failed but because the donors are so deeply entangled in the current situation that their self-evaluation is as important as that of the Africans. Both parties have reason to share responsibility for reversing the current predicament.

RATIONALE FOR A NEW APPROACH

If there is anything that we should have learnt from past experience with foreign aid, it is that it works best when prospective beneficiaries have a stake in the venture; when it is adapted to the particular circumstances of the situation in which it is being dispensed; and, when it makes people feel enthusiastic and ready to cooperate to achieve a common objective of theirs.

In recent years donors have typically found it more difficult to tailor their assistance along these lines. For a variety of reasons -- suspected or documented cases of corruption, perceived lack of commitment among recipient government officials, increased pressures from home authorities to show results, and so on -- aid agencies have usually taken a more direct control over the use of their funds or have channeled increasing sums via trustworthy international non-governmental organizations with a presence in the recipient countries. The inevitable effect has been to reduce the opportunities for local accountability and involvement; to limit the chances that their assistance will be of lasting value.

The approach proposed here is being presented with a view to showing a different way forward. It starts from four assumptions.

The first is that a critical variable in determining the effectiveness of foreign aid is how it is being dispensed. The idea that the mechanisms for channeling aid are important is of course not new, but not enough attention has been paid to how the institutional conditions in Africa today affect this issue. More specifically, what can be done in situations where public institutions have lost much of their legitimacy and ability to influence the course of events?

The answer to date has been along two lines. One has been to cut the size of the public service on the assumption that with better financial incentives for those remaining, productivity will go up. The second has been to encourage private and voluntary initiatives to play a more important role in development. While these may be necessary conditions for improving Africa's development prospects in the years ahead, neither is sufficient. Many people still perceive the public realm as a place for making private gains. The real challenge of how to restore confidence in public authority remains. Only when people can expect to be treated with fairness and professionalism are public institutions likely to earn the respect they need to promote national development and political order. Further attention to the public realm is crucial to any effort to get Africa out of its current predicament. This means that a bolder and more imaginative approach needs to be adopted: one which accepts that "public" is not a priori

synonymous with "lackluster performance". It is the conditions under which an organization is public that determine its effectiveness.

The second assumption of this model is that a trustful relationship between donor and recipient is a prerequisite for a good use of foreign aid. Today there are plenty of examples from African countries to the opposite. Some donors keep pushing money into treasury coffers or specific projects but often experience a moral dilemma when being forced to apply extensive measures of control that very clearly illustrate their lack of trust in the recipients. Others avoid this moral dilemma by simply channeling money only to institutions outside the public sector. None of these scenarios is a prescription for national development. It often amounts to nothing but throwing good money after bad or to giving priority to private initiative over public authority when both are sorely needed. Africa can move forward no better on a one-leg approach based on private initiative than it could on one based on state direction. Africa needs both legs and the donors must find a way of developing greater trust in their African counterparts. The latter, on their part, must be given a chance to prove that they can be trusted. Only then will the physical capital (money) that the donors provide begin to be converted into social capital, i.e. institutions that will sustain development efforts based on local commitments.

The third assumption is that donors need to be less selfish or nationalist in their approach to foreign aid. Many of them continue to act unilaterally. By having their own consultants design projects they reduce the opportunities not only for local recipients to be involved but also other donors to partake. There is a tendency for these agencies to feel that the more control they have over the actual preparation of a given project, the more likely it is that the project will yield positive results. The truth of the matter, of course, is that the result is usually the opposite. As long as donors insist on being so directly involved in design and forcing the recipient institutions to adhere to their own peculiar idiosyncracies -- not the least when it comes to administering specific projects -- chances that development projects will succeed are very slim. Aid does not work that way. In recent years, donor coordination has been fostered by consensus over the need for macroeconomic reforms. Such coordination is still rare at project level and, when it is achieved, it is typically with donor considerations prevailing. Apart from a few ministry officials, representatives of the recipient side have little input into these activities. What is needed is a reversal of this process so that donor coordination is taking place in response to the demands of recipient institutions.

The fourth assumption is that development funding must be available not only at the central level of government but also at lower levels. There has been much talk of decentralization in Africa over the past twenty years but very little has materialized that are true measures of power-sharing. The growing emphasis on local government revenue collection is important but not enough to assist the process of decentralization. First of all, most local government areas are too poor to sustain themselves, leave alone engage in development projects. Second, as long as the only other source of revenue are central government loans or grants, they are in no situation of effectively bargaining for more influence. The whole set-up needs to be changed in such a way that local governments can compete on equal terms with central government institutions for finances available for public use. The central control of decision-making, information flow and resource allocation can be broken if local institutions, including local governments, are able to enhance their financial autonomy vis-a-vis central

government. How this can be done in the contemporary context of African governance is an important challenge to all.

THE AUTONOMOUS DEVELOPMENT FUND MODEL

The approach proposed here is derived from recent experience with similar institutions in developing countries but is being adapted to the particular challenges of the present situation in sub-Saharan Africa. It is possible to identify at least four types of development funds. The first are the rural development funds that donors began funding in the 1970s. Their institutional location was typically in the Office of the President and their principal aim was to enable the government to finance smallscale projects outside the framework of its own bureaucracy. These funds had no board of trustees, and they were easily turned into political patronage funds. In most cases, as evaluations show, there was little feedback on what happened and poor financial accountability. This type has been largely abandoned by the donors today.

The second type consists of the increasing number of private foundations that have been set up locally, sometimes with assistance from American charitable foundations, with a view to financing smallscale development projects at the community level. They do have a formal legal independence and are set up with their own boards of trustees, but many of them have been "politicized" and used to favor particular political agendas. Their overall performance record is mixed. They continue to play an important role in many developing countries, however more so in Asia and Latin America than in sub-Saharan Africa.

The third type might be best described as the public sector version of the above private initiatives. Some donors, e.g. UNDP and UNICEF, have decided to help establish funds to cater for community or village development. The assumption is that through these funds their money can more easily reach the poor and groups at risk. These funds are typically funded by one donor only and are politically accountable to the head of state or a designated minister. For donors who in the past have experienced great difficulty in reaching the poor, the performance of these funds to date is encouraging.

The fourth type are the social action or social development funds established with the help of the World Bank to cater for adverse social effects of the macroeconomic reform programs. The most well-known of these is the Emergency Social Fund in Bolivia, which has been hailed by many as a success story, although it had difficulty reaching out into the rural areas. These funds are typically operational in that they also carry out specific projects. The exact status of these funds varies from country to country, but they are accountable to a political head, either the head of state or a designated minister.

Each of these types has, or has had, an important role to play, but none meets the real governance challenges of Africa today. The autonomous development fund model proposed here differs from all or some of the above types in the following ways:

- * it is a public but politically independent institution
- * it caters for both government and civil society
- * it is a funding, not an operational, entity
- * it aggregates finances from many sources

- * it brings donors and recipients together in new ways
- * it is national in scope of operation

These funds would serve as intermediaries between donor agencies and recipient institutions. They would be incorporated in the recipient country and ultimate responsibility would lie with a board of trustees whose members are legally prevented from serving on the board if they have political or economic interests that collide with their role as trustees. This way, the funds are accessible to any group regardless of their political orientation. By being guided by professional and not political criteria, these funds have the potential of encouraging a constructive competition between government departments, on the one hand, and private and voluntary organizations, on the other, to demonstrate how development work can be improved and be made more sustainable. By refraining from an operational involvement it can more easily retain its independence. By inviting donors to "invest" in these funds, they can avoid finding themselves in the pockets of a single sponsor. Donors, in turn, can consider abandoning their support as a way of putting pressure on the funds to perform better. It encourages donor sensitivity to good performance without forcing them to apply conditionalities that typically get in the way of doing development work well.

It should be pointed out that these funds are not expected to absorb all external aid flows to a given country. They will, through specific sectorial foci, e.g. on food security, public health, education, or women in development, absorb finances that are currently targeted directly on government departments or NGOs involved in social and economic development. Large-scale infra-structural projects and humanitarian assistance would fall outside the purview of these funds.

The fund objectives can be summarized in the following way:

- * to accelerate social and economic development by facilitating the conversion of physical capital into social capital;
- * to foster more responsible forms of governance based on the principles of local responsibility and accountability;
- * to encourage a more demand-driven development process by making public money available in response to proven ability to handle it in a feasible and responsible manner;
- * to enable donors to withdraw from direct operational or administrative involvement in externally funded project activities;
- * to provide greater space for African governments, including local governments, to demonstrate their commitment to improved governance in their countries;
- * to help African countries generate more support for their development efforts by demonstrating that external funds can yield positive results.

THE CONCEPT OF AUTONOMY

Autonomy is crucial to the development fund model. It is defined here as the ability of an organization to formulate goals and policies that do not necessarily reflect the articulated interests of the environment such as resource providers. Autonomy is a condition which

describes both the organization's relations with individual resource providers and its access to resources. Autonomy is never total, but the extent to which an organization enjoys it influences performance. Organizational performance is often measured only in terms of effectiveness (or efficiency), but it should include also such dimensions as innovation and morale. The latter two are as critical to success as effectiveness measured in terms of goal achievement. Where organizations are resource dependent, as the case typically are in Africa, definitions of effectiveness tend to be provided by the resource providers, i.e. the donors. This usually has the effect of lowering the levels of innovation and morale. The organization loses its readiness to criticize policy, much less innovate on it. It just implements. Under more autonomous conditions, organizational performance is motivated by internally generated definitions of effectiveness. The organization evaluates and criticizes external notions of effectiveness, as well as reject them in favor of its own. Performance shifts from the art of the possible to the art of defining what possible is. If African governments and donors are concerned with better performance, autonomy, as the literature on organizations suggests, is an important condition. Effectiveness is likely to be best promoted by precisely those qualities -- innovativeness and morale -- that are associated with autonomy. Both donor and African governments have reason to rethink their relations to respective clients: donors vis-a-vis recipient governments; the latter vis-a-vis other organizations in society. The autonomous development fund model addresses both these nexuses.

Organizational resources can be divided into three categories: (1) authority (right and responsibility to carry out programs and general legitimation); (2) financial assets (for maintenance as well as program development and implementation); and (3) technical expertise (mode of operation and staffing issues). Each of these categories will be covered in some detail below.

ISSUES OF AUTHORITY

The autonomous development fund is supposed to be a public institution, but it should be independent of government control. It should not be construed as "a state within the state". The appropriate analogy is rather the role played by an independent central bank, which in the interest of the national economy is allowed to make monetary policies of its own. Partisan interests, represented by the government or any other set of actors, must not infringe on the fund's decisions.

One way of bolstering its autonomy is to emphasize its status as a national institution, open to all. Regional funds or other similar institutions catering for a specific clientele easily lose their autonomy. It gets coopted by client interests. A fund established at the national level has greater clout to withstand such pressures. With a diverse clientele and with more than one resource provider, it should be able to uphold its image as an institution that serves the government as much as it does civil society. At the same time, it might be in the interest of all that there is no single fund for all types of social and economic development but a number of sectorially specific funds competing among themselves. This is a potentially performance-enhancing measure.

Much of the general legitimation of these funds will depend on how their boards of trustees are constituted. There are essentially three models for constituting a board:

- * representative
- * restricted
- * self-perpetuating

The first of these implies a charter which specifies that members represent different interests or organizations. The second specifies particular qualifications that have to be met. In the third, the charter permits members of the board to select their own replacements. The first of these is problematic in this case if representation is seen to be on behalf of potential clients. It may be applicable, however, if representation is seen to be on behalf of sponsors. The other two options are also applicable. It is likely that certain qualifications and restrictions should be included in the charter. For example, persons who are actively engaged in politics or serve in organizations that are potential clients should be excluded from consideration. Similarly, an element of self-replacement may be desirable to enhance autonomy.

A major problem with this kind of institutions in the past has been the tendency for the ultimate appointing authority, i.e. the head of state or minister, to fill the board with friends and allies. If the charter does not put a break on that tendency, little will have been gained. The board of trustees of these funds must be persons who are secure in their positions and sufficiently insulated from undue pressures to make decisions about allocation of resources that follow standards of fairness and professionalism. It may become necessary to insert a contractual obligation on the trustees to follow such standards so that they can be held accountable in case of violation.

One possible scenario in order to avoid past shortcomings would be to have the funds answerable to the national legislature. It would appoint, for example, three members to the board, the financial sponsors another three, and the board itself selecting the remaining three. To ensure continuity and an institutional memory in the board, the election of new trustees may be staggered so that three new members, e.g. one from each of the three categories listed above, are selected each year for a three-year mandate. It may also be specified that no member of the board would be allowed to serve more than two, or possibly three, three-year periods. This way the boards would be accountable to the lawmakers of the country without being totally in their hands. Each fund would be responsible to submit an annual report to the legislature and, if necessary, the latter could recommend certain measures, including instituting a public probe, aimed at enhancing their performance without compromising the principle of autonomy. By making the funds accountable to the legislature instead of a particular minister or the head of state, they can more easily be saved from becoming sources of political patronage. As a collective entity, the legislature will find it difficult to turn the funds into instruments of particular politicians. By making the annual reports available to the legislature, the funds are likely to be more effectively the subject of public scrutiny by both law-makers and media representatives alike. By making the legislature ultimately responsible for monitoring these funds, its own status is being enhanced and democratic governance promoted. In these respects,

the funds serve the objectives of democracy and better governance.

FINANCIAL ASSETS

The issue of financial assets is central to autonomy. The more an organization can rely on its own self-generated assets, the greater its autonomy. The development funds proposed here are not likely to achieve such a level of autonomy in the near future. The idea that the funds as public institutions could be permitted to issue bonds in order to raise money is a possibility, but capital markets in African countries are still weak. Such an option is probable only in the longer run.

The idea of relying on money transferred to the funds from the regular government budget should be discarded as that would compromise their autonomy vis-a-vis the executive branch, a potential client of these funds. Governments would still retain their existing social and economic development programs and would apply to the funds to supplement their own budgetary allocations. The funds should not be seen as diverting finances from the government. Their role is to complement the state budget and help raise more money for development programs and projects. For example, donor governments that are used to providing assistance through negotiations on an annual basis with their counterparts in recipient countries would make sure that in their agreements that cover all types of aid, a special clause is included that the particular amount set aside for the autonomous development funds would be subject to annual review and possible replacement so as to enable the donors to move their capital from one fund to another (within the same country or possibly to a fund in another country) in accordance with their sense of how these funds perform.

The principal role of these funds, at least in the short to medium term, is to mobilize external support for development by demonstrating to donors that they are capable of doing a professional job and thus are worth investing in. While the funds are not perceived as preempting the opportunities for other institutions, governmental or non-governmental, to directly request external assistance from donor agencies, the successful funds would become attractive targets for these agencies to channel sizable amounts of money instead of having to worry about a large number of small grants to many individual organizations. As intermediaries in the recipient country, the funds would relieve the donors of this quite labor-intensive responsibility.

Donors would typically make annual payments into these funds. As "investors" they would make contributions in accordance both with their own policy priorities and the perceived performance of each fund. Certain contractual obligations may be agreed upon to avoid too drastic changes in the resource endowment of these funds, but those who place their money in the funds should have the right to withdraw it, and certainly exercise the threat of withdrawing it, if performance falls far short of target or managerial irregularities are disclosed. By holding out such threats, and sometimes executing them, the donors are likely to invoke compliance with principles that enhance the autonomy of the funds.

If channeling financial support direct to these funds, the possibility of routing the money through the Central Bank is an alternative. To be sure, many Central Banks have in the past proved less than efficient in facilitating such transfers, but recent improvements in their

management should make this option more realistic today. If pursued, it has of course the added value of making hard currency available to the country for uses other than in the context of the development funds alone.

The important thing here is to go beyond the currently dominating one-donor fund, which has little or no effect on building improved governance capacity. Greater responsibility and accountability will only come if donors have enough trust in their counterparts and provide them with an opportunity to demonstrate such qualities. There is no real growth opportunity for local institutions if they are not able to enjoy operational autonomy. Donors, therefore, must transcend their current "project orientation" and help create intermediary funds in which they can place, and if necessary withdraw, their money. By providing the recipient countries with more of a carrot without giving up the whip altogether, the donors can more effectively than in the past help their resources work for development.

Thinking about development has for far too long been viewed as a matter of "catching up" with the North. Donors have encouraged investments in new projects and programmes without giving adequate attention to the institutional set-up in which these activities take place. In recent years, the importance of institutions has entered development discourse through the notion of an "enabling environment". This has been largely interpreted as breaking up public monopolies and giving greater opportunity to private entrepreneurial activity. While this in many cases may have been fully justified, it is not sufficient to foster development at an aggregate national level.

The latter requires a rethinking of development away from the notion that it is primarily about physical capital. Development does not only require money and human expertise. It also needs the social capital that turns physical capital and human skills into something productive on a sustainable basis. Defined most simply as voluntary forms of social regulation, social capital inheres in the relations among people. The concept derives from the norm that one should forego one's own self-interest and instead act in the interest of the community, collectivity or corporate entity of which one is a member. This norm, reinforced by social support, status, honor and other rewards, generates the social capital that sustains development.

The challenge of the international donor community in the current African context is to ensure that their financial resources get converted into social capital. The assumption of this proposal is that the autonomous development funds stand a better chance of achieving such an objective than any other institutional mechanism. By holding out the prospect of financial resources on a competitive basis, prospective recipients must first demonstrate that they possess enough social capital to make a grant or a loan available to them worthwhile. How such capital would be employed to foster institutional development would be a central criterion for assessing the feasibility of given project proposals.

An attractive feature of the development fund model is the possibility of recycling old debts. Most of these liabilities that keep hanging over individual African countries are the result of past excessive faith in physical capital and human expertise. Because most of them were designed by consultants funded by the donors, the latter share responsibility for what went wrong. It is not only poor implementation that explains past development failures. Equal blame must be laid on overambitious and poor design.

The international community could take a decisive step towards accelerating development in sub-Saharan Africa by going beyond the ad hoc way in which debt swaps are currently being managed. Most debt swaps are now being handled by the Debt-For-Development Coalition, based in Washington DC. It has facilitated the conversion of old debts into local currencies. The beneficiaries of these swaps have typically been international NGOs, many of them engaged in environmental conservation. Donors have preferred working with such NGOs because of their proven management capacity but in so doing have also preempted the opportunity for local institutions to emerge and develop. The funds proposed here would encourage donors to think about debt swaps in the context of national development. The presence of such funds would greatly enhance the absorptive capacity for recycling old debts. They would provide the money once lost with a second chance to demonstrate its productive potential.

A more consistent move in this direction by the donor community would involve a number of tricky issues, none of which, however, should be beyond resolution. For example, one would be to ensure that swaps do not fuel inflation. Such arrangements, therefore, would have to be carefully coordinated among the donors and with the Central Bank of the recipient country. Another issue is who should negotiate these deals. The Debt-for-Development Coalition has done an excellent job on behalf of the NGO community, but should it also take responsibility for negotiating swaps for the development funds? Will the international NGOs perceive this as preempting their chances of obtaining funds for development? These and other related issues, many legal and technical, have to be worked out in greater detail before swaps-for-development could benefit the funds proposed here. All the same, these difficulties seem small compared to the enormous gains that could be made for Africa and the world if the current debt burden is considerably reduced within the context of a plan for productive investment.

TECHNICAL EXPERTISE

The question of how technical expertise bears on the operations of these funds is not only a matter of personnel but also one of conditions of work. Who pays for the costs of running these funds? Different answers are possible. One is that government foots the bill, but that is likely to compromise the principle of autonomy. Another possibility is that parliament sets up special votes for the recurrent costs of each of these funds and allocates financial support directly on an annual basis. A third option is to endow these funds so that their operational costs are met from their own assets. This is the ideal solution from the point of view of autonomy and sustainability of operations. Endowing the funds would probably have to be done with assistance from the donors. Some may face legal obstacles to placing their money in endowments. Such was the case, for example, in the United States until a few years ago when the Foreign Assistance Act was changed so as to enable USAID to create local currency endowments with grant money.

The qualities of the persons hired to serve as trustees are very important. They include public respect, professionalism, good judgment and independent stature, i.e. no active involvement in ongoing political activities. As suggested above, these should be written into the law and the charter guiding the funds. They should apply equally to all categories of trustees, those chosen by the parliament, the sponsors and those picked by the board itself. Such persons

are available in the countries concerned. They may be found among retired public servants, the religious communities or professional bodies, to mention only the more obvious places. The sponsors may wish to choose their representatives from among persons who are not indigenous to the country they support. Such a presence may be helpful in enhancing the credibility of the funds. If confined to one third of the total membership, this representation would be small enough not to compromise the principle of local accountability, yet large enough to be able to effectively "blow the whistle", should it become necessary. This international presence on the boards should not be ex-officio, nor should the persons chosen be employees of particular donor agencies. The agencies supporting a particular fund should instead get together to nominate their representatives from among respected international figures, who would be interested and competent to serve on the boards. The board as a whole would be responsible for reporting back to the financial sponsors, although informal contacts would no doubt be kept especially with those three chosen by themselves. The category chosen by the board itself should be from within the country where the funds are located as should those selected by the legislature.

Staff hired to work for these funds must be carefully chosen. They have to demonstrate utmost professionalism and must be ready to interact with potential clients in ways that enhance the stature and image of the funds. Priority should be given to hiring local staff. There are plenty of both seasoned and young professionals in African countries who simply have not been given a fair chance to prove themselves because of the institutional malaise that exists around them. There would be need for both generalist managers, financial accountants as well as specialized program officers. The first category would be responsible for the overall management of the funds. This would include ensuring that allocations of loans and grants are made to credible organizations with viable projects. Their job would also entail contacting financial sponsors, both actual and potential, to attract their investments. The financial accountants would be responsible for keeping track of the flows of money, both in and out of the funds, and ensure that record-keeping is up to date and available for inspection on short notice. The program officers, most likely a mixture of economists and other social scientists, would be responsible for preparing project portfolios for consideration by the board. The assumption here is that they would recommend for support those projects that demonstrate the greatest potential for success, while communicating with other applicants so as to encourage them to improve their project proposals before taking them to the board. There might be some cases where outright rejection is warranted, but in most cases the approach taken by the program officers should be that of advising the applicants how they can improve their chances of receiving support.

Special guidelines might be prepared both for public and "in-house" use so as to facilitate the process of application and assessing proposals. For instance, eligibility criteria would have to be worked out in order to prevent the use of the funds for partisan political and religious ends. It may also be stated from the outset that applicants must convincingly demonstrate what resources of their own they bring to the project, what competence they possess, and exactly how they intend to carry out the proposed activity. If these funds are conceived in the context of a poverty-alleviating strategy, it might be necessary to specify exactly what other criteria that must be met before proposals can be considered for funding. The main purpose must be to

weed out those applicants who are only superficially interested in doing something serious with the support obtained. Achieving this is likely to be labor-intensive. Program officers will have to spend a fair amount of time on the road, following up applications and assessing their merits.

Pay is another issue of importance. Employees of these funds need to be paid an adequate and competitive salary, but levels should not be prescribed in advance for all institutions at once but left to the market to determine. If funds are capable of doing well, staff should be given higher salaries or bonus payments depending on what is appropriate. Regardless of what particular mode is chosen, the principle should as much as possible be that salaries, above a certain minimum level, are performance-based.

Need may arise for hiring staff from outside the country, but this should be kept to a minimum so as to give the local professionals a chance to really prove themselves. In most, if not all countries in sub-Saharan Africa, there are sufficient numbers of very competent professional persons available. This pool must be given highest priority, especially since many such persons today find themselves in employment situations that are far from motivating. This does not rule out the possibility of hiring outsiders as consultants, e.g. to help develop or evaluate specific program components.

As a national public institution with a specific sectoral mandate, each fund should be equipped with a variety of policy instruments that enables it to serve all types of potential clients. The latter may include government departments, public, cooperative or private enterprises, non-governmental organizations, and community-based organizations. To give it maximum versatility, it may be advantageous to have each fund operate through three separate "windows". One such window may cater for project requests that are not expected to yield any financial return on investment. Such activities include education and training, as well as the hiring of additional technical expertise on a consultant basis. The relevant mechanism for handling requests through this window would be grants with no obligation to pay back. A second window may cater for organizations working with individuals and groups that are not able to attract credit on commercial terms. Here the soft loan mechanism would be most appropriate. Special care has to be paid in this category to striking a balance between risk and opportunity. To ensure that support of such individuals and groups is viable, it becomes important to ascertain that the activity is well-grounded in a community and that there are matching contributions. The third window would provide credit on regular market terms and thus cater for organizations that typically work with clients in the formal sector. In this regard, it would be similar to a regular credit institution, the difference being that its loans would be exclusively targeted on a specific sector or set of issues.

Each fund would, within its operational mandate, advertise its services publicly and invite organizations that are legally incorporated to apply. To make sure that project proposals are as well prepared as possible, it may also announce what these submissions should contain and what conditionalities, if any, apply. For example, experience with the Emergency Social Fund in Bolivia indicates that it did not do enough to reach the poorer segments of the population in the countryside. If this concern is primary, the fund should explicitly state that applicants for financial support must demonstrate how they will involve the poor in their activities and how the latter are likely to benefit from such involvement.

Notes

1. This conference was held in May 1990 at Mweya Lodge in Uganda and was opened by his excellency, Yoweri Museveni, President of Uganda. The conference resulted in a separate publication entitled *The State and the Crisis in Africa* (Uppsala, Dag Hammarskjold Foundation, 1992), which has subsequently been translated into French. Both versions have been widely distributed in Africa and in the international development community.
2. For an interesting illustration of the validity of this point, see a recent study of the Fonds d'Action Sociale in France by Robin S. Silver, "Conditions of Autonomous Action and Performance", *Administration and Society*, Vol. 24, No. 4 (February 1993), pp 487-511.
3. United Nations Development Program (UNDP) commissioned a study in 1993 to define and put into practice the concept of Sustainable Human Development (SHD), in which social capital is viewed as the key to such development. See Tariq Banuri et al. *Sustainable Human Development: From Concept to Operation*, New York, UNDP, 1994.

Note

1. This contribution by Goran Hyden served as a background paper to the discussions on Autonomous Development Funds at the Expert Consultation in Uganda in April 1995. It presents the rationale for these funds and outlines in some detail their main features. The background paper is based on four assumptions. The first is that a critical variable in determining the effectiveness of foreign aid is how it is dispensed. This becomes particularly critical in situations where public institutions have lost much of their legitimacy and ability to influence the course of events. The second assumption is that a trusting relationship between donor and recipient is a prerequisite for the good use of foreign aid. Only then will the physical capital (money) that the donors provide begin to be converted into social capital, i.e. institutions that will sustain development efforts based on local commitments. The third assumption is that donors need to be less selfish or nationalistic in their approach to foreign aid and not think that the control they have over the preparation of a given project the more likely it will be that the project will yield positive results. What is needed is a modification of this process so that donor coordination takes place in response to the expressed needs of recipient institutions. Finally, the fourth assumption is that development funding must be available not only at the central, governmental level but also at lower levels. The central control of decision-making, information flow and resource allocation can be broken if local institutions, including local governments, are able to enhance their financial autonomy vis-a-vis central government.

The autonomous development fund model, then, is characterised in the following way: it is a public but politically independent institution; it caters for both government and civil society; it is a funding not an operational entity; it aggregates finances from many sources; it brings donors and recipients together in new ways; and it is national in its scope of operation.

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Rethinking Hyden's Development Fund Model: A Critique and Suggestions for Modification

OLATUNDE OJO

INTRODUCTION

Goran Hyden's proposal (1993; 1995; and reprinted in this issue) for national politically autonomous development funds opens up a much needed debate about the causes of alleged aid decline to Africa and what can be done to increase aid and to make it more effective. At its core, Hyden's National Development Fund (NDF) Model is a proposal to aggregate resources from donors into four or five national pools (based on sectoral foci, e.g., food security, public health, education, etc.), and to distribute this pool to public, private, and voluntary institutions which compete for it on a level playing field within certain specified guidelines. The goal is two-pronged: (1) to make foreign aid more productive in the current context of sub-Saharan Africa and, through it, (2) to stem aid decline, in fact substantially increase aid inflow, to the continent.

Few who are truly devoted to rapid development of the continent will object to these goals. There also is no doubt that the proposed mechanism for achieving these goals is innovative and does have a great deal of merit. It is doubtful, however, that the mechanism, in its present form, can achieve its "dual mandate". This article points out certain major weaknesses and suggests how they can be corrected if the NDFs, like countless past innovative policy measures or "advice" for Africa, is not to lead to disappointment or even disaster.

The analysis is in three parts. First, the rationale and the likely efficacy of the competitive mechanism and processes by which governments are to be made less corrupt, more accountable, and more effective in using aid to bring development to their people is discussed. Contradictions in the rationale and operational application of the mechanism are also discussed, the problem being linked to Western orthodoxy about the role of the state in a developing economy and to a faulty understanding, or even a deliberate misreading, of why decades of aid have not led to the development miracle in Africa. Second, the mechanism and its processes as they apply to local and grassroots institutions are discussed, pointing out the limitations that may affect donor countries' perceptions and assessments of their efficacy as agents of profound economic transformation. The necessary modifications in the Hyden proposal that all of this suggests are outlined in the third part of the essay. The final section summarizes the arguments

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<http://www.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v2/v2i2a2.pdf>

and the suggestions for rethinking the NDF model.

NDFs, THE STATE AND DEVELOPMENT PERFORMANCE

The proposal for national autonomous development funds (NDFs) is sadly reminiscent of the structural-functional and modernization paradigms that one thought had become *depassé par l'histoire*. The argument advanced or implied is basically that more aid will be forthcoming if aid can be made more effective for development; one way to do this is to engineer into existence a new institution which will check both corruption and lack of accountability while at the same time eliminate the developmentally dysfunctional consequences of central state control over development planning and resources. The effective use of aid and, with it, higher aid inflow, are thus a function of a well-designed institutional structure combined with decentralized or limited state involvement in development planning.

Hyden couches the argument for a well-designed institutional structure in terms of four principles or assumptions deemed to be conditions of "publicness" *sine qua non* to effectiveness of public institutions in the use of development aid. These assumed conditions are: (i) the necessity of political autonomy and accountability for institutions and bodies that dispense and utilize aid; (ii) the necessity of eliminating or at least reducing corruption and creating trust between donors and recipients of aid; (iii) the necessity of indigenizing control of aid machinery in order to reduce suspicions and enhance effectiveness and efficiency; and (iv) the need to redress imbalance in national and local bodies' access to aid resources and opportunities. In the abstract, these principles are unassailable. Applied to concrete African reality, they can be problematic. Principles (ii) and (iv) for instance form the backdrop against which Hyden derives the two specific and interrelated ways through which the proposed NDFs can bring about change in the direction of accountability and effectiveness in governmental use of aid monies. As will be shown below, they are not as unassailable as they initially appear to be.

The first and most fundamental way NDFs would meet the stated condition of corruption reduction for a more trustful donor-recipient relationship is to make national governments (and state governments in federal set-ups) compete on equal basis with other institutions--public, private, and voluntary--for foreign aid monies. Since the main criterion of success in winning an award is effective performance, the need to succeed is likely to force government institutions and personnel to be less corrupt. In Hyden's words (1995:12) "these funds have the potential of encouraging a constructive competition between government departments, on the one hand, and private and voluntary organizations, on the other, to demonstrate how development work can be improved and be made more sustainable." The key, then, is competition and NDFs offer the forum and structure for this.

The second way NDFs would help promote development is a derivative and reinforcement of the first. By giving local governments in particular, and grassroots organizations in general, access to an independent source of funding, NDFs could help wean these institutions and organizations from their dependence on the state for resources, and hence from constraints of central control of development planning. As Hyden (1995:9-10) puts it, if the whole set-up can be changed so that local institutions, including local governments, "can compete on equal terms with central governments for finances available for public use," if they are "able to enhance their

financial autonomy vis-a-vis central government," then "the central control of decision-making, information flow and resource allocation can be broken."

My central discomfiture is with these two key elements of the Hyden model. In the first place, Hyden fails to carry the policy implications of his competition argument to its logical conclusion when, without articulating any cogent reasons, he recommends competition in some areas of development aid activities but not in others. In the second place, I find very dangerous the end which Hyden expects his policy of local government access to independent revenue to serve--an end to national or state control of decision-making and resource allocation, in short state control of decisions over the economy and the direction it should go. As I will show presently, these policy failings reveal the Hyden model to be motivated less by concern for Africa's development and how to get substantial aid toward that end, than by antipathy to central government involvement in economic activities that in Western mode of thought ought to be left to the private and voluntary sectors.

SHORT-COMINGS IN THE COMPETITION ARGUMENT

The kernel of Hyden's argument is that trustful relationships no longer exist between African governments and donors. He devotes considerable space to castigating African states for this development. He points to their incapability to put external finances to good use, to their turning of a once "reasonably reliable [aid] implementation machinery ... into a corrupt, inept, and inefficient 'good-for-nothing' kind of institution" (Hyden, 1995:3), and to the fact that "(m)any people still perceive the public realm as a place for making private gains" (Hyden, 1995:7). The result is donor fatigue and unwillingness "to continue pouring money into ... a bottomless pit" (Hyden, 1995:3).

The depths of distrust are reflected in the fact that donors have either taken a more direct control over projects they fund, or they have resorted to using trustworthy international NGOs with a presence in the recipient countries to deliver aid directly to African beneficiaries (Hyden, 1995:6). Hyden correctly gauges this tendency of donors to give priority to private initiative over public authority as unavailing because "both are sorely needed" (Hyden, 1995:8). However, rather than attempt to refurbish and re-establish the earlier machinery which, "in spite of inadequate staffing" worked in a "reasonably reliable" manner, Hyden finds it far easier to establish a new machinery outside central government purview. The new machinery is designed to impact on the old, on extant governmental institutions, by forcing them, by way of competitive aid requirements, to be efficient, accountable and less corrupt.

Since competitive bid for aid funds is the heart of the Hyden proposal, the means by which to make governments less corrupt and more efficient and effective in handling development projects, one would expect that all aid funds should be subject to the competitive requirement if we are to make a dent in breaking the old habit, if we are to show seriousness about a new dawn "other than business-as-usual," to use Hyden's phraseology. Alas! That is not what Hyden recommends. Rather, Hyden recommends, first of all, that central government competition with local governments and grassroots organizations be limited to aid monies "that are currently targeted directly on government departments or NGOs involved in social and economic development. Large scale infrastructural projects ... would fall outside the purview of these

funds." Hyden reiterates that NDFs "are not expected to absorb all external aid flows to a given country" (1993:17; 1995:11); that the NDFs are not perceived as pre-empting the opportunities for government-to-government or government-to-non-governmental organization aid.

There are several problems with Hyden's specific policy recommendations, given his initial premise. First, there is no reason why competition should be limited to social developmental aid and not extended to infrastructural aid, assuming the two can be conceptually and operationally distinguished in the first place. It sounds disingenuous to assert that only competition in respect of social and developmental aid could lead to better development projects, make central governments less corrupt, and offer an opportunity for these governments to prove their trustworthiness and thus win NDF funding. Surely governmental performance in respect of infrastructural aid equally offers adequate opportunity to prove effectiveness and reliability. If African governments can be trusted with infrastructural aid, they surely can be trusted with developmental aid. There is no evidence that these governments are less corrupt or more competent or more capable with respect to infrastructural aid than with developmental aid. If anything, the sheer scale and complexity of infrastructural projects provide greater opportunities and avenues to engage in corruption and to exhibit ineptitude and inefficiency, the putative rationale for, and target, of Hyden's reform. Hyden's argument that due to their scale, infrastructural projects are best handled by central governments thus rings rather hollow. In any case, if the scale of projects is a necessary and sufficient condition for exemption from competition, then central governments should be exempt from competing for developmental aid as well. After all, central governments handle as many large scale and complex projects of a developmental kind as they do infrastructural ones.

Nor is there a valid reason to limit local governments and local civic organizations to competition with central governments for developmental aid while excluding them from competing for infrastructural aid. Local governments and local civic organizations are deeply involved in both infrastructural and developmental projects even if their activities in each category are invariably smaller scale versions of central government projects. The distinction between infrastructural and developmental undertakings is not easily made. The borderline is often blurred. For example, Nigeria's Ajaokuta Iron and Steel Complex and the proposed Liquefied Natural Gas projects, which seemingly are developmental projects, also fit the definition of infrastructure. By the same token "an ultramodern market and abattoir complex" undertaken by a town's Progressive Union is as infrastructural as developmental.

Thirdly, Hyden's proposal to limit direct government-to-government aid to infrastructure while requiring central governments to compete with local governments and grassroots organizations for development aid will, whether he intends it or not, have the effect of cutting, perhaps by as much as half, the already inadequate aid that African states now receive relative to their needs. There will be no rational ground why central governments, already labelled as irredeemably corrupt and unworthy, would be preferred for an award in the competition for NDF funding. The known or presumed corruption and ineptitude of central governments would be *a priori* ground for rejecting their applications in favor of those submitted by their presumably more honest and more competent local competitors. The ostensible level playing field effectively would be one stacked against central governments.

Despite Hyden's demurral that "the funds should not be seen as diverting finances from the government," the NDFs would have precisely that effect. There is no reason to suppose that donors will even continue to give direct government-to-government "infrastructural" aid to what they and Hyden already brand as "inept, corrupt and good-for-nothing institutions," when a putatively more efficient, more accountable, and more developmental alternative exists in the NDFs. Hyden indirectly admits this much. "While the funds are not perceived as preempting the opportunities for other institutions, governmental or non-governmental, to request external assistance directly from donor agencies" (1995, pp 19-20), while infrastructural aid would continue within the abhorred aid regime and mechanism, Hyden expressed his honest intentions when he adds that the objective of his proposal is that "successful funds would become attractive targets for these agencies to channel sizable amounts of money" (ibid p.20). The contradiction between Hyden's claim that his model will not replace the existing aid regime and the reality that it would render that regime redundant cannot be more glaring! In short there is an inherent bias against governments in the intent and likely outcome of the Hyden proposal as it now stands.

The bias against governments must be removed. If indeed there is confidence that Hyden's NDFs have the ability to deliver on the promise then there is no reason why all aid to a particular country, other than emergency aid, should not come under the NDF umbrella. All public institutions of the recipient country should go to the NDF and all donors should go through the same institution. The only reason a donor would not want to do this is political. Hyden hints at this in his position that as "investors" donors "would make contributions to the NDFs in accordance with their own policy priorities" (Hyden, 1995:20). If the purpose of aid is truly to assist recipients' development, then donors should have no additional policy priority; and it is for the recipient country to decide their sectoral and project priorities within the development priority.

A case can be made that donor priority that is at variance with the recipient's or the refusal of donor agencies to conform with national priorities or comply with national regulations would be prima facie evidence that the donor has other purposes in giving aid than aiding the recipients' development and priorities as determined by the recipients. Admittedly donors must operate within their own country's and agency's laws and regulations, and their task is to try to find the narrow path that satisfies both countries. However if such "policy dialogues" fail, and change in the recipients' priority is nevertheless extorted as a conditionality for the desperately needed aid, then aid becomes an instrument of the donor's self-interest and political agenda.

Fourthly, it is not clear how and why competition with grassroots institutions for developmental or any other aid will make central governments less corrupt, or lead to better development projects. The reasoning that the threat or actual loss of aid funds for being corrupt and inefficient would force governments to change their ways mis-reads or trivializes the causes of the pathological level of bureaucratic and grand corruption in Africa (e.g., Theobald, 1994:701-706). The reasoning also is a veritable "fallacy of competitive pressure" similar to, and no doubt deriving from, the dogma of monetarism which says in effect that "once you set policy incentives, everybody will do the right thing and the market will be perfect" (Botchwey, 1989:10). The lessons of contemporary history teach us that policy incentives do not work that way in Africa. Structural adjustment programs have exercised equivalent threats of withholding

finances as a way to induce economic reform and good governance, including pluralist democracy, public accountability, and human rights, but to no avail. These means of bringing "a concerted attack on corruption from the highest to the lowest levels" (World Bank, 1989:192) obviously have not made a difference as corruption has indeed worsened, with many states moving from prebendalism to what Peter Lewis (1996:100-101) calls "predation."

From the foregoing, it is clear that neither the "scale" yardstick, nor the efficiency/effectiveness criterion, adequately explains why competition is not required in both the infrastructural and developmental aid categories, which suggests that explanation must be sought elsewhere. That explanation, I suggest, is rooted in the renewed Western antipathy to central government involvement in large scale developmental projects and activities. Simply put, the new Western orthodoxy of state rollback in economic activities, together with the accompanying "small is beautiful" philosophy, makes it unacceptable for governments, especially central governments, to dabble in the sphere of economic activities deemed best left to the private and voluntary sectors. Two counter arguments by Africans are ignored: (1) that a willing and capable indigenous private sector entrepreneurial class does not exist to take the initiative, and (2) that their experience of privatization (and earlier indigenization efforts) showed the beneficiaries to be primarily foreigners (e.g., Ake, 1985:188-200). It is no wonder then that many see the practical expression of the new orthodoxy, the structural adjustment programs, particularly the privatization elements, as intended to benefit private foreign investors not the budding and as-yet-inchoate indigenous entrepreneurs. This is partly the reason structural adjustment programs have not been taken seriously enough in many countries.

What is at stake, then, is not simply a matter of trust in African governments. It is, more fundamentally, a matter of invigorated Western determination (in the name of liberalization, governance, and a nail in socialism's coffin) to limit the role of governments in the economy. Pursuant to this, and to ensure that direct government involvement in productive activities does not go beyond the provision of basic social and infrastructural services, macro-management of African economies is fast becoming the order of the day. The NDF model can be seen as a new element in this macro-management scheme. Some African leaders even see donor attempts to micro-manage their economies. Either way, the cause of trust is unlikely to be furthered. As Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi recently remarked apropos of the micro-management tendency in structural adjustment conditionality: "Give us the benefit of the doubt. We can't have trust if you try to micro-manage our economies" (quoted in *Africa Recovery*, May, 1996:26).

Fifth and finally, it is also not clear how a less corrupt central government and institutions and the attendant "better use of aid for development" can lead to "substantial" aid inflow to Africa. Donors give aid primarily in pursuit of their own national interests and only secondarily and derivatively in pursuit of development of the recipient country, the rhetoric about aid for development notwithstanding. Who gets aid, how much they get, and for what specific activities, are therefore political decisions that have little or nothing to do with efficiency in the use of aid or with relative levels of corruption in the recipient countries. The South Korea case illustrates the point that there is no correlation between levels of corruption and the amount of

aid donors disburse, and that indeed development is possible despite gross and ubiquitous corruption if the level of aid is sufficiently high.

From 1946 to 1978, Korea received \$6 billion in economic aid from the United States alone, in addition to \$6.6 billion in military aid. Korea also received an additional \$1 billion from Japan and \$2 billion from international financial institutions (Woo, 1991:45). Yet, during that whole period the verdict most often heard about Korea was almost identical to the verdict about Africa today. As Jungen Woo (1991:46) points out, the common view was that "aid did nothing for economic development, or even worse, doused Koreans with a welfare mentality." United States' development agencies almost universally "found Korea a nightmare, an albatross, a rat hole, a bottomless pit; even in the middle of the 1960s some American academics despaired of the 'dawn' of the day when Korea might become anything more than a permanent ward." Nevertheless, aid continued to pour into Korea for, as one donor country put it, the primary politico-strategic purpose of "throw(ing) our full weight in resources and technical know-how into the scales and make the enemy, (China), break his back in the effort to stay in the race (for Korea's allegiance)" (Woo, 1991:70). The result was that Korea attained the critical mass in aid that enabled development to take off and to grow at nearly 5 per cent despite corruption and inefficiency. Korea's annual per capita foreign assistance figure of \$600 for three decades (and Taiwan's \$425 per capita) have not been equalled anywhere else in the world except Oman. By contrast, per capita assistance for sub-Saharan Africa from all sources was \$62 in 1993 and not much different in the years before or since. Korea's \$6 billion in U.S. economic grants and loans during 1946-1978 contrast with the \$6.9 billion the U.S. gave for all of Africa during that period. The Korean experience lends support to the view of the UN Economic Commission for Africa as expressed in the Lagos Plan of Action and in the African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programmes for Socio-economic Recovery and Transformation (AAF-SAP) that what Africa needs is substantially increased external resource flows and debt relief, without unrealistic, red herring pre-conditions such as stopping corruption first. To Africans the answer to the chicken or egg question in regard to corruption and development is clear: development reduces corruption, not the other way around. Put another way, the cure for corruption is development.

It is clear, then, that the notion that "substantial" aid would come to Africa (substantial to make a difference in the African development saga?) if a new aid implementation machinery that reduces corruption and makes effective use of aid were established, is an act of faith based on the rhetoric of donors rather than on the realities of why they really give aid.

NDFs, LOCAL AND GRASSROOTS INSTITUTIONS AND DEVELOPMENT

Perhaps the most innovative aspect of the NDF model is the principle that development funds must be available not only at the central level but also at lower levels of the state and governments. Availability of funds at the lower levels, it is believed, would enable meaningful development to take place there and, by making these levels financially autonomous, bring about true decentralization of political power and authority. Local governments and local civic organizations, thus, will be economically, and hence politically, empowered.

This rationale is a good argument for setting up aid funds specifically for local governments and grassroots developmental civil organizations, separate from, and additional to, the existing government-to-government aid mechanism, whatever its fault and whatever the modifications or reforms that are made to it. Since governmental corruption, ineptness, and ineffectiveness in delivering aid to the grassroots constitute the kernel of the argument against the existing mechanism, a case can be made for a separate mechanism that enables local governments and grassroots organizations have access to "indigenized" external funding. Such a separate mechanism would likely receive substantial contributions from citizens of donor countries eager to donate on a continuing basis "if the money actually goes to those who really need it," that is, if it goes to alleviate poverty.

Had Hyden focused his advocacy at this level--analyzing the size of current aid to local governments and grassroots organizations relative to need, ascertaining what is wrong with the current mechanisms of delivering aid to these grassroots recipients, what the effects are, and how a new structure might help overcome the shortcomings, etc.--he would have made an invaluable contribution to the cause of foreign aid and development in Africa and to scholarship on the matter. Hyden makes no case for why we should not continue with, or enlarge, the current mechanisms (and there are many increasingly innovative mechanisms) of delivering aid to local grassroots organizations or local governments (see, e.g., Bratton, 1990; Clark, 1990:36; Fowler, 1988:14; Johnson and Johnson, 1990:7; Ukpong, 1993:13; Ojo and Koehn 1997; van de Walle, 1990).

Instead, his analysis focuses on what is wrong with the mechanism of aiding national governments and thus on why we should not continue to give development aid to such governments. The result is a proposed alternative mechanism that is a mish-mash of the existing vilified mechanism (an unexplained contradiction), and suggestions about how local governments and grassroots organizations (GRO) might access foreign aid in a way differently than they now do (ways nowhere impugned). The mish-mash clearly does not derive logically from Hyden's original premise. Of more immediate concern, however, are two projected or likely outcomes of giving local governments and grassroots organizations access to NDF monies. The first pertains to local autonomy and the curtailment of central government control over decision-making and resource allocation, hence its control of the political economy. The second pertains to the cost implications of this access both in terms of the NDF administrative overhead and in terms of the adequacy of "substantial aid inflow" to make a difference. These deserve further examination if we are to avoid disappointment.

(i) Local Autonomy and Central Control. Hyden sees his proposal as making true decentralization possible by local empowerment that makes it possible to "break central control over decision-making, information flow, and resource allocation." Decentralization is usually extolled as the political-administrative approach that holds out the prospect of advancing democratic governance and promoting socio-economic development (Rondinelli, 1981:37-39; Osborne and Gaebler, 1992:252-253). For this reason it attracts considerable attention and is being pursued to varying degrees in Africa (see, e.g., Koehn and Ojo, 1996; Adamolekun, 1991:285-291; Ayee, 1996:31-50).

However, premature and extreme decentralization can be counter-productive which is one reason the African attempts have been cautious. African states are weak vis-à-vis their

component ethnic societies. Because of this, these states are not authoritative and make up for that deficiency by being authoritarian (Jeffries 1993). The little legitimacy the state has comes from its control over decision-making, information flow, and especially over resource allocation. The potential threat to state legitimacy, national unity, and integrity and the danger of naked authoritarianism to deal with the problem sound a cautionary note to the idea of empowerment of locals if the purpose is to break central control over what gives it its tenuous legitimacy.

In this regard Jjuuko's (1995:20) observation is instructive. Jjuuko has noted an unsavory if unintended consequence of similar "empowerment" of villages and other GROs through aiding their "development" programs outside the purview and control of the state. He describes it as "nothing less than the negation of the national state; the depoliticization of the development process; the balkanization, localization, and ethnicization of peoples and nations" Jjuuko warns that "the business of national development (including the creation and integration of a state) demands as a basic minimum, the reorientation of resources and processes to the more complex (if currently inefficient) nation-state. Local and village self reliance is counter-productive if it keeps people locked there." In the final analysis, capitalist development in general, and grassroots development organizations in particular, need a strong state in control or they will not survive or flourish.

Much more realistic and probable (and therefore likely to cause disappointment by betraying the hope of breaking central control over the political economy) is that the availability of an independent source of funds would make local governments even less politically autonomous of central governments or of the local and regional elites who shape national politics. The more money, the greater the elite interest in, and control likely of, local politics and government will be. For the latter are seen merely as communal assets in the national political game played, in its turn, to defend the communal base of their interests. As Vaughan (1995: 502-504) observes (in respect to Nigeria, but applicable elsewhere): the en-trenched ethno-regional and class interests which dominate political life at the national level are unwilling to sustain state structures at the local level as effective institutions of governance, but rather as means for allocating patronage and as instruments of political domination in local communities. Thus, even if local governments were 100 per cent financed with funds from an NDF, that fact alone is unlikely to break either the hold of the central/state government, which also has constitutional responsibilities for the lower tier, or the hold of the local/regional elites.

What has been said of local governance holds with greater force for grassroots organizations such as hometown associations. No doubt the influence and importance of communal and grassroots leaders and elites in these associations derive in part from their ability to raise funds for community development; it is they who employ "formal and informal networks that penetrate the policy arena [to] serve... as important conduits between the center and the periphery" (Woods, 1994:465-83; also Vaughan, 1995:51-6; Barkan, McNulty, and Ayeni, 1991:464-68). Would making NDF funds available reduce this power and influence? Most unlikely.

The reason is that these local elites and leaders provide more than sources of finance. They provide ideas, knowledge, and skills. This is why in Nigeria, for example, traditional rulers usually confer them with chieftaincy titles, a popular one translating as "the community's eye."

More importantly, these local elites are the catalyst in the creation of "social capital", a quality that enables physical capital and human skills to be converted into concrete development products. In fact they would be central to the formulation and writing of proposals for NDF funding. Remote villages, without sufficient numbers of these elites working in tandem with traditional rulers and elites for the village improvement or development, would be handicapped in getting their needs formulated and articulated for NDF consideration.

This fact points to the possibility of urban bias under the NDF operations unless special steps are taken to prevent it. More significantly, it points to the real problem of African development--the limiting factor of lack of skills at the local level to implement development ideas and projects. It delimits the scope of absorptive capacity at the local grassroots level. Unless the NDFs are going to be involved in micro-management at this level, aid monies alone will be inadequate to ensure local autonomy from the processes and socio-economic relationships that facilitate central control. Whether the NDFs can and should do this is largely a cost question.

(ii) Cost Implications of NDFs: There are two levels of analysis here. The first is the administrative cost of the proposed new structures and processes. The other is the scale of aid monies to make local development sufficiently visible to earn the new approach kudos instead of name calling.

(a) Administrative costs. Hyden raises the question of who pays for the costs of running the national funds and makes suggestions about setting up endowments, but he makes no attempt to even guesstimate what range of figures may be entailed. If we accept Peter Koehn's (1998) operationalization of the Hyden model as a pointer, the costs are likely to be staggering. The NDF bureaucracy will become intimately involved both in the preparation and execution of projects, especially as its priority is the poorest of the poor at the grassroots. These are predominantly illiterate, many without the educated elites that give hometown associations and similar organizations the visibility that has made them the focus of attention as grassroots developmental NGOs. Many therefore will need help to write acceptable proposals as they will need with registration to become legal persons, a requirement of the NDF model for qualification to receive aid. The NDF also would need to provide intensive individual and group technical assistance at various stages of the award process for small scale proposals that may be strong in ideas, but poor in implementation design, technical feasibility, and budget planning.

The NDF involvement will indeed be of such a scale and intensity as to constitute an administrative burden. Koehn (1998) suggests for instance, that NDF's Monitoring and Evaluation Divisions should have field offices comprising representatives of the Division's four sections in each of the component states, regions, or administrative divisions of the country concerned. For a country like Nigeria, for example, this would amount to a minimum of 3,096 field officers of the Division in the 774 local government areas (excluding those in the head-office). There would be three other Divisions. A Funds Management Division of presumably moderate size would serve as Treasury, receiving, managing, and accounting for donations. An Administrative Support Division, also of presumed modest size would handle personnel, travel, and information-sharing matters. A Projects Awards Division, which would be the largest because of the enormity of its responsibilities, would engage in program formulation, offer

training workshops and free consultancy services for prospective aid applicants, assess and recommend thousands of applications for funding or rejection.

No estimates of personnel requirements in these Divisions are made, but it is clear from the functions just outlined that the number would be colossal to be effective. This will be particularly so in the case of the Projects Awards Division which will have to cope with the fact that the applicants it will serve at the grassroots level may be predominantly illiterates, unable to elaborate their ideas into formal project proposals. Scores of examiners external to the NDF bureaucracy will also be recruited on an ad hoc basis to help assess applications. At the minimum this will cost the NDF money for hotel accommodation, feeding, and some honoraria. Considering that there are some 52 countries in Africa and each is to have four or five NDFs (each with a specific sectoral focus), and bearing in mind that we are talking of wage scales and conditions of service that would attract the best and at the same time dampen temptations to engage in corrupt activities, there can be little doubt that the overhead in salaries and other emoluments would be very large.

(b) Cost of visible grassroots development. No doubt part of the dissatisfaction with the outcome of past aid-giving is the fact that grassroots people in the recipient countries appear not to benefit from it; there is no visible grassroots development, no visible alleviation of poverty. This accounts in part for the trend in donors' diversion of aid to Northern NGOs which work directly with recipient grassroots people, a trend Hyden has noted. This raises expectations that the proposed model will make a difference, resulting in visible grassroots development. The hype about what the model can do, given in the context of sharp contrasting vilification of existing aid machinery, creates unduly high expectations for the model. Failure to meet that expectation may thus once again lead to frustration and, hence, to accusations of grassroots ineptitude, inefficiency, perhaps even corruption.

In this regard, Hyden's assertion that substantial aid would come with the implementation of his model is important but, as we have seen, unrealistic. Experience with another reform package with a promise--structural adjustment programs--shows the promise failed of fulfillment. Ravenhill (1993:19) notes for instance that "Few countries have made a sustained effort at implementing structural adjustment programs while receiving external financial support in the volumes required for the programs to be successful." Would the case of NDFs be different?

It is doubtful that Hyden's model or any other one can result in visible grassroots development in a long while. The amount needed to make that kind of transformation is unrealizable, given the political determinants of aid-giving and the size of the need. A case can be made that for purposes of visible grassroots development, aid must reach a minimum critical mass before it can propel development forward. It may well be in recognition of this necessity that the UN and the OECD agreed on an aid target of 0.7 per cent of a developed country's GNP, a target that is far from being met. Sayre Schatz (1988:139-150) calculated the minimum aid needed for sub-Saharan Africa's economic recovery to be \$121.5 billion for the five year period 1986-90, an amount that works out to almost 150 per cent of what sub-Saharan Africa currently receives. The Council on Foreign Relations and the Overseas Development Council back in 1986 estimated the need at some \$20 billion annually through the rest of this century (Schatz, 1988:147). The UN Secretary-General has estimated that a minimum of \$30 billion in net

overseas development assistance (ODA) was required in 1992, with real net ODA subsequently growing at 4% each year throughout the 1990s just to raise Africa's per capita income by 1% (Africa Recovery, October, 1996:14), but as Ravenhill (1993:42-43) has commented: "this appears to require levels of financing substantially beyond those that can be expected from Western donors!" It should come as no surprise, then, that with this economic recovery aid requirement not being met, while SSA has become a net exporter of resources to the World Bank/IMF duo (amounting to over \$1 billion annually) since 1988 (Cornia, 1991:29-30), there is now little or no development taking place.

The point then is not merely that the hype and vilification be toned down and balanced, but that a structure or structures and processes that are less likely to be administratively expensive and less exclusive of state and/or national governments should be established.

REFORMING THE REFORM PROPOSAL

One way of doing this is to combine features of the NDF with the operational features of the Groupement des Aides Privées (GAP) that currently functions in Niger (see Johnson and Johnson, 1990:25-37). Specifically, the NDF Board could be retained but rechristened National Autonomous Local Development Fund (NLDF) to which donors contribute funds earmarked specifically for local government and local grassroots associations, particularly those of the Hometown Association genre. NLDF would have the same functions and procedures as the NDF Board but without its huge field operations and bureaucracies. To ensure responsiveness to the felt needs of the people and to meet the priorities set by the local and central governments, the NLDF would only gather those projects which have been proposed by the local population, approved by local government authorities, and reviewed by the relevant central government ministries. The NLDF members also are completely free to make project proposals working directly with local groups; but, these must then fit into local and higher planning frameworks. To facilitate the process, a Central Government office would maintain a project bank of ideas and proposals that have come up through the system from local communities (Johnson and Johnson, 1990:25-37).

One valid objection might be that the necessity of securing appropriate governmental approval to ensure that projects fit into national priorities may constitute a bottleneck. The World Bank at first raised such an objection in respect to the GAP system, finding it "too confining" and unlikely to attract into certain countries the full potential of aid flow (see Johnson and Johnson, 1990:27). However, there is no reason why those genuinely interested in assisting development should not want to do so within nationally set priorities. It must not be forgotten that an ostensibly harmless "developmental project" which satisfies some private wants can create secondary and tertiary public needs and obligations for governments. This is why no responsible government anywhere allows untrammelled freedom in economic development activities without regulations and priority-setting. Fortunately, the GAP experience has proved the bottleneck and below-full-potential argument to be groundless. In fact, the Bank reports that "(o)n the whole, the [GAP] system is smooth," and that it is a "realistic compromise between socio-political realities and the need for economic allocation of resources" (Johnson and Johnson, 1990:27).

As for a government-to-government aid regime, there are two options. The first is to follow the logic of Hyden's premise and argument to their logical conclusion. That would mean expanding the scope of the NLDF to include aid to central/state governments as well so that all aid ? developmental or infrastructural ? comes under the aegis of the NLDF (to be renamed NDF in that eventuality). This option is impractical for political and other reasons, among them the fact that donors give aid to pursue their own national interests first and foremost. Hence, who gets it, how much they get, and for what specific activities are politically determined.

The alternative therefore is to leave the government-to-government aid machinery alone, warts and all. The very political reasons advanced for the impracticability of putting all aid monies (except emergencies) into NDFs militate against any other meaningful reform. Donors simply cannot be "less selfish or nationalist in their approach to foreign aid" as Hyden would wish. Half measures to make them change this is likely to be counter-productive.

CONCLUSION

Hyden has made a valid case for why we need to aid not just central/state governments, but local governments and grassroots organizations as well. However, instead of discussing what is wrong, if anything, in the current mechanism of delivering aid to local governments and grassroots organizations and suggesting how they might be improved, Hyden focuses on what is wrong with the mechanism of aiding national governments and, thus, on why we should not continue to give development aid to such governments. Paradoxically, however, the new structure he recommends, which should take away all aid from that mechanism, in fact leaves the bulk of it, so-called infrastructural aid, to the much maligned mechanism to administer. No valid explanations are given for this anomaly, thus leaving one wondering what the vilification of African states and their aid implementation machinery was all about.

An equally intriguing paradox is what to do with that portion of aid that comes under the purview of NDFs, the so-called social and developmental aid. For a share in this portion, the central government is to compete with local governments and grassroots organizations on a theoretically level playing field, but in reality under prejudicial rationale, clouds of suspicion, and humiliating processes that effectively stack the deck against central governments. More intriguing, this is justified in the name of bringing efficiency, accountability, and reduced corruption into central government's handling of developmental aid that will somehow permeate into the infrastructural portion where no such competition obtains!

These contradictions and paradoxes can only be explained in terms of a broader agenda, an end to which the ostensible claim of aid reform is actually directed. That end is the new Western orthodoxy of rolling back the state from directly productive economic activities and control of decision-making, of keeping the state out of direct development activities and confining it to the realm of infrastructures. It would seem that it was to paper over these contradictions and paradoxes that Hyden reverts to the inflation of derogating epithets and catch phrases that have now become the stock in trade of contemporary western Africanist scholarship (Mkandawire, 1997:31-32)

All of this means that meaningful reform in state-to-state aid delivery machinery is most unlikely in the foreseeable future. What is feasible is a machinery for delivering aid to local

governments and grassroots organizations. A modification of NDF to combine the Board structure and functions with the operational structure and processes of the Groupement des Aides Privées of Niger would be a giant step forward.

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The Wilsonian Conception of Democracy and Human Rights: A Retrospective and Prospective

KORWA G. ADAR

INTRODUCTION

The principles of democracy and human rights have been persistent, if at times secondary, themes within the rhetoric of American foreign policy toward Africa since the end of World War II. The linking of such Wilsonian precepts with foreign policy practice, however, has been an altogether different story. US policy makers consistently followed the dictates of *realpolitik* in the era of the Cold War, leaving concerns for democracy and human rights aside. With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, conditions are now in place for the tangible and coherent pursuit of an American foreign policy based on democracy and human rights. In the current era, the question emerges as to the resonance of such Wilsonian principles in US foreign policy towards Africa. This essay examines the salience of Wilsonian precepts in United States foreign policy towards Africa in the past and in the current era of Clinton's visit to Africa.

In his foreign policy pronouncements vis-a-vis the European colonial powers President Woodrow Wilson advocated for the pursuit of democracy and human rights conceptualized within the context of self-determination for the colonized peoples. The idea of universal morality was central for Wilson. In his view, the realization of individual freedom, limited government, and legitimacy of power held the key to both international peace and the emancipation of humanity from injustice¹. It was within this philosophical context that he advocated for the need to make the world safe for democracy. This, he argued, would promote America's long term interests².

Wilsonianism emerged as a distinct policy philosophy at the end of the First World War. One of the central concerns at the time was how to avoid war and conflict in general. For Wilson, the crucial priority was the need to establish people-oriented internal and international democratic institutions that would act as the custodians of democracy and human rights as conceptualised within the general rubric of self-determination³. This idealism culminated in the formation of the League of Nations in 1919. Thus, Wilsonianism was not only internationalised

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<http://www.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v2/v2i2a3.pdf>

but also institutionalised. Although the United States did not become a contracting party to the League, Wilsonianism had a global impact.

Such thinking would go on to inform the founding fathers of the United Nations. The UN system tangibly paved the way for the process of decolonization in Africa through the UN General Assembly resolutions, with African countries which were independent at the time as well as India and the socialist countries taking the lead ⁴. In this respect, Wilsonianism not only challenged dictatorial and authoritarian systems worldwide but it also helped oppressed people become aware of their rights. For the colonized peoples of Africa, democracy and human rights (or self-determination in general) was equated with the absence of colonialism ⁵. Moreover, the momentum on the issues of democracy and human rights was evidenced with the appointment of Eleanor Roosevelt to Chair a Commission on Human Rights. The results of Roosevelt's Commission were the establishment of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and its corollaries the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

President Wilson's global campaign as the champion for the silent majority also set the stage for a United States democracy and human rights foreign policy in the twentieth century ⁶. Wilsonian precepts resonated clearly in the message of the Atlantic Charter which, although promulgated by Franklin D. Roosevelt, Wilson's intellectual heir, manifestly indicated US dissatisfaction with the lack of sovereignty for colonised peoples.

The concern for the promulgation of democracy and human rights is thus part of the legacy of United States foreign policy towards Africa. The salience of these moral principles in foreign policy practice, however, has always stood in the face of a more realist agenda guiding US policy. This was particularly evident during the Cold War. The status of such ideas in the post-Cold War foreign policy of the United States remains an open question.

WILSONIANISM SHELVED: THE COLD WAR AND US POLICY TO AFRICA

In the spirit of Wilsonianism, the US welcomed decolonization and independence in Africa in the 1960s. However, with Cold War prism taking a centre stage, emerging American national interests became defined in terms of combatting communism in Africa and other parts of the world. Indeed, such concerns were evident even prior to much of Africa's independence. After his visit to Africa, Vice-President Nixon in his report to Eisenhower explained that "the course of Africa's development...could well prove to be the decisive factor between the forces of freedom and international communism" ⁷.

To be sure, the concerns with democracy and human rights occasionally surfaced in the discourse of US foreign policy. For instance, the US Congress, particularly since the 1960s has enacted legislation linking economic and military aid to democracy and human rights. Section 116 of the 1961 Foreign Assistance Act prohibited the President from providing development assistance "to the government of any country which engages in a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights" ⁸. Similarly, the 1976 Congressional Foreign Assistance Act stipulates, among other things, that the US is "to promote and encourage increased respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms throughout the world." US security assistance was to be given in a manner which will "provide and advance human rights

and avoid identification of the United States, through such programs, with governments which deny their people internationally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms" ⁹.

These episodic legislative efforts should not blind us to a more general pattern wherein US foreign policy actually worked against the precepts of Wilsonianism. The overall history of US activity in Africa during the cold war reads like a litany of anti-Wilsonian practices justified in the name of containing communism. This included US support of such brutal dictators as Mobutu, Moi, Barre, Nimieri, and Selassie, whose human rights records were among the worst in Africa. Billions of dollars were spent to roll back communism. Indeed, US weapons played major roles in conflict situations in Angola, Ethiopia, Liberia, Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of Congo-DRC), Namibia, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda, and Sierra Leone.

The more specific chronology of US foreign policy further confirms US reluctance to support Wilsonianism. President Kennedy, guided by US strategic interests, was unable to support anti-colonial forces in Portuguese colonies in Africa due to his concern for the strategic North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) bases in the Azores ¹⁰. Even the 1960 decolonization and self-determination-oriented UN Resolution 1541 (XV), in which Wilsonianism was clearly inscribed, was not supported by the Eisenhower Administration. The US was one of nine countries (Australia, Belgium, Britain, the Dominican Republic, France, Portugal, South Africa, and Spain) to abstain during the voting in the UN General Assembly ¹¹. The abstention clearly indicated that the US sanctioned oppression, racial discrimination, and the violation of human rights in Africa by the colonial powers, if to do so meant containing communism. US ambivalence on the Rhodesian question was also a clear manifestation of a reluctance to pursue democracy and human rights policies in Africa ¹². Although the administrations of Presidents Kennedy (1961-1963) and Johnson (1963-1969) were generally concerned with the issue of apartheid in South Africa, the Vietnam war occupied most of their time.

Whereas the Johnson Administration upheld the UN economic sanctions against the white regime in Rhodesia because of its human rights violations, President Nixon permitted the US company Union Carbide to import 150,000 tons of chromium ore from that country ¹³. Similarly, the Nixon Administration also increased military aid to South Africa, violating the UN embargo. This policy clearly placed the US on the side of the white regimes in southern Africa and in support of the violation of human rights policies that were part of the systems. The Nixon and Ford Administrations's policies of replacing Wilsonianism with national security only enhanced the status quo in the region. These trends in foreign policy behavior underwent a gradual, though inconsistent, shift during the Carter Administration (1977-1981).

Carter defeated the Vietnam War weary and Watergate scandal plagued Republican Administration by building on a domestic constituency rife with Cold War disillusionment ¹⁴. His new vision de-emphasized the view that conceptualized conflicts in Africa within the prism of communist adventurism. For Carter, conflicts arose as a result of domestic disorder or simply socio-economic and political stress ¹⁵. Carter, like Wilson, brought to the White House religious and moral virtues which translated into his foreign policy-making process ¹⁶. One of his concerns was how to bring about democracy in Africa. To help him achieve this objective, he appointed a number of African-Americans, in addition to others, who shared his views to key foreign policy-making positions ¹⁷. It was during the Carter Administration that a real

qualitative leap in the prominence of American human rights foreign policy was reactivated¹⁸. Carter was able, at least initially, to move America away from the realpolitik of the Nixon-Ford-Kissinger years to a vision of Wilsonianism. Specifically, he made the issues of democracy and human rights the subject of international diplomatic discourse. This policy initiative was pursued more vigorously in his first two years in office, raising the hopes of pro-democracy and human rights advocates both in the US and Africa. For example, export and import restrictions were imposed on South Africa, Ethiopia, and Uganda¹⁹. By linking economic and military aid to human rights violations, the Carter Administration intended to influence the policies of the repressive regimes in Africa.

Carter's idealism was aimed at encouraging countries in Africa considered to be progressive. His Administration dismissed the Kissinger plans in southern Africa as inconsistent with democracy and human rights principles and supported instead the anti-apartheid efforts of the Front-Line States. Carter also increased diplomatic efforts aimed at resolving the Angolan, Mozambican, and Namibian questions. Racism and dictatorship rather than communism were seen as the main threat to American interests in Africa²⁰. The Carter Administration also nullified the 1971 Byrd Amendment which allowed American companies to import chrome from Rhodesia and signed U.R. 1746 to law prohibiting US companies from dealing in trade with the white minority regimes in southern Africa and limiting military sales restrictions on countries in Africa that violated human rights in general.

These moves placed the Carter Administration on the side of the pro-democracy and human rights movements in the region and the anti-apartheid advocates in the US²¹. President Carter's shift from Wilsonian idealism to realpolitik became apparent during the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the taking of American hostages in Iran. Carter hurriedly negotiated for military bases in Kenya, Somalia, and Sudan in 1980 at a time when human rights violations were rampant in these countries. Carter needed logistical support for the Rapid Deployment Force (RDF) which was established as a result of the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the US hostage crisis in Iran.²² His Administration's inconsistency, however, was displayed on a number of occasions. Whereas he was concerned with the Soviet intention in Africa, his Administration was also insistent on the issue of the observance of human rights²³. In Fiscal Years 1980 and 1981, for example, Zaire became one of the first victims in Sub-Saharan Africa whose military aid was reduced by Congress during the Carter Administration. Ethiopia and South Africa also were earmarked for sanctions and denial of military aid.

The Reagan and Bush Administrations viewed the issue of democracy and human rights largely within the context of the containment of communism in Africa. This was clearly symbolized in their continued support for what Reagan called freedom fighters such as the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA). The Contact Group of Western countries established during the Carter Administration to oversee the Namibian transition to independence was relaxed by the Reagan Administration. Instead, Reagan established the policy of constructive engagement which accommodated the views of the apartheid regime²⁴. The US-USSR rapprochement that began in 1984 with the Reagan-Gromyko meeting set the stage for the close of the Cold War. These developments paved the way for the Reagan Administration's accommodative approach to human rights that was expanded under the Bush Administration²⁵.

THE END OF THE COLD WAR: A NEW TREND IN US FOREIGN POLICY?

The collapse of the Soviet Union ushered in great opportunity for the pursuit of foreign policy based on Wilsonianism. We find such an emphasis emerging in the foreign policy orientation of both the Presidency and Congress. To be sure, it will take some time, perhaps decades, before such a policy becomes meaningfully established. Our aim here is to try to demonstrate that a trend is emerging within the US foreign policy-making establishment in favor of the pursuit of democracy and human rights policy in Africa. The linkage of Wilsonianism to foreign policy and development acquired a central theme under President Bush following the collapse of the Soviet Union. The US advisor to the UN Commission for Human Rights, Marc Northern, clearly articulated President Bush Administration's foreign policy on democracy and human rights. In his address to the Commission, Northern stated that "the US makes no apology for insisting that where human rights are concerned, every nation , including my own must be held to the highest standard... . We stand ready to help those governments committed to human rights move ahead" ²⁶. He further emphasized that "the division in the world today is not between East and West... . The real division in the world is between those committed to democracy and liberty and those against" ²⁷. This trend of thinking , did not however, manifest until in the 1990s. In 1989 the Bush Administration opposed aids cuts to some of the leading African old guards-cum-dictators such as Moi (Kenya), Barre (Somalia), and Mobutu (Zaire, now DRC). The same dictators were to face political conditionalities in the 1990s imposed by the US and other donor countries.

In Kenya, for example , relations with the US and other donor countries in general began to deteriorate in 1989. The years 1989-1991 witnessed great internal and international pressure on the Kenyan Government to allow multipartism. The US Ambassador to Kenya, Smith Hemstone, brushing diplomatic ethics aside, stated publicly that US assistance would be directed to countries that "nourished democratic institutions, defended human rights and practised multiparty politics" ²⁸. In conformity with Section 116 of the 1961 Foreign Assistance Act and other democracy and human rights legislation, President Bush acquiesced to the Congressional freezing of \$25 million in military aid to Kenya ²⁹. Kenya's foreign aid was subsequently withheld by the US and other donors in 1991 forcing the Moi regime to allow multipartism. The other African countries which were victims of Congressional legislation in the late 1980s to early 1990s included, Cameroon, Malawi, Sudan, Togo, and Zaire. The Bush Administration was also involved directly or indirectly in peace initiatives in Sudan, Mozambique, Angola, Ethiopia, and Zaire among others. These efforts were augmented by Congressional support.

The effort of Bush Administration on the issue of human rights and democracy were carried on by President Clinton who acknowledged that when he became President, the US had no policy towards Africa. The policies existing at the time, he argued, focused mainly on specific countries. He stated that "for decades we viewed Africa through Cold War prism...We supported leaders on the basis of their anti-Communist or anti-apartheid rhetoric perhaps more than their action ... And... the United States... simply ignored the realities of Africa" ³⁰. He further emphasized that the United States would like to "see more prosperity and more well-

functioning economies and democracy...We'd like to see sustainable development that promotes the long-term interest" defined in terms of global stability³¹. This Wilsonian liberal internationalism constituted part of Clinton's foreign policy orientation.

In one of his public speeches, the American Secretary of State at the time, Warren Christopher, emphasized that "promoting democracy and human rights is a pillar of American foreign policy" conceptualized within what he called the "moral and strategic imperative of the 1990s"³². The concern of the Clinton Administration, rhetoric or otherwise, on these issues is centred on the need to establish viable internal and international stability defined in terms of democracy and human rights. These values are increasingly being linked to foreign aid by donors. This foreign policy framework is based on the thesis that liberal democracy and free markets are the best guarantors of world peace, stability and development³³. Financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund(IMF) and the World Bank(WB) in particular, have joined the bandwagon in supporting the emerging donors' perspectives on the issues of democracy and human rights. These policies are bound to enhance internal and international pro-democracy efforts.

A further example of Clinton's commitment to human rights is witnessed in the Administration's response to the cancellation of election and killings of innocent people by the Abacha regime in Nigeria. The Clinton Administration cut off \$450,000 aid for military training and \$11 million in grants. The US, the European Community, the Commonwealth Countries, and some members of the UN also imposed sanctions against the Abacha regime following the hanging of Ken Saro-Wiwa, a human rights advocate, and eight other Ogonis³⁴. In her address to the UN General Assembly on November 28, 1995, the US Ambassador to the UN at the time now Secretary of State Madeleine Albright singled out Nigeria and Sudan as countries in Africa whose governments are associated with dictatorship, coercion and violation of international recognized human rights principles³⁵.

However, concerns with democracy and human rights did not supplant more fundamental American interests. The US, however, as one of the major importers of Nigerian crude oil, did not impose stiff economic sanctions against Nigeria. This indicates that realpolitik still guides important aspects of US foreign policy. Indeed, this is a clear indication that regardless of a President's avowed politics, US economic interests always take precedence over other issues.

Moreover, stability in Africa is increasingly understood within the context of Wilsonianism. This is evidenced by the steady decline in military procurement to the continent, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa. For example, the US arms deliveries to Sub-Saharan Africa started to show a steady decline from 1985 to 1994. Under the Clinton Administration, the term Security Assistance since 1994 has been changed to Assistance for Promoting Peace and Building Democracy. This shows a clear shift in the Administration's policy on security issues in relation to Africa. The focus by his Administration is on the peace-building military training in conjunction with the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the individual African states. This new concept, under the name African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI), introduced in 1996 by the Clinton Administration, is designed to prepare African countries' military personnel for future peace-keeping missions in trouble-spots in the continent. While Botswana, Uganda, and Zimbabwe participated in this joint military training program with the US Marines in late 1997, Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania did so in 1998. What is emerging within the US foreign policy-

making establishment is the inclusion of democracy and human rights even on matters pertaining to security.

To augment its peace-building initiatives in Africa the Clinton Administration has also supported the concept of denuclearization of Africa. The US played an active role in drafting the final text of the African Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone Treaty also known as the Treaty of Pelindaba which was opened for signature in April 1996 in Cairo, Egypt. During the Cold War the US was persistently opposed to this concept, particularly in relation to the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace proposed by the African and Indian Ocean littoral states.

CLINTON'S VISIT AND WILSONIANISM: RHETORIC OR REALITY?

One of the central questions which needs to be asked is the extent to which President Clinton's March 1998 visit to Africa helped solidify the US policy of Wilsonianism? Or was his visit influenced largely by narrow American realpolitik perspectives thus missing the opportunity to lay the foundation for a well established Wilsonian idealism?

While in Uganda President Clinton emphasized that "if we work together to strengthen democracy and respect for human rights, we can help this continent reach its full potential in the 21st century -- its true greatness, which has too long been denied" ³⁶. This was the message Clinton re-emphasized during his official tour of the continent. President Clinton also stressed a number of things, which according to him, are different from the course US took during the Cold War period. First, he emphasized the importance of good governance, accountability, freely elected governments, and the need for African governments to provide democratic space. Second, he stated that African stability, security, and prosperity are consistent with US interests. Third, he stressed that respect for democracy and human rights constitutes the centre stage of US interest in Africa. Clinton's US-Africa foreign policy pronouncements centred on trade, security, and democracy and human rights ³⁷. These statements were carefully chosen and linked to Clinton's priorities and strategies at home and in Africa.

Within the domestic context it can be argued that the Clinton Administration's main objective was designed to enlarge its domestic constituency, particularly among African-Americans. His recent recognition of the role played by the American slaves during the Civil War and his apology for the US transAtlantic slave trade can be understood in this context. An expanded domestic constituency would enhance support for the Democratic Party in future elections. Louis Farrakhan's visit to Africa earlier, particularly to Libya and Sudan (dubbed terrorist nations by the US), could not be taken lightly given his increasing influence in the US ³⁸. Clinton also wanted to enhance his Administration's image in Africa by engaging in a mutually beneficial human relationship with Africans, or simply a comprehensive form of "neo-constructive engagement". This was an important aspect of his visit. It was an attempt to move Africa away from marginalisation and mere US stereotypes to a continent that needs to be engaged in a reciprocal partnership. In other words he brought America to Africa by way of focusing the attention of Americans on the African continent. Clinton may have succeeded in these areas at home-gaining support of the African-Americans and establishing a different image of Africa among the American people-but what are the potential ramifications in the African context?

With the exception of Rwanda, Clinton visited countries (Ghana, Uganda, Rwanda, South Africa, Botswana and Senegal) considered by the Administration to be democratising and promoting market-oriented economies. But what package did he bring? His trip was boosted, at least by the perspectives of his Administration, with the passage of the African Growth and Opportunity Act on March 11, 1998 by the US House of Representatives. Yet, to some observers the Act "poses significant threats to Africa's long term interests in sustainable economic development and democracy-building" ³⁹. The central displeasure with the Act is that it imposes certain conditions- a form of "trickle down theory"- on the African countries. For example, the African countries must comply with IMF rules which require the privatisation of their assets through divestiture; they must acquiesce to World Trade Organization rules such as tariff cuts and the removal of import restrictions and adopt currencies and investment deregulations which allow foreign investors to establish ownership over natural resources in the continent ⁴⁰. The initiative is obviously a good one and it indicates a willingness on the part of the Clinton Administration and Congress to engage in meaningful economic relations with Africa. The Act in its present form, however, constitutes a threat to the sovereignty of the African states and renders the idea of mutual respect and reciprocal partnership entailed in some of Clinton's speeches nugatory.

Whereas Clinton emphasized that US-Africa economic policy is to be based on trade as opposed to foreign aid, he failed to offer a historic package to the debt plagued continent. Economic development and more so Wilsonian idealism inscribed in his speeches cannot thrive in a continent trapped in debt. Currently, sub-Saharan Africa alone has foreign debts totaling over \$200 billion. Clinton's message could have had great impact for generations to come in the new millennium if it contained a plan for writing-off the 48 sub-Saharan African states' debts, 31 of which are classified as severely indebted and low-income. Something of great foreign policy magnitude like the 1948 Marshall Plan could have made a difference. Even if the plan (or let us call it Clinton-Albright African Plan) were to target only some of the African countries perceived by the US leaders to be in the processes of nourishing democratic ideals, good governance, and respect for human rights, it could have set the stage for a tangible and historic US-Africa policy. The fact that the US and its allies managed to mobilize about \$100 billion debt relief under the 1996 Highly Indebted Poor Country Initiative (HIPC) to salvage the East Asian countries trapped in economic crisis, make Clinton's rhetoric in Africa suspect. After all, even under the debt chocking conditions, about eleven sub-Saharan African countries managed to experience 6% growth rates in the period 1996-97, faster than their 3% population growth rates. It is along these lines that Clinton could have made his visit more historic which in turn could have served long term US-Africa interests. Instead, US aid to Africa has undergone a steady decline in recent years. Whereas sub-Saharan Africa received an average of \$700 million from the US between 1990-98, down from \$ 841 million in 1992, Israel's aid increased from \$3 billion to \$5.5 billion in the same period ⁴¹ What is more revealing is that in Fiscal Year 1999, Sub-Saharan Africa is allocated only \$155 million compared to \$225 million for Bosnia alone ⁴².

Clinton's strategic initiative in Africa conceptualised within the context of peacekeeping missions or simply "African solutions to African problems" sounds more like a new form of the Nixon doctrine of the early 1970s, a policy based on the strategy of transferring arms to regional American proxies to enhance their military capabilities to guard US interests. If the Clinton

Administration's decision to withdraw American troops from Somalia in 1994 is anything to go by, then the idea of introducing African peacekeeping forces (ACRI) only re-enforces my interpretation. Compare the decision by the US to withdraw from Somalia to its commitment in the former Yugoslavia? The NATO peacekeeping forces are still busy patrolling the area a few years after they were deployed. This is not to argue that the US should become a policeman in Africa. The central point is that even in the post Cold War era the US commitment to Africa is still questionable. It remains at the level of rhetoric defeating the objective of promoting Wilsonian idealism, a policy that would serve US long term interests. The same level of political will established to combat communism in Africa and elsewhere during the Cold War era should be directed toward "rolling back dictatorship and oppression" from the continent and replacing it with Wilsonian idealism. President Clinton had the best opportunity to put such a policy in place while he was in Africa. Although his speeches in Africa were coached in Wilsonian conceptions, they will continue to be interpreted as mere political rhetoric. An inclusive and tangible US-Africa foreign policy orientation can still be put in place by the Administration before the new millennium. After all this was the central thrust of Clinton's keynote address at the White House Conference on Africa in June 1994. In my view, such a policy, would catalyse and solidify the political and institutional reforms that are dubbed "the African Renaissance" sweeping across the continent.

Notes

1. See generally, Stanley Hoffmann, "The Crisis of Liberal Internationalism", *Foreign Affairs*, 98(Spring 1995):159-177. Wilsonianism is hereinafter used interchangeably with democracy and human rights
2. Tony Smith, "Making the World Safe for Democracy", *The Washington Quarterly* (Autumn 1993), pp. 198-199. See also Anthony Whelman, "Wilsonian Self-Determination and the Versailles Settlement", *International and Comparative Law Quarterly* 43¹ (January 1994): 99-115.
3. See, Bruce M. Russett, *Grasping the Democratic Peace* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), James L. Ray, *Democracy and International Conflict: An Evolution of the Democratic Peace Proposition* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1995), and Bruce M. Russett, *Controlling the Sword* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990).
4. See generally, United Nations, Declaration on the Granting of Independence of Colonial Countries and Peoples (Doc. A/L/ 325, 1960), Report of the Special Committee on the Situation with Regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence of Colonial Countries and Peoples (Doc. A/5800/Rev. 1, 1964), Robert Mc Coroudale, "Self-Determination: A Human Rights Approach", *International and Comparative Law Quarterly* 43(4) (October 1994): 857-885, and Korwa G. Adar, "The Principles of Self-Determination and Territorial Integrity Make Strange Litigants in International Relations: A Recapitulation", *Indian Journal of International Law* 26(3/4)(July-December 1986: 425-447.

5. Michla Pomerance, "The United States and Self-Determination: Perspectives on the Wilsonian Conception", *American Journal of International Law* 70(1)(January 1976), p.19.
6. On the evolution of the US human rights foreign policy see for example, David P. Forsythe, *Human Rights and the United States Foreign Policy: Congress Reconsidered* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1988), David L. Cingranelli, *Ethics, American Foreign Policy, and the Third World* (New York: St. Martins, 1993) and Joshua Muravchik, *The Uncertain Crusade: Jimmy Carter and the Dilemmas of Human Rights Policy* (Lanham: Hamilton Press, 1986).
7. US Government, *The Vice-President's Report to the President on His Trip to Africa*, February 28-March 21 1957, White House Office Files, Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library, 1957.
8. Stephen B. Cohen, "Conditioning U.S. Security Assistance on Human Rights Practices" *American Journal of International Law* 76(1982)p.247. See also generally, R. Weissbrodt, "Human Rights Legislation and U.S. Foreign Policy", *Georgia Journal of International and Comparative Law* 231 (1977):247-268.
9. Quoted in W.F. Buckley, "Human Rights and Foreign Policy: A Proposal" *Foreign Affairs* (Spring 1980), pp. 785-787.
10. Todd J. Moss, "U.S. Policy and Democratization of Africa: The Limits of Liberal Universalism", *Journal of Modern African Studies* 33(2) (1995), p.193.
11. Marion Muchkat, "The Process of African Decolonization", *Indian Journal of International Law* 6(1966) p.495 and D. A. Kay, "The United Nations and Decolonization", in James Barros, (ed.), *The United Nations: Past, Present and Future* (New York: The Free Press, 1972), pp. 152-153.
12. See generally, Anthony Lake, *The 'Tar Baby' Option: American Policy Toward Southern Rhodesia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1973), Mohamed A. El- Khawas and Barry Cohen (eds.), *The Kissinger Study of Southern Africa: National Security Study Memorandum 39* (Westport, CON.: Lawrence Hill & Co., 1976), Z. Brezinski, *Power and Principle: Memoirs of the National Security Advisor, 1977-1981* (New York: Farrar Straws Ginoux, 1983) and Peter J. Schraeder, *United States Foreign Policy Toward Africa: Incrementalism, Crisis and Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).
13. P. M. Kamath, "Human Rights and National Security: US Experience in Africa During the Cold War Era", in M. Munene, J. D. Olewe-Nyunya, and K. G. Adar (eds.), *The United States and Africa: From Independence to the End of the Cold War* (Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 1995) p.57 and T. Szulc, *The Illusion of Peace: Foreign Policy in the Nixon Years* (New York: The Viking Press, 1978), especially pp. 176- 177.
14. G. Macharia Munene, "Cold War Disillusionment and Africa", in Munene, Nyunya, and Adar, (eds.), *The United States and Africa*, op. cit., p.30
15. On this view as it relates to Africa in general see, Helen Kitchen, *US Interests in Africa* (Washington, DC.: Praeger, 1983), pp.1-14 and Korwa G. Adar, "Kenya-US Relations: A Recapitulation of the Patterns of Paradigmatic Conceptualization, 1960s- 1990s", in Munene, Nyunya, and Adar, (eds.), *The United States and Africa*, op. cit., pp. 89-104.

16. David Mervin, *Ronald Reagan and the American Presidency* (New York: Longman, 1990), pp.63-64.
17. Michael Clough, *Free at Last? US Policy Toward Africa and the End of the Cold War* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1992), p.42.
18. Dilys M. Hill, "Human Rights and Foreign Policy", in Hill, (ed.), *Human Rights and Foreign Policy: Principles and Practice* (London: Macmillan Press, 1989),p. 22.
19. For the Ugandan and the South African case see, *Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Year 1979, PL 95-426* and *Export-Import Bank Act Amendments of 1978, PL 95-630* respectively. Further restrictions were imposed on Uganda under the *International Security and Development Cooperation Act of 1980 PL 96-633*.
20. Cyrus Vance, "Human Rights and Foreign Policy", *Georgia Journal of International and Comparative Law Quarterly* 7¹⁹⁷⁷, pp. 223-225. See also David Carleton and Michael Stohl, "The Foreign Policy of Human Rights:Rhetoric and Reality: From Jimmy Carter to Ronald Reagan", *Human Rights Quarterly* 7(May 1985): 54-81. Cyrus Vance, *Hard Choices: Critical Years in American Foreign Policy* (New York: Praeger, 1983), pp.450-451.
21. W. F. Buckley, "Rhodesia and the Hypocrites", *The Washington Star*, March 16, 1979 and D. Clark, "Africa's Policy's Big Test", *The New York Times*, January 30, 1979.
22. Korwa G. Adar, *Kenyan Foreign Policy Behavior Towards Somalia, 1963-1983* (Lanham:University Press of America, 1994), p.156.
23. R. Cohen, "Human Rights and Decision Making in the Executive Branch: Some Proposals for a Coordinated Strategy", in D. P. Kommers and G. D. Loescher (eds.), *Human Rights and American Foreign Policy* (Notre Dame:Notre Dame Press, 1979):216-246 and Morgan, "Panel Rebuffs U.S. Bid to Relax a Rights Sanction", *Washington Post* (March 23, 1979), p.A2, col.3. For the US sanctions against Sudan for what Washington calls state sponsored terrorism see Korwa G. Adar, " A State Under Siege: The Internationalization of the Sudanese Civil War", *African Security Review*, 71(1998):44-53.
24. US Government, *The United States and South Africa: United States Public Statements and Related Documents, 1977-1985* (Washington,DC.:United States Department of State , September, 1985).
25. Tamar Jacoby, "The Reagan Turnaround on Human Rights", *Foreign Affairs* 64(Summer 1986): 1066-1086.
26. "Fledgling Democracies Can Count on U.S. Help, *Maoni Ya America*, 53 (April 1992), p.1.
27. *Ibid.*, p.1.
28. "Storm Over USA's Views "The Weekly Review, May 11, 1990, p.14. See also, "U.S. Envoy Steps into Political Firestorm in Kenya", *New York Times*, May 6, 1990, p.13 and generally, Smith Hempstone, *Rogue Ambassador: An African Memoir* (Sewanee, TN.:University of the South Press, 1997).
29. Barbara Grosh and Stephen Orvis, *Political Conditionality ,Democratization and Economic Performance in Africa: Aid in Kenya in the Post Cold War Era*, no. Publisher, no date., p.6. See also, Senator T. Kennedy, "Suspend All American Aid to Kenya for Human Rights Violations", *Congressional Record* 136(93) (July 19, 1990), pp. 15-16.

30. Bill Clinton, "Developing a New U.S. Policy Towards Africa", The White House Conference on Africa, June 26-27, 1994 (Washington, D.C.: Africa Regional Services, USIS July 1994), p.14.
31. Ibid.
32. Warren Christopher, "A New Relationship", Africa Report (July-August 1993), p.37. Warren Christopher, "Democracy and Human Rights: Where America Stands" Address at the World Conference on Human Rights , Vienna, June 14, 1993.
33. "U.S. Policy for a New Era in Sub-Saharan Africa" (Washington, D.C.: State Department Fact Sheet, January 27, 1993) p.6. See also, Marlin Fitzwater, "U.S. Policy for New Era in Sub-Saharan Africa" U.S. Department of State Dispatch 4(3) (January 18, 1993), p.35 and George Moose, "Top U.S. Official Defends Africa Programs Before Congress, Maoni Ya America 86 (April 1995), pp.3-9.
34. For Nigeria's human rights record see, U.S. Government, Department of State, Nigeria: Human Rights Report, 1995 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1996), pp.1-26.
35. Madeleine Albright, "U.S. Challenge Nations on Lack of Respect for Human Rights", Moani Ya Amerika, 95 (January 1996) pp.25-26.
36. See, The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, Kampala, Uganda, "Remarks by the President at Entebbe Summit for Peace and Prosperity", Imperial Botanical Beach Hotel, Entebbe, Uganda, March 25, 1998., pp.1-2.
37. See generally, The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, "Remarks by President to the People of Ghana", Accra, Ghana, March 23, 1998, The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, Press Conference by President Clinton and President Mandela", Garden of Tuynhies, Cape Town, South Africa, March 27, 1998 and The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, "Remarks by the President at Entebbe Summit for the Peace and Prosperity", Imperial Botanical Beach Hotel, Entebbe, Uganda, March 25, 1998.
38. "Clinton in Africa", The Economist, March 21, 1998, p. 56.
39. "African Americans Urge Senate to Modify Africa Trade Bill", Letter from Several Prominent African Americans to Members of the US Senate Urging Modification of the US-Africa Trade Bill, Transafrica, March 13, 1998, pp. 1-10.
40. Wafula Okumu, "Reflecting on Clinton's Africa Safari", The Perspective, July 14, 1998, p. 4.
41. Ibid. See also generally, "Oxfarm Briefing Statement on President Clinton's Africa Trip", Oxfarm International, March 23, 1998, pp. 1-4; USIA, "Africa Wants Support Provided by Trade Bill-Summers", (Washington, DC.: United States Information Agency, June 22, 1998), pp.1-9.
42. "Clinton Trip Doesn't Mean Change in Policies", The Times of Zambia, March 27, 1998, p. 1.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Comparative Imagination. On The History Of Racism, Nationalism, And Social Movements. 1997. George M. Fredrickson. Berkeley: University Of California Press. 259 Pp. \$27.50 cloth.

George Fredrickson of Stanford University, this year's President of the Organization of American Historians, has devoted much of his distinguished career to the study of the history of race, racism and anti-racism in America, and, at the same time, established himself as one of America's leading comparative historians. The bulk of his comparative work has been devoted to the histories of South Africa and the United States. His first major study was the pioneering *White Supremacy* (1981), which compared white ideologies and practices in the two countries over three centuries. Then, in *Black Liberation* (1995), he focused on "the subaltern side of the color line" (p. 135), exploring black ideologies opposed to white supremacy in the two countries, from the mid-nineteenth century to the 1970s. In 1988 he published a first collection of essays on slavery and race, entitled *The Arrogance of Race*. This new collection comprises, after a largely autobiographical Introduction, eleven essays, previously published for the most part in rather obscure places. All of the essays either reflect upon comparative history or are attempts to write such history. I will confine my comments chiefly to what he says about the comparative method in general and to what may be of particular interest to those in African studies.

Fredrickson is a "splitter", who adopts what he calls a "historicist" approach, which means that he is concerned with the particular, highlights difference as much as similarity, and seeks multiple causation instead of focusing on a limited number of variables. Comparison works best, of course, when the cases being considered show considerable similarities as well as differences. Fredrickson's usual approach is to discuss the one case, then the other, and then to try to explain how they are similar, and how they are different. Some will say that he does not sufficiently overcome in his own work the danger, which he mentions (p. 13), of writing parallel histories rather than genuinely comparative ones. Such work requires, of course, a good grounding in each case. which is why he advises against treating more than two, or at the most three cases (pp.10-11). Some South African historians criticised *White Supremacy* because they did not agree with what Fredrickson said about aspects of South African history. *Black Liberation*, more narrowly focused and better grounded in primary research, was less open to this kind of criticism.

South African historians should be grateful that so eminent a scholar has devoted so much attention to their history. Fredrickson writes lucidly and his ideas are always stimulating. His willingness to address contemporary issues is admirable, as are his humane, anti-racist concerns. He is not shy of seeking to derive lessons for the present from the past. He argues that

<http://www.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v2/v2i2reviews.pdf>

the history of race relations shows, for example, those relations to be "a dynamic process that can be made to change course as a result of political action and initiative" (p.131).

This "heterosexual white male of Swedish-American ancestry" (p.18) is surely right that comparative work is both a good antidote to parochialism and important to an understanding of the forces that have shaped world history as a whole. While some comparative work by United States historians has strengthened notions of American exceptionalism, Fredrickson has sought to "transcend the exceptionalist paradigm", by seeing each case as "distinctive, but none truly exceptional" (pp.57-58), although he does argue that the consequences of the Civil War and Reconstruction gave a particular character to American race relations.

The essays here which contrast South Africa and America range from comparisons of the frontier (Ch.2) to the very recent past. They mostly pick up and develop ideas to be found in Fredrickson's own two comparative studies. Chapter Eight, entitled "Reform and Revolution in American and South African Freedom Struggles", makes clearer and more explicit some of the key arguments in *Black Liberation*. Chapter Ten provides a detailed comparison between the American civil rights movement and the South African defiance campaigns, ending with an unusually imprecise comparison between the success of the anti-apartheid movement and Birmingham and Selma. In the last chapter, in which he compares black power and black consciousness, Fredrickson is, as usual, sensitive to the very different contexts in which the two operated. American blacks usually wished to be included, on their own terms, within the society in which they found themselves. The "freedom struggle" in South Africa, by contrast, reflected "the ambition of a majority to rule in its native land" (p.211).

Like other historians, Fredrickson did not anticipate the "negotiated revolution" that took place in South Africa from 1989, but with hindsight he finds the ANC's reformism "not surprising" (p.146). Although he suggests that reform was "forced from below by militant confrontational tactics rather than imposed from above in an effort to head off trouble that had not yet reached crisis proportions" (p.147), it was surely both, and how does one weigh the relative significance of each? While little in *The Comparative Imagination* will be entirely new to those familiar with Fredrickson's major comparative books, no one will be able to read these essays without gaining much food for thought.

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Aspects of African Archaeology. Papers from the 10th Congress of the PanAfrican Association for Prehistory and Related Studies. Gilbert Pwiti and Robert Soper, eds. University of Zimbabwe Publications, Harare [distributed by the African Books Collective Ltd., Oxford UK]. 1996 857 pp. \$75 paper (42.00 pounds sterling).

A brief review cannot do justice to an 857-page collection of ninety-eight separate papers presented at the Congress of the PanAfrican Association for Prehistory and Related Studies,

which met in Harare, Zimbabwe in 1995. As the editors point out in their introductory remarks, the meeting showed the Association's viability, after an interval of sporadic and less efficiently reported meetings.

The Congress was notable for full participation of scholars from post-apartheid South Africa and for a strong emphasis on cultural resource management and historical archaeology linking Africa with global history. Two types of papers predominate, each informative and thought-provoking. Some fill in formerly empty temporal and geographical spaces, often where archaeological research had previously been precluded by war or lack of infrastructure. Others incorporate sophisticated analytical and theoretical approaches into studies ranging from Homo erectus to Iron Age symbolism.

Below I note the major thematic sections into which papers are grouped, commenting on some pieces of admittedly idiosyncratic selection, in no way reflecting on the quality of papers not specifically noted.

Hominid Evolution: four articles, ranging from theoretical models for hominid behavior (Cachel and Harris, Stoppiello) to diagenetic and osteometric studies of bone (Person et al, Santos).

Palaeoenvironmental Studies: five pieces, reporting on regions and sites in Egypt (Moeyersons et al.), Libya (Cremaschi and DiLernia), Zambia (Avery), and Zimbabwe (Haynes). Hassan's discussion of "abrupt Holocene climatic events in Africa" synthesizes paleoenvironmental data from several regions.

Early Stone Age: seven articles. J. D. Clark, the doyen of African Stone Age studies, discusses hominid decision-making and Acheulian variability. Rogers and Kyara carry such ideas into two landscape-focused studies of lithic utilization. ESA occurrences in Ethiopia (Beyene et al.), Zimbabwe (Klimowicz and Haynes), Mozambique (Meneses), and Sterkfontein, South Africa (Kuman) are reported.

Middle Stone Age: eight papers, including Deacon and Wurz on the Howieson's Poort industry at Klasies River Main site, which shows blade-based tool production at 70,000 years BP. Reports on Egypt (van Peer et al.), the Horn (Gresham and Brandt), Congo (Lanfranchi), Tanzania (Willoughby), Zambia (Barham), Zimbabwe (Larsson), and Namibia (Vogelsang) fill in knowledge of MSA variability.

Late Stone Age: 14 articles, including provocative findings in the Acacus, Libya (DiLernia and Cremaschi). Four papers are on Kenya and Tanzania; lithic analyses by Barut and Odeny-Odul assess resource use patterns. The Pleistocene-Holocene transition at Shum Laka, Cameroon is described in four papers by Belgian researchers. Smith argues for pre-colonial ethnic differentiation of herders and hunter-gatherers in the Cape region, while Sampson, Klatzow, Opperman, and Mazel describe a complex mosaic of herding and foraging peoples in other southern African areas.

Rock Art Studies: three pieces, including a comparison of west Norwegian and southern African art by Waldenhaug and new descriptions of art from Gabon (Oslisly) and Angola (Gutierrez).

Early Food Production: ten papers, including Amblard's critique of long-held views on Dar Tichit, Neumann et al.'s report on botanical evidence from Burkina Faso and northeast Nigeria. These and other papers hint that trajectories toward food production in Africa may differ significantly from those documented elsewhere.

Early Iron Working Communities: five articles, on the Mandara Mountains of Cameroon-Nigeria (MacEachern), the Interlacustrine region (MacLean), Central African Republic (Yandia), and Upper Tana River, Kenya (Kiriama et al.). Plug notes rare occurrence of chickens in the southern African Early Iron Age which, like house rats, may have entered via the Indian Ocean trade.

Late Iron-Working Communities: six pieces, filling in knowledge of technology and exchange from Lake Albert (Connah) to Pate (Wilson and Lali Omar) and Mozambique Islands (Duarte and Meneses) to Botswana (Pearson). Garenne-Marot's analysis of metallurgy in the "medieval" Senegal employs the notion of technological style in a manner worthy of emulation.

Development of Complexity: eight papers, ranging from Chad and Nigeria to Aksum to Ntusi, Uganda to Zimbabwe. Notable are assertions by David that a high level of industrial production of iron could exist without classes and political centralization and by Herbert of the intimate link between technological practices in African metallurgy and elite power.

Historical Archaeology: nine articles, including several on trans-Saharan links (Insoll, Mayor), on West African coastal trade with Europeans (deCorse, Kelly), the Swahili coast (Kusimba), the Nyanga complex of Zimbabwe (Beach), and Boer South Africa (von Vollenhoven). Several papers demonstrate the value of archaeology for placing Africans within the web of historic world system interactions. Schmidt asserts that understanding African "rhythmed time" aids in reading cyclical patterns of cultural deposition at ritual centers. Schoenbrun seeks to trace development of ideologies of social power through linguistic analysis of key terms in Great Lakes Bantu languages.

Ethnoarchaeology: seven pieces, including Lane's thoughtful analysis of applications and limitations of ethnoarchaeology in Africa, and Robertshaw and Kamuhangire's discussion of the intersection of traditional values, archaeological conservation, and the workings of the state. Barndon and Ndoro deal with symbolism in practical action, relative to iron and ceramic production and use. Papers by Ryan et al., Brandt, and Saetersdal deal with specific ethnoarchaeological cases.

Cultural Resource Management: twelve papers. In contrast to other volume sections, papers are with one exception by residents of African nations, who daily face the challenges of conserving sites and materials with few resources and often limited legal mandates. Countries represented are Botswana (van Waarden), Kenya (Kibunja, Wandibba), Mozambique (Macamo), Nigeria (Folorunso, Agbaje-Williams), South Africa (Deacon, Miller, van Schalkwyk), and Zimbabwe (Matenga, Pwiti and Mvenge). Van Schalkwyk's discussion of CRM in the "new South Africa" points to the difficult trade-offs in the highly developed economy to which many other African nations aspire, ironically noting "the past is not dead, we are still busy killing it." McIntosh highlights the global crisis in plunder of sites for the art trade, and reproduces the PanAfrican Association's resolution to press for enforcement of international law pertaining to stolen antiquities.

Articles in *Aspects of African Archaeology* are generally of high quality and well-referenced, reflecting sound editorial work by session heads as well as the editors-in-chief. All involved are to be congratulated on the swift appearance of the volume. A few minor flaws may be noted: typos or grammatical problems mar some articles, and the list of contributors is

incomplete. It is, however, well worth obtaining for an overview of Africanist archaeology today. It is useful to archaeologists of any phase of the African archaeological record, paleoanthropologists, and African historians, as well as those interested in global issues in cultural resource management.

In sum, *Aspects of African Archaeology* testifies to the current diversity and vigor of Africanist archaeology. Despite under-funding and many tumultuous events, senior archaeologists have carried on investigating the continent's human past, and younger scholars have committed themselves to continuing this work, often with world-class sophistication. That so much has been accomplished in the face of these challenges bodes well for future archaeological research.

In closing, I relay the editors' note that, despite the African venue, most Congress attendees were based overseas, reflecting their easier access to travel funds. Contact with colleagues is a widely recognized, acute need of Africa-based archaeologists and historians. A concerted fundraising effort for a travel funds endowment should be a top priority for Africanists living elsewhere.

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African Islam and Islam in Africa: Encounters between Sufis and Islamists, Eva Evers Rosander and David Westerlund, eds. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press. 1997. 347pp \$39.95 cloth, \$19.95 paper.

African Islam and Islam in Africa is another in a growing number of edited volumes devoted to the dynamics of contemporary Muslim communities in Africa. Its sub-title, "Encounters between Sufis and Islamists," refers to the volume's focus on points of conflict involving Muslims who emphasize different aspects of Islamic religiosity and often seem to be irreconcilably opposed on crucial matters of the faith. The authors understand "African Islam" to refer to Muslim beliefs and practices that Africans have contextualized over the years, often under the guidance of Sufis, and "Islam in Africa" to refer to the ideology of religious reform, usually articulated in the Islamist call for greater implementation of the sharia.

The contributors approach these encounters from a variety of disciplinary perspectives, including anthropology, religious studies, international relations, law, and history. Most of the examples are drawn from Muslim communities in the northern third of Africa, including Egypt, the Maghrib, and the "sudanic" belt to the south (stretching from Senegal to the Sudan). Some of the essays are case studies rooted in field research or textual analysis, and others are syntheses devoted to thematic or regional developments.

Several case studies examine the lives of prominent African Muslims. Rose Lake, in her fascinating study of an important Senegalese Mouride leader, Serigne Abdoulaye Yakhine Diop, focuses on a lengthy interview with an elderly disciple. This informant's intimate portrait of

Diop highlights the ambiguities of Mouride memories, and adds an additional layer of complexity to the Senegalese past. Abubakar Gumi, the influential Islamist figure associated with the Yan Izala movement in northern Nigeria, is the focus of Roman Loimeier's contribution. In addition to biographical details, Loimeier offers insightful comments that help illuminate the complex politics associated with the Yan Izala's different approaches to Tijaniyya and Qadiriyya Sufi movements in Nigeria. Lisbet Holtedahl and Mahmoudou Djingui use the biography of al-hajji Ibrahim Goni of northern Cameroon to reveal how Fulbe families associated with the military movements of the nineteenth century still utilize Islamic credentials to bolster their social status.

The translation of the Qur'an and Muslim ritual life are the topics of two additional case studies. Justo Lacunza-Balda offers a richly documented analysis of three ki-Swahili translations of Islam's scripture that situates them into the vibrant politics of translation in Tanzania. Sossie Andezian begins her contribution with a wonderfully thick description of an Algerian women's pilgrimage ritual and then raises a cluster of issues associated with gender relations and the representation of authority. Her essay, a translation of an article she previously published in French, is a provocative engagement of the anthropological literature on ritual that complements some of the themes raised in *Modernity and its Malcontents*, the volume recently edited by Jean and John Comaroff.

Other contributions are thematic essays or explorations of intra-Muslim relations in particular countries. John Hunwick situates the "sudanic" belt into the context of the wider Muslim world of the twentieth century, focusing on a broad range of individual and institutional contacts. He suggests, with the historian's sense of the past as prelude, that the trend toward the globalization of Islamic contacts and knowledge will not lead to a homogenization of Muslim beliefs and practices in the region. Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im also focuses on the societies on the vast southern edge of the Sahara in an essay concerned with human rights. An-Na'im reminds us that the sheer diversity of the Muslim cultural systems in the region create a complex context in which the struggle for human rights occurs locally. Muhammad Mahmoud, Tomas Gerholm, and George Joffe provide overviews of the activities of Muslim groups in the Sudan, Egypt, and the Maghrib, respectively. The most instructive comment appears in Gerholm's essay, in which he reminds us that the majority of Muslims, "the mainstreamers" as he calls them, are not directly engaged by the arguments of any of the diverse Muslim movements currently competing for their loyalties in contemporary Egypt.

The volume includes a thematic introductory essay by Eva Evers Rosander and a concluding analysis focused on the rise of Islamism by David Westerlund. Both stress the activism and creativity of the Islamists, noting that "reformers" are constructing new types of Muslim society in their invocation of divine mandates from the Qur'an and sunna. Westerlund probes the possible causes for the emergence of Islamism, and quite convincingly moves beyond presumptions of economic and political discontent to underline the efforts taken by Islamists to attract followers to their cause. Rosander focuses on contemporary Muslim discourse and the construction of authority in which groups strive to root themselves in a "legitimate" Muslim "center" and castigate their opponents as occupying a "morally inferior" "margin." Her essay powerfully underlines the implications of Islamism for Africa. Even if, as Gerholm notes for Egypt, most African Muslims are mainstreamers, encounters between

Islamists and other Muslim leaders are producing new configurations that will shape relations of domination/subordination in specific contexts.

This volume enhances our understanding of intra-Muslim relations in contemporary Africa. Occasionally, the focus on two currents, Sufism and Islamism, belies the evidence presented in the essays that Sufism is not the only alternative to Islamism in contemporary discourse. While Rosander and Westerlund, following the lead of Andezian, acknowledge that gender relations are significant, this theme is not as fully elaborated as it deserves. Finally, except for the analysis of the Qur'an translation by Lacunza-Balda and occasional references in other essays, the writings of the Muslim protagonists are not engaged. Nevertheless, this volume deserves a wide readership. Specialists will find worthwhile contributions in their particular fields and generalists may read this volume with confidence that the authors are discussing important issues pertaining to the emergence of Islamism in Africa.

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The African Novel in English: An Introduction, M. Keith Booker. Portsmouth: Heinemann. 1998 227 pp. \$24.00 paper.

Francophone African Women Writers: Destroying the Emptiness of Silence, Irene Assiba D'Almeida. Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1994. 222pp. 34.95 cloth.

After giving an introduction on how to read the African Novel, Keith Booker gives a brief historical survey of the ways in which postcolonial theorists have engaged with African literature. Booker has chapters on important African texts and their authors and the countries they come from with a brief overview of that country's history. Chinua Achebe, Buchi Emecheta, Ayi Kwei Armah, Ama Ata Aidoo, Nadine Gordimer, Alex La Guma, Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Tsitsi Dangeremba are some of the writers whose texts and historical location are included in this book.

Even in its title, Booker's text makes no tall claims about bringing additional information to our scholarly understanding of African literature. His introduction will provide an intelligent undergraduate with a historical and political background of the African novels they are reading in class without having to do additional research elsewhere. Perhaps as a teaching tool this oversimplification is a bit too convenient, for this encourages students not to go to the library since it provides sketchy but nonetheless excellent socio-historical information. Booker quite rightly cautions that teaching African literature "requires constant vigilance and, in many cases, radical reformulation of lifelong habits of reading." The problem, in my opinion, is that he encourages such reading habits by giving a rather skimpy and predictable analysis of the various texts he chooses. I do want to reiterate however, that as a point of inception, this book will become a very useful tool for teachers of African literature in this country simply because

Booker makes it unnecessary to consult other information and does chart the sequence of criticisms offered by other critics.

Booker's style is direct and simple, and therefore quite appealing to teachers engaged in representing African literature to an audience of students. His selection seems curious, for even as he includes some of the people taught most as African literati in the American academy, the exclusions are rather glaring. Wole Soyinka is prominent among the exclusions. It is true, however, that he does give information about Nigeria and Achebe, but it seems that he favors one inclusion and not the other though he never states why. The Maghreb, though as much a part of Africa as Southern Africa, is also left out.

I particularly like Booker's inclusion of Tsitsi Dangeremba's text *Nervous Conditions*, for she is one of the new women's voices from Africa, but again, the exclusion of Bessie Head is notable. In addition, he does not question the political significance of how the West has valorized Nadine Gordimer in the classroom and the academy in general, a study much needed, but assumes that indeed one must perpetuate a rather problematic area of South African literary discourse. Again, as in other areas, he does not offer any new thought or analysis of Gordimer, simply paraphrasing Burger's *Daughter* without saying why that is necessary. This kind of critical text does not illuminate further any area of African discourse but rather charts it. However, we cannot fault Booker because what he does is useful. Indeed, the first two chapters seem to suggest a critic who is not only very thoughtful about texts but who has spent considerable time learning and no doubt teaching the authors and texts mentioned here. It is clear that Booker's knowledge about colonial and post-colonial discourse in Africa is considerable. My question then is why does he not include his students at the same level of sophistication in the following chapters that we know he has from the first two?

Irene D'Almeida, on the other hand, divides her book differently, not with authors but rather with ideas. The three chapters on women's discovery of the self through autobiographical writing, through a disclosure of family life, and through criticizing society's intervention in women's lives, are important points of beginning an in-depth analysis of Francophone African Writers. The introduction engages her own analysis with the writing of other feminist critics of African literature and provides an excellent survey of the problematic issues that this criticism raises.

D'Almeida's book is startling in its honesty and scope. She brings to the reader's attention a very specific way of reading Francophone African women writers. Her focus on what she calls "destroying the emptiness of silence" is especially interesting since Minh-ha critiqued Western feminists for assuming that the "silence" of third world women was indeed empty and could be filled by Western feminist discourse. I was particularly pleased to read D'Almeida's book, for it afforded the opportunity to look at it very closely. She brings to this book a thorough knowledge of Francophone African women's texts and a considerable sympathy for the plight of women as illuminated by such writers as Nafissatou Diallo, Ken Bugul, Andree Blouin, Claixthe Beyala, Angele Rawiri, Werewere Liking, Aminata Sow Fall, and Veronique Tadjo. This book will bring to the Anglophone world information which was previously elusive.

D'Almeida's book brings Francophone women into the discourse of third world feminism as instigators and subjects. Silence and the silencing of women, and indeed the breaking free from that imposed silence, the main concern of her book, is very thoughtfully elaborated within

the contexts of the chosen texts. She obviously has a thorough knowledge of Francophone women writers and explains her selection of authors and texts meticulously. D'Almeida's book is very enjoyable. She is direct and clear and never leaves her reader in a quandary if they have not read all the Francophone Women's texts that are the concern of her book.

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