AFRICA 21

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCATION:

SOCIAL SCIENCES: A STATE OF THE ARTS

A GENERAL OVERVIEW:

Social sciences have entered a new era. After a long period of relative neglect, they have gained recognition. Their clientele has enlarged; the demands made on them are varied and many, and the size of the social sciences community has grown to impressive proportions. Social sciences have become important. People have begun investing faith in them. They are called up to "deliver the goods.

Such a situation offers both a challenge and an opportunity. It offers challenge in the sense that social sciences have to demonstrate their utility in solving day-to-day problems of society- through diagnoses of the "cases"; and through participation in the preparation of strategies for the future. There is an opportunity in the sense that the new situations has highlighted a host of problems and themes on which no attention was hitherto paid by the social scientists; investigation of these would, it is hoped, enriched the stock of social science knowledge – contributing both to theory and to reach methodology.

Several factors have contributed to the emergence of such a situation. The natural and technological sciences, which received a favorable treatment from all quarters, did make commendable contribution to the growth of civilization. They facilitated the emergence of machine culture and created considerable hardware for mass production, rapid transportation,

and speedy communication. These, in turn, gave rise to the problems connected with software, and with human behavior. To tackle them, social science know-how was needed. Social sciences came out of their ivory towers; social scientists left their armchairs. Social theories faced the crisis of their empirical validation; methodology of research underwent critical re-examination and renovation; and the goals of social science teaching and research experienced a redefinition.

Facilitated by the newer modes of rapid transportation, social scientists undertook long voyages to visit cultures and societies that were vastly different from what is generally described as Western Civilization. These cultures of the 'primitive' and 'traditional' societies became subject matter of social scientific research particularly of the anthropological variety. They, thus, entered the social science literature through the pen of 'outside' observers. Theoretical interest at this initial stage was largely motivated by political concerns of the government at home. Couched in evolutionary terms, the theories of society propounded by western scholarship in the 19th and the early 20th centuries constructed a pyramid to place their own society at the apex and locate other societies at lower stage of civilizations. Some sort of staircase theory of social change was advocated by them; later they revised it only to replace the staircase by the escalator.

 Apart from the extension in space social sciences also developed interfaces with other disciples. Over the years disciplinary boundaries of individual social science specialties have become less rigid, and semi-insular.

Over the last two decades, three important trends have become noticeable one, students specializing in any one social science are required to offer a course or two in a sister social science discipline; two, researchers have started exploring the subject areas which were earlier considered to be the

province of some other discipline; and three, even in professional institutions – like medical schools, engineering and technological institutes, and agricultural college- social science curricula are being introduced. These trends have created several apertures in the boundary walls of individual disciplines. The student has begun receiving an inter or multi-disciplinary orientation; the researches have paved way for the growth of many new branches as a result of happy marriages between academic specialties and new challenges have been thrown up for making social sciences vocationally relevant for professional people.

The newly freed nations of the third world are seeking the assistance of the social scientists – both native and foreigners- in accelerating the pace of the twin processes of "decolonization" and of development. In the newer context, earlier theories, originating mainly in the west, have failed to provide a meaningful framework or even insights relevant to understand the contemporary society and its complex problems. Developing societies are no longer "ethnological zoos" to oblige the curiosity of a western anthropologist. They are neither static, nor they following the path unilinear evolution precharted by earlier theories. They are nations-in-hurry. They are deciding their own destiny; they are making all the critical choices and are in a position take strides in a smaller compass of time; they have a desire to sit in line with the countries of the developed world without sacrificing their identity. In all of them, several programmes of directed and planned social-cultural and economic change have been initiated.

The countries of the developed world particularly their governments not merely watched with keen interest the developmental process but offered aid and assistance to under-developed countries, to accelerate the pace of change. Foreign aid in the form money, technology and personnel started pouring in. This was the new entry point for the social sciences. Social

scientists from the developed countries came in two roles, as government nominees, in advisory and consultative positions; and as researchers interested in the investigation of the new phenomenon of directed social and cultural change.

Indigenous scholarship has also begun to grow; trained in foreign universities; 'native' scholars have started returning. They now occupy position of influence in the government and in the universities.

The return of the natives, and the arrival of foreign social scientists not only anthropologists but also economists, sociologists, political scientists, and psychologists – have created a climate in African countries that is propitious for social sciences. While the indigenous social scientists have started to provide an effective pressure group for the promotion of social sciences, foreign social sciences have demonstrated the utility of social science research in a developmental context.

In the universities of the African region, there is now a sizable social science population. The tradition of social teaching and research is growing. Social sciences have, in a way, become geographically widespread and intellectually respectable.

While the social science movement is building up- having now a growing constituency in Africa, very little is known about the social science situation in African countries. (1) Social scientists in these countries are much more aware about their counterparts in the United Kingdom, France or the United States of America, than about their immediate neighbors. Because of the text books originating in the West, the new generation of social scientists in Africa shows great familiarity with the American, British, or French social relatives, and modes of analysis, than with the societies and cultures of African countries. This ignorance is indeed appalling and deserves to be remedied.

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(1) CODESRIA's recent efforts, a beginning

It is no exaggeration that social sciences in Africa had, and even now continue to have, a westward orientation. Very little communication exists between social scientists of different counties forming part of Africa. Most social scientists go abroad for studies, and conduct research on their own society. Because of the infancy of social sciences in African countries, their academic degrees do not carry the prestige, and halo of a western degree. Language has served as a key barrier to the flow of social scientists from one African country to another, both for research and for teaching.

However, it is relatively recent that social sciences gained entry into the African university system. Even now, there are universities where one or the other social science is not taught and among these are some of the old established universities. There is still presentence in some quarters, of the philosophy of "knowledge for the sake of knowledge" – a tradition handed down from the age of the British, and fostered by the western system of education moulded after the British pattern that emphasized normative, abstract, and abstruse learning. The objective of producing 'Babus' did not require inculcation of the spirit of enquiry, students learnt the Humanities and the Arts to attain a certain kind of sophistication and acquire an arrogant academic aplomb. All learning, be it 'Arts', or 'Science', or 'Commerce' was informed by such a philosophy, nurtured by the colonialists.

The tradition of science laying stress on enquiry, questioning, and research entered the scene belatedly. While it has been internalized by the students of the natural phenomena, its raison d'être is still questioned by those who wish to address themselves to the social phenomena. Debate still continues whether there can be a social science.

The resistance is, however, breaking down. Scholars, who have been abroad, have seen social science flourishing, and some of them returned convinced of their utility and desirability; in fact some received formal

training in the social science disciplines and came home as zealous converts. In the process, some Indoligists and historians became anthropologists and sociologists and some philosophers turned psychologists. Their conversion was an important step towards the recognition of these disciplines and towards the creation of independent departments.

In the initial phase, most of the disciplines tended to be normative and philosophical. Later, empiricism gained ground. However, philosophical normative character is still retained in a large number of departments, particularly of political science. Even in political science a significant minority has launched a tirade against 'ancestor worship' – they also no longer devote their career to Greek political thought or to the study of constitutions of various governments; empiricism and behaviouralism have gained entry in their research protocol.

The reasons for the growing recognition for the role of the social sciences in developments are:

(1) Along with the natural sciences, if not to the same extent, the social sciences can be used to create a scientific outlook. Teachings and research in sociology, social psychology, economics and other social sciences, using precise methods such as statistics and other instruments of measurements can develop in students as well as in teachers, a spirit of accuracy, critical analysis, investigation and experimentation which any good educational process has the duty to encourage and promote.

(2) The social sciences are essential tools for the study of the conditions and needs of modern society, and without a proper use of their methods and results, controls of economic, social, financial and demographic developments or manpower requirements is impossible. Proper planning, which is important for all countries of Africa,

needs a larger number of persons with extensive knowledge and training in the social sciences.

(3) Modern societies need, as they become more industrialized, not only engineers, technicians and skilled workers, but also a large number of well educated and trained people for what is usually called 'the third sector of the economy': education, public administration, private management, commerce, distribution, communication, information service, etc. Specialists in these fields need good education in the social sciences.

THE SOCIAL SCIENCES: THE AFRICAN SCENE

"Africa, more than the other Third World regions, is thus faced with a development crisis of great portent. In spite of the region's ample natural resources, of a favorable population to natural resources ration, in spite of the generous and even indiscriminating incentives foreign private enterprise, in spite of our participation in numerous conferences, both regional and inter-regional, and in spite of our adherence to orthodox theories and prescriptions – in spite of all these, neither high rates of growth nor of diversification nor an increasing measure of self-reliance and dynamism seems to be within our reach" (my emphasis)

PART I – The Historical perspective

The establishment of colonialism in the continent of Africa and the consequent deepening of capitalist structures of exploitation throughout the continent set a chain of reaction throughout the continent. The first major response of African societies was military resistance to colonial

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*Dr. Adebayo ADEDEJI, Executive Secretary of DOA. "Africa Development Crisis" in Africa Guide, 1978, p.25 Publishers: David C. Jamieson. Anthony Axon.

occupation of their countries. This resistance started at the end of the last century but when eventually defeated militarily because of the poor military technology existing in Africa at the time. After the conquest came a period of "stability" which continued until the end of the second World War. After the Second World War a second stage of resistance began and this developed into the nationalist movements which emerged throughout the continent in different forms and with different strength. This second stage of resistance (through the nationalist movement) eventually led to the granting of political independence to the African countries by the colonial powers.

During the colonial period, the colonial powers were faced with two fundamental problems. First, in order to establish capitalist economic structures in rural and urban areas, it was necessary for the colonial powers to have what can only be called political "stability". Secondly, because of the various forms of resistance that took place during the establishment of colonialism and because of the destructive nature of capitalist economic structures in relation to pre-capitalist modes of production, there was a serious need for the colonial system to effectively control labor so that it can be utilized for the new forms of economic structures which were being introduced. The control of labor was very critical for the emerging colonial economies both in rural and urban areas. Thus in order to fulfill these two requirements of the colonial situations, it was necessary for the colonial powers to have a deeper understanding of the African communities in terms of their social, economic and political structures. Hence from the very early period of colonial and capitalist penetration in African there was concomitantly a serious attempt to study African societies in all their aspects. The evolution of the so called African studies therefore is intimately linked with the colonial powers and the objective needs of the colonial system. Hence the ascendancy in Britain, France, and Belgium of Anthropology as the major discipline in the study of African societies. Later, after World War II and particularly after independence, Sociology, Economics and political science assumed

a dominant role in research on African societies.

A review of the studies and literature produced by specialists from the metropolitan countries on African societies during the colonial period, clearly reflects the objective need for scientific information on African societies by both the colonial states and the colonial capitalists (owners and managers of mines, plantations and commercial enterprises). These studies concentrated mainly, on the following problematic of the colonial context. (a) the migration process, (b) the land tenure and farming systems, (c) the kinship and political structures and (d) the process of urbanization and the rural urban linkages.

It is very clear that it is in these areas that both the colonial states and the colonial capitalist were facing problems. It was necessary for the colonial economy to understand the migration process in order to utilize labor more effectively in order to avoid disruption of its enterprises (plantation and mining industries and commerce). Similarly it was necessary for the colonial economy to understand the subsistent pre-capitalist farming system and the nature of land tenure in order once again to be able to introduce new forms of agriculture, which would complement the plantation system, and the mining industries, which were growing in different parts of Africa. Similarly as commerce and small industries began to emerge in the urban centers the process of labor migration, the rural farming systems and the very nature of urban structures and rural urban linkages became important for both the colonial state and the industrialist and commercial classes in the urban areas. It was necessary for these classes to understand the nature of the labor that has come to town, the kind of stability or lack of stability that existed with this labor force and so on. Thus clearly and from the earliest period, the colonial economy had a specific need to understand the way in which African societies were reacting to the penetration of the capitalist mode of production.

The colonial state itself also held very important information concerning the political structure of African communities in order to effectively maintain administrative and political control over African societies. This was irrespective of the different forms and methods of control used by the different colonial powers in different parts of Africa. Hence the very large body of literature which undertook the study of the kinship system and the political structure of African societies in different parts of Africa.

Behind the many specialists who came to Africa to study African societies there were formidable institutional and financial structures, which booked these researchers. All the centers and institutions that specialized in researches on African societies were totally financed by the metropolitan countries.

To start with, in every metropolitan country there were specific universities and research institute which specialized in the study of colonial peoples. This is of course the case for Britain, France, and Belgium, Spain, and Portugal. These metropolitan research institutes and universities had specialists who performed two functions. One was to undertake research in Africa and secondly to train administration who were going to serve in the colonial administration. As colonialism deepened and as the need for more information increased, the colonial power extended the institutional structures further and created research centers in Africa itself. These research centers were again financed by the metropolitan colonial powers as well certain colonial capitalists such as owners of mines and plantations. These research centers were exclusively manned by specialists from the colonial powers. They had very strong linkage with the colonial state, the colonial industrialist and farmers and also strong linkages with the metropolitan universities and research institutes which specialized on Africa. Thus the research centers in Africa were advanced outpost of metropolitan universities and research institutes, for collecting information, analyzing it and feeding it back. Such well known research center as the East Africa Institute of Social Research.

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The evolution of the study of African societies during the colonial period, passed through various stages which we need not describe in detail here.
As the need for African manpower to aid in the administration of the colonial state and colonial economy increased, it became necessary to create institutions of higher education for the training of higher level manpower. This became important especially after the Second World War when the colonial powers began to realize that under the reassure of the nationalist struggle they will eventually have to concede political control to the African people. Hence began the evolution in many African countries of such institutions which passed through various stages and which eventually ended up as universities not only trained high level manpower but also began to undertake research which was previously done by the colonial research centers. Indeed most of these centers of research created during the colonial period were eventually absorbed and became part of the new African universities. It is important therefore to make tow point here. Firstly the absorption of these research centers by the colonial powers into the universities of the

independent African states. Secondly the new universities themselves and the research institutions or centers which absorbed and continued to be under the control and domination of specialists from metropolitan countries. Thus as an important corollary to this development all the literature on African societies and the theoretical framework and techniques of analyses produced and developed by the colonial specialists (both in metropolitan countries and in the centers in the colonies) were taken over by the new universities and accepted as "scientific" literature without questioning the colonial context and therefore the validity of the literature. Hence this carry over of the stock of knowledge from the colonial period through into the new national institutions of the emerging independent African countries was extremely important and thus provided what we can only call the "intellectual and scientific" continuity from the colonial period to the post colonial period. Thus the new universities and the research institutes which were created later in most African countries did not start from a clean slate, but rather with an inherited stock of knowledge and personnel in all fields – social science, humanities, education, and of course later on in the natural sciences, technology, agriculture and medicine. To us the important of this continuity is that it in both teachings and research. There were of course other mechanisms which have also significantly contributed to this situation. Some of these are discussed below.

PART II – STRUCTURAL AND INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL SCIENCE IN AFRICA

As is clear from the above, social science in post independence Africa has not developed or existed in a vacuum. In this second part let us look at a number of important issues related to the "development" of social science in Africa. First of all let us look at the expansion of institutions in which social science research is based in a post independence period. Secondly,

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at the general orientation of African research institutes, and thirdly at the whole question of funding of research in Africa.

It is clear that post independence social science research and teaching in Africa has existed within both specific institutional and structural contexts as well as within an ideological framework of the capitalist mode of production from which conventional social science itself originating.

The institutional and structural context:

Just before and immediately after independence there Has, in many African countries an expansion of universities and colleges of various types as Egypt, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and one or two other countries.

Firstly let us look at the nature and the reasons for the creation of these universities which provided the major forum for research and teaching of social science. Host universities and colleges of various types were created for the primary purpose of training high level manpower- for the institutions of the states themselves and for the commercial and industrial sectors of the national economies. As to what kind of social science research and teaching was done at these universities, the importance of continuity from the colonial period, and the strategic role played by metropolitan universities through the vertical links between them and African universities - These issues have been excellently dealt with by a number of sub-regional case studies, prepared by CODESRIA e .* I would however like to emphasize a few points which clearly come out in these case studies and also from the surveys and experience of CODESRIA. These points relate to the major characteristics concerning the

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- • 1. Towards a social science policy in English speaking West Africa; by Clause Ake.
  2. Social Science Policies in Africa: The Case of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland: By Frank BAFFOE
  3. The Teaching of Social Sciences in East Africa: by Peter Anyang NYOONG'O
  4. Les Science sociales en Afrique del l'Ouest Franchophone: by Kohtar DICUF.

expansion of institution and structures of universities and research institutes during the early post independence period.

(a) Universities were set up before independence in a number of strategic countries which had important colonial research centres - such as Uganda, Zambia, Zaire, Nigeria and Senegal, etc. In these strategic countries the universities absorbed, at the time of independence, the old colonial research cetres which became the most important units within the post independence universities and which played a significant role in legitimizing the "scientific" nature of the literature on African societies produced during the colonial period and buttressed by metropolitan conventional social sciences. Furthermore the former colonial research centres which had a rich body of literature from. The colonial period became important in terms of providing leadership in research within the countries concerned.

(b) Given the pressure by the states on universities to produce as many graduates as quickly as possible, it was therefore to be expected that the universities (which were at this time dominated by expatriate staff) used almost exclusively the existing conventional social science for teaching and research. The early post independence period thus saw the reproduction and strengthening of the major social science disciplines of economics, sociology, political science, public administration, business management, etc. This situation was not conducive to innovation and progressive changes in the social sciences. Indeed it definitely blocked any possible changes. Reproduction and imitation of conventional social science reigned supreme during this period.

(c) Again in the early period of independence in most African countries almost all universities recruited the majority of their teaching staff and researchers from the former metropolitan countries. It is not necessary here to describe the structure of recruitment between the

African universities and the metropolitan countries, There are well known and as institutions they still continue to recruit professors and lecturers in Britain, France, Belgium and Portugal for universities in the African countries.

In many countries, research institutes per se were created some years later after the universities. These research institutes went through two important phases of development. In the first phase, they were almost totally dominated by expatriates from metropolitan countries and North America.

Additionally most of the important researches undertaken in these research institutes during this early period were financed from external sources. Hence the research institutes of most African countries during this early period tended to reinforce the inherited social science which prevailed at the level of university teaching. The second phase of these research institutes was what we can only call the phase of localization of personnel in these research institutes. In the majority of cases the research institutes went through a certain period of conflict between local and indigenous researchers on the one hand and the expatriate specialists from North America and metropolitan countries on the other. This conflict centered on the question of(a) the control of research institutes themselves and therefore their ultimate direction in terms of research, and (b) in terms of research priorities. The eventual outcome of this conflict has been the triumph of localization, which is of course a reflection of policies of localization in general during the post independence period. Whether the first period in which 'the research institutes were dominated by expatriates from outside differ fundamentally in terms of the nature of its research from the later period of local control of research institutes is a question for debate.

- North American social scientists began to play an important role in social science research in Africa after independence.

Again we would1ike to point out that some of the important issues related to the nature, orientation and direction of research at both university level and the research institutes in African countries, are discussed below when we discuss the question of funding of research in African countries, both external and internal.

We would like now to turn briefly to the question of the relationship between the research institutes, universities and governments. In most African countries (~in with the exception of a few countries) there is only one university and one major research institute. Both universities and research institutes are seen as very important institutions related to the state itself. Hence the relationship between universities and research institutes on the one hand and the state on the other is very strong and complex in most African countries. For example, the appointment of Vice-Chancellor, the appointment of Directors of Research institutes, the appointments of senior professors and lecturers at the universities, are often taken as important issues in which the state itself has certain interest, Indeed it is the state which finances almost totally the universities and research institutes, thus Giving the states important leverage in controlling the orientation of the universities. Similarly the majority of students get their scholarships from the governments. These are some examples of the strong links between the universities and research institutes on the one hand and the state on the other. There are of course important implications concerning the development of research and the teaching of social science in African universities and research institutes precisely because of this strong relationship. In many cases universities are seen by the state as simply training institutions. Similarly research institutes as such are also viewed as institutions which should under-take research which will be useful to the state itself. To what extent therefore this strong relationship allows flexibility for the development of social science from the perspective of the nation itself,

is an issue which needs to be discussed in more detail. Some of these issues are discussed below, when we come to the' quest ion of funding both external and internal.

GENERAL ORIENTATION OF RESEARCH INSTITUTES IN AFRICA

By the late 60's and early 70's, localization of personnel in research institutes was more or less completed. By this period most African governments were implementing "development Plans" as important instruments of social development. At the same time most governments were encountering many serious problems in rural areas, urban centres, in the private and nationalized industrial sectors, foreign exchange problems, difficulties in public administration, inflation, unemployment, etc. Hence research into these different areas and fragmented problems became important and was given priority. Though most governments created their own departmental research units in the various ministries, nevertheless many African governments began to put pressure on research institutes to undertake research on these various problems. Furthermore because many research institutes had become localized in terms of personnel, many governments felt more confident in having their own nationals undertake research for the government. But this situation in which government puts pressure on research institutes to undertake research on problems identified by the government could hardly be considered conducive to bringing about changes in the very nature and thinking of social science itself. Like the early period when the Universities were under pressure to produce graduates, local researchers in research institutes also came under pressure from government to undertake many research projects and to produce results and reports as quickly as possible for government consumption. These researchers also has no alternative but to fall back to the conventional models and tools of research which they have learned from Europe and North America and which exists and dominates the African universities. As pointed out above concerning the universities, the research institutes had a little room for

Innovative research and the development of a more relevant and progressive social science.

The success of localization policies in research institutes led to a certain reduction in the level and intensity of the traditional vertical linkages with metropolitan countries. At the same time African research institutes began to diversity their linkages by establishing relations with Scandinavians, Germans, Americans, Canadian institutes and scholars. The diversification of links by African research institutes (and universities) reflects two important aspects of the African situation. Firstly the non-colonial Western European and North America began to extend their interest and active involvement in Africa. We will not discuss this particular issue here. Secondly African research institutes, i.e. horizontal linkages within the continent. We will briefly discuss this second aspect.

There were and still are important objective difficulties in the creation of horizontal linkages within Africa. To start with, during the 60s and even during the early 70s, there were no regional organizations such as CODERSIA whose main objective is the creation of horizontal linkages among African research institutes. Secondly there are major problems of communication in terms of language, different social science tradition inherited from the various colonial powers, physical difficulties of movement by individuals within the continent and the absence of common literature, archives and exchange of information. Thirdly there have always been political reasons for lack of horizontal linkages. For example the first and most promising experiment in this field was the creation of the East African University, composed of Kakerere, Nairobi and Dar-es-Salam university colleges. For a period of a few years this particular sub-region went through an important experimental phase in which linkages between the social science community of the three parts of the East African university were strong and well established. The university provided incentive to the social science community in East Africa for the

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development of ideas, exchange of information and experience and thus leading to innovation in social science research and teaching. However when the East African community broke down for political reasons the university of East African also broke down into three different and independent universities (Makerere, Nairobi and Dar-es-Salaam universities). Thus the earlier co-operation, in research and all the advantages which ensured from that co-operation, began to disappear, leading to the present situation in which the three universities are isolated from each other. The break down of the East African university was not because of lack of cooperation and initiative by the social science community, but because of political factors which intervened in the situation.

Additionally by the middle 70s many governments were going through serious economic, financial and political problems. Many states felt the need to control what they considered their most important institutions of high education groups and "foreign" ideologies. There were therefore many states which had policies of either directly or indirectly controlling the output of research and content of teaching at the universities and research institutes. The small social science community of many African countries often felt threatened by the power of the state and therefore tended (with a few noble exceptions) to conform rather than react against the power of the state. Movements to other countries were often controlled partly for political reasons ,and partly for economic and financial reasons. Thus as the economic and political situation in various African countries deteriorated conformity became the order of the day and creating links with other African scholars became more and more difficult. This was and is at a time when horizontal linkages are, objectively, most needed. Indeed the difficult problems of travelling between African countries, foreign exchange problems, the difficulty of obtaining visas, etc. made this cooperation and creating of links between institutes and researchers in the continent more and more

difficult. In contract to this was the ease in which African researchers could travel to Europe and to North America without facing the kind of difficulties that they normally meet in travelling within Africa. All these seemingly small matters assume certain importance in their totality.

Why should the creation of horizontal 1inkages amongst African research institutes and universities as an alternative to the vertical linkages with institutions in Europe and North America, be more productive in terms of the development of social science in Africa? The simple answer is that the institutes the more dominant will conventional social continue to be in Africa. On the other hand the creation of horizontal linkages between researchers and research institutes within Africa need not automatically lead to innovation and a more relevant and critical social science. Nevertheless we do believe that horizontal linkages can be much more innovative and productive because of the nature of the experience of underdevelopment in different African countries. African researchers interact intensively, they will begin to see that the wider African experience has certain general characteristics in terms of the problems of development by the different countries, and in terms of the various solutions adopted, etc. As African researchers begin to have a wider perspective on the African experience, and as more information on these problems is exchanged, we are sure that certain re-examination and re-thinking of conventional social science will take place and indeed is beginning to take place in some areas. We expect this reexamination and re-thinking will eventually lead to the acceptance of more relevant and critical social science. Though such critical social science has existed in a few centres in Africa, it is only now that it is emerging as a stronger force. Indeed in Latin America it was this very process i.e. the generalization of the Latin America experience as a whole, which lead to the development of the various critical schools in social science in Latin America. However there a:-e important differences between Latin America and Africa.

PROBLEMS OF FUNDING

The problems of funding impinge not only on the quantity of research but also on the quality and direction of research. It is well- known fact that underdeveloped countries account for less than 5 per cent of total world expenditure on research. The obvious implication is that in the underdeveloped countries only a very small percentage of scientific personnel well, at any given time, be devoted to research, most of the personnel being confined to administrative and teaching tasks. An immediate result of this limitation on resource availability will be low levels of research output at least in quantitative terms.

These problems of resource scarcity and research capacity have been extensively discussed in both national and international fora and need no further elaboration here. We shall therefore proceed to deal with other implications of research funding especially on the content of research in Africa.

A. Internal Funding

In Africa virtually all the internal sources of funds are State or parastatal. These sources of funds tend to view research along two broad lines

(a) An instrumental or praxiological function of research and (b) an ideological legitimization function. Very rarely will a government welcome a critical function of research except perhaps where such research is directed towards external factors (~.g. Transnational firm, imperialism or neocolonialism) although even here the realization that these external factors have internal manifestations within the state structure m~ provoke government annoyance at the direction of research.

At first sight the instrumental function of research would seem the least problematic. After all the urgency of development is generally understood and the need to mobilize country's resources, including her merge intellectual capital, should be clear to everyone. In the African context where "development planning" has been widely accepted it would appear that such planning provides

a framework for research orientation. Researchers should provide the state with information necessary not only for the drawing up of plans but also for their actual implementation. Such information may take the form of house-hold surveys, studies on demographic shifts, rural surveys, manpower needs, analyses, etc. In general the need for the regularity of such studies will lead to their routinization and often time bureaucratization within specific ministries or departments. Research will then involve no more than routine statistical exercises. (1) Due to limited funds and institutional rivalries very little funds will be available for researchers outside government ministries or departments. Indeed once such research has been routinized, research outside the formal government structures may appear superfluous. A result is that few extra-governmental institutions such as universities are able to carry out empirical research due to shortage of funds.

However, even "Then funds are made available to institutions outside direct government control, several problems arise leading to mutual distrust between governments and the commissioned researchers. One major source of friction is the haphazard nature of planning in Africa, a planning usually characterized by the absence of coherent social development programs and priorities. This leads to the inability of the official funding authorities to formulate in a coherent manner research programs necessary for the society's development and planning needs. Even where an internally consistent plan document exists clearly indicating what areas need further research, the widespread discrepancy between the drawing up of plans and their implementation can be a source of frustration and alienation as researchers are increasingly convinced there is neither the political will nor the institutional mechanism for the systematic utilization of research findings as inputs in the planning effort. For researchers, this may lead to a kind of "intellectual emigration" into mindless model-building or arcane preoccupations with more intellectually

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(1) Such routinized research does have its drawbacks however. In one case in Africa a whole Central Office of Statistics had to be temporarily closed as statisticians were detained for publishing information deemed unpleasant by the government.

or internationally "respectable" subjects , further convincing the funding authorities that university researchers are "too academic" and therefore irrelevant. Where researchers go further and begin to question the political structures or the institutional mechanisms involved in planning, charges of "Academic irresponsibility" will be raised. The inclination from government side to internalize and routinize instrumental research within the ministries and departments will be reinforced thus barring non-Government researchers of Funds.

A more problematic relationship between state funding authorities and researchers arises from the former's desire to use researchers to legitimize or at least reinforce certain ideological positions adopted by the leadership and the latter's quest for academic freedom and intellectual autonomy. For historical reasons, African leaders have had an unusual proclivity to establish what they believe are indigenous ideological constructs to guide the development process. Such "ideologies" as Iyerere's "Ujamaa", Kaundat s "Humanism", Nasser's "Arab Socialism", Senghor's "African Socialism", Tolbert's "Humanistic Capitalism", Nobuto's "Authenticity", to name only a few of the well-known ones, have entered the arena of African politics. In some cases, the leaders annunciating these ideologies have directly or indirectly demanded that researchers contribute towards the further elaboration, justification or even implementation of these ideologies. Funds have been more favorably allocated to research considered positive towards these ideologies. While it is true that some simple-minded or even opportunistic work has come up in line with some of these ideologies, in general African researchers have eschewed dwel1in directly, let alone critically, with these constructs.

Several reasons for African researchers' distanciation from these issues can be named. In the case of some of the earlier formulations, African scholars during their postgraduate studies abroad were constrained from showing interest in these ideologies because their host institutes in Europe or America Usually

Refused to see these ideological formulations as worthy of serious academic consideration. The dominant structural-functionalist approach in the universities of Europe and America was basically with the role of ideology in the process of "modernization". This was particularly so since this approach ideology had been declared dead and in retrospect, prematurely so.

A second factor was the finality with which some of these ideologies were launched. They became state policy and immediately sacrosanct. In only a few cases (Tanzania and Senegal immediately come to mind) did the leadership permit relatively open academic discussion and questioning of official ideology. In most cases, academic work on these ideologies was at best purely expository and at worst purely apologetic, critical examination of these ideologies having been precluded ex Cathedra. Furthermore, the charismatic and dogmatic framework within which the ideologies were-e pronounced obviated the need for allocation of research funds to examine the relevance, coherence and applicability of some of these ideologies to the African situation.

B. The Problem of External Funding of Research

The meagerness of internal resources and the failure to establish mutually satisfactory and stable working relationships between the state and researchers on instrumental, let alone critical, functions of research have created problems which have been further compounded by the presence of external funding. We do not have available the exact magnitudes of foreign funding of African research although; there is no doubt it is quite substantial. Foreign funding is carried out in various forms: it may be bilateral or multilateral public grants to institutes or individual researchers; it may take the forms of grants from private foundations; or it may assume the form of technical assistance involving the presence of research personnel from the developed countries.

African researchers and governments usually exhibit ambiguity in the attitudes towards foreign funding. At times it is seen as necessary to supplement the meager funds available in the African countries.

At other times it in seen as one more aspect of continued domination of African societies by foreigners, a form on "intellectual imperialism", if you like. And still at other of times researchers will consider foreign funding as an escape value from domestic restraints and state control of research activities and direction although even here it is never clear weather the escape from one form of control (by internal funding organizations) is worth it if the alternative is controlled by external funding organizations. There is no a priori ground for supposing that one form of funding guarantees greater professional autonomy although it is r.1oreliy.elythan not that foreign funding organizations will eschew direct forms of control and instead exercise their control through more subtler means if only because they are more sensitive and more vulnerable to charges of foreign interference.

Like all forms of foreign assistance, there is a multitude of motives behind foreign research grants. There is the now familiar nee-colonial use of aid to exercise control in order to acquire, in this case, intellectual and cultural hegemony over the underdeveloped countries. Such control can take the crude form of foreign intelligence organizations actually funding research and publications (1). In some cases it can involve the "planting" of foreign intelligence personnel in research institutes. Given the clandestine nature of -this form of research funding we can never be certain of its magnitude. A more open form of control and steering of research is one where the external funding organizations specify not only what areas they consider as top priority but even the methodologies to be used to carry out studies in Africa by either African researchers working independently or under the guidance of carefully selected foreign academics. The selection of foreign personnel will be biased towards conventional social scientists. Thus it is very rare indeed that a well-known Marxist scholar is funded by private foundations to do work in Africa. Of course this may reflect academic

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(1) A much publicized case was the funding of the then Uganda-based "Transition" by Central Intelligence Agency.

repression or intolerance in the advanced countries so that the absence of Marxists in the universities of the advanced countries spills over in the selection of research personnel possessing qualifications deemed "scientifically acceptable". Whatever is the case, the intellectual bias in the universities of the advanced countries will reflect itself in the type of researchers sent to Africa and the selection of acceptable project proposals from African researchers and research institutes.

There are foreign sources of funding which may be viewed as disinterested and where the major purpose is genuine research cooperation with and development of African research institutes. However, even this source of funding is not without its Problems. We have already indicated the ever present danger of foreign intellectual bias and idiosyncrasies "spilling over" to African institutions. Research paradigms dominant in the funding countries will tend to influence not only the direction of assistance to African research but will also condition the choice of institutes with which to collaborate Institutes considered hostile to the dominant paradigm in the advanced countries or simply considered as not sufficiently competent in terms of that paradigm will receive no financial assistance. Given the paucity of funds in their own countries African researchers will, either out of outright opportunism or academic self-preservation, tend to adjust their research activities in a manner most likely to attract favorable responses from external funding organizations.

Complicating the situation further is the "trendy" and ephemeral nature of research on problems of economic underdevelopment. In one year funding may be directed largely towards demographic problems, in another on rural poverty and in yet other problems of employment, women, child labour, land reform or any other subject reflecting whatever has been declared by international organizations as the "burring issue of our time". An unfortunate consequence of these researches "fade" is that they often times do not correspond.

to national priorities as perceived by local researchers nor is the time over which these issues are considered "burning" long enough to permit serious study of these problems over a sufficiently long time. To keep with "trends" researchers are cynically compelled to engage in "instant research" to beat the deadlines determined not so much by the magnitude of the problems but by the funding organizations time perspective and fiscal year. Specialization is then considered as dangerous restrictive and a "Jack-of-all trades" mentality is wittingly or unwittingly, cultivated. Funding organizations will then complain in of absence of competent and specialized researchers with whom to co-operate while it is partly their preference for "in" projects rather than lone-term support for research programmae which contribute to the disjointed and diffused activities so characteristic of research in African universities and research institutes.

Even where genuine co-operation is sought, it is often vitiated by a type of division of labour that emerges. African researchers are often given the task of doing the spadework of collecting local data which is then sent abroad for processing theoretical elaboration and model building. The processed and restructured data is then brought back to Africa in the form of publications and textbook. In the more perniciou8 forms of this type of cooperation and division of labour foreign researchers are attached to research institute which provide research assistants, the foreign researchers then collect the data and take it with them to their universities abroad as material for their doctoral dissertation. Nothing more is heard of them except by scavenging foreign microfilm libraries at the African universities own expense. In the absence of continuity, whatever research experience is gained by the indigenous research assistants and collaborators which will come to no use as projects are abandoned with the departure of the expatriates.

CONTENT OF SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH
The content of research carried out by African scholars has undergone
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Various transformation in the last 30 years or so. Two times periods conditioning the context of social science research in Africa can be identified the colonial and post-colonial period. In the former period the content was clearly conditioned by the demands of the struggle for independence and the leading role played by intellectuals during this struggle. As a result the major themes evolved not only around an incessant polemic against the iniquities of colonial rule, but also around the affirmation of the basic humanity of the African people in face of the dominant racist ideology of the time. Conghor's "Negritude", Nkrumah's "African Personality" and Kenyatta's "Facing Mount Kenya" are outstanding examples of the affirmative role of African intellectual activity of the time. An interesting point to note here is the social position of most of the African writing on African's social and cultural problems of the time they were all invariably drawn into leading positions of the nationality struggle.

"Ivory towers" scholarship was a luxury few of the African intellectuals could afford for various reasons. In the first place the absence of institutions of higher learning deprived African intellectuals of any "Ivory Towers". The few university colleges that existed were totally detached from their local environment being totally dominated by expatriates and being more appendages of metropolitan universities. In the second place, the colonial system's discriminatory policies tended to alienate African intellectuals from the colonial systems discriminatory policies much later in the game had no clear
policy as to how they would absorb the "educated natives". This was particular so in the settler societies of Eastern and Southern Africa where entrenched racism and availability of white labour (supposedly for climatic reasons) obviated the need for any indigenization of positions in the colonial administration. Thirdly, intellectuals could not possibly be shielded from the exigencies of the liberation struggle and the nationalism sweeping across the African continent.

Following the attainment of independence, some of the intellectuals who had participated in the struggle for independence were catapulted into key positions in their new governments. A number of them continued writing on African issues in a general ideological framework. Namadou DIA, Sengor, Nyerere, Nkrumah, to name only a few, published works dealing with various problems of the transformation of African societies and the consolidation of Africa's economic, political and cultural independence. The literacy output of these intellectuals in power enjoyed a rather peculiar existence. While widely read, it was never a subject of systemic study in African university which refused to give to this work any "intellectual respectability". One of the reasons was that scholars in the advanced counties, who dominated the training of African scholars, tended to view this work as curiosa and not "scientific" enough to deserve serous study or critique. It could be collected in anthologies of writings from Africa but it never figured in serous intellectual discussions. One has only to look at some of the "modernization" literature to see that the views of these intellectuals in power on the nature and direction of change in Africa were never seriously considered.

The post-colonial period immediately witnessed a dramatic expansion in the number of social scientists trained abroad or locally. The "localization" policies, expansion of state activities, some rudimentary import substitution industrialization, all these created new opportunities for the educated members of the new societies leading to their relatively easy co-optation in the state and party apparatus. Careerism and the basic belief that with independence Africa could now put to use the conventional wisdom, disseminated in the new universities and from abroad, led to a certain complacency and the blunting of the critical faculties of the researchers thus -permitting the continued pre-eminence of conventional western social science paradigms. Social science research was uncritically and innocuously descriptive of the new

societies and was replactive of studies elsewhere with Africa merely providing "case studies" to collaborate already established models and theories. At the same time, the African intelligentsia became increasingly depoliticized and tended to accept with alacrity their newly assigned roles as advisors to governments and administrators. Whatever confrontation between governments and the intelligentsia occurred, it was confined to such practical matters as the pace of "Africanization" of professions, living conditions in the universities and salaries.

The second phase, which was not to wait too long, began to change the position of the intellectuals in African societies. The failure of industrialization, the whittling down by inflation of the incomes of the educated, increased repression by the embattled governments, the demobilization of the masses and governments' increased reliance on coercion rather than persuasion as their charisma lost its luster, the deepening economic dependence rampant corruption penetrating even the hallowed grounds of academia, all these began to undermine the complacency of the intellectual and open room for more critical theories of underdevelopment. It is not being suggested here that this new room was immediately flooded by critical research. Several objective factors still remained to reinforce or at least prop up conventional social science research. I have already mentioned how research funding has introduced certain biases and styles of research. Another factor was sheer intellectual inertia which continued to bind African scholars to the more familiar patterns of thought. Universities and Research institutes are not as flexible or adaptable as one would hope. The effect was a growing discrepancy between the purely academic functions of the intellectuals and their extracurricular preoccupation with the condition of the masses. On the "scientific" level one continued to disseminate or advocate development models that often generated forces creating the social malaise which one condemned on the moral level. Part of the explanation of this intellectual schizophrenia

can be derived from the conventional dichotomy between "positive" and "normative" aspects of social science. Another explanation is the ambiguity of intellectuals in the emerging class structures. In economic terms, they belonged to the new privileged classes and the system of incentives (including repression) demanded that they continue to have close links with those that could pay the piper. On the other hand their social origins and the dramatic conspicuousness of the growing inequality and injustice impinged themselves upon their usual academic preoccupations.

To sum up:

(a) Conventional social science in Africa has been a historical relying largely on a static functionalist view of society;
(b) It makes unwarranted claims of ideological neutralism couched in scientistic terminology although it is quite clear that its underlying wetanschaung presupposes certain ideological conceptualizations of man and society;
(c) It is highly compartmentalized into various disciplines and each discipline is further fragmented into so-called specializations. The specializations generated are not responses to the exigencies of the objects of analysis but of styles and tradition of organizations copied from abroad. *
(d) It systematically eschews the study of fundamental issues of the development process confining itself to the symptoms of a particular style of development ("inappropriate" technologies, unemployment etc.)
(e) And finally it is increasingly and fetishistically reliant on sophisticated models and analytical tools without examining the appropriateness of these tools to the task at hand let alone the

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*One such example is "Institutes of Development Research". One would have supposed that the entire university in an underdeveloped country would be the Institutes of Development Research. If only one institute in the universities is preoccupied with problems of development one wonders what the others are doing.

paradigmatic sources of the models of these tools. We are not suggesting here that analytical tools are inherently bad or inappropriate. What we are pointing to is the uncritical fascination with abstractions derived from totally different social formations. On has only to look at the case of economics where considerable time is spent on the study of the macroeconomics of the stabilization of advanced countries in societies where the task is structural change and development or the preoccupation with sophisticated models of perfect competition in societies where private and state monopolies are the decisive economic units.

To be sure new critical approaches to our social problems are emerging but these face severe problems of funding and political and academic tolerance. Deprived of funds and institutional infrastructure the critical studies have lacked the technical sophistication of the dominant approaches and have confined themselves to assertive or polemical styles of writing. Furthermore, the newness of the approach has lent itself to unfortunate forms of "eclectism" that undermines its claims as an alternative approach. The matter is further complicated by admission by conventional social scientists that problems of underdevelopment have eluded conventional wisdom so that a number of themes common to the critical schools are now entering conventional science research albeit often blunted of their sting and insight. Thus, for instance, only a few years ago critical researchers pointed out that the conventional models of development were generating the growing marginalization and immiserization of large sections of the population. Today this is widely accepted but the initial insight is being used to introduce "system maintenance" schemes for the eradication of absolute (1) poverty. This intellectual co-optation and ideological emasculation pose severe problems to the development of a

This intellectual co-optation and ideological emasculation pose severe problems to the development of a critical and relevant social research. It may of course raise useful challenge to critical researchers compelling then to be more specific and clear in their arguments. But they need to be on guard since some of these concessions may be merely tactical obfuscating crucial differences on fundamental issues.

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"May the Mother Land be the locus of our common happiness, which we shall build though liberty, thought and industry "Rifa 'ah al – Tahtawi 1801 – 1873

THE CRISIS

Africa's experience of the past two decades has clearly demonstrated the failure of the conventional approaches and strategies of development which emphasized the growth aspects, assumed the automatic re-distribution of the benefits of growth, and relegated the social and other dimensions of development to the secondary level. All agencies of the United Nations system have arrived at this same conclusion (2).

In failing to achieve the foals that they were designed to achieve, those developments strategies have in addition led to unintended and highly undesirable consequences such as the growth of economic and social inequalities, growing poverty, mass unemployment and political instability.

Hence the need to pay a closer attentions o the question of social development (and the social sciences in their broad sense), which have been relegated to the background, and has led to a fervent search for alternative strategies that would give the social dimension its due weight and re-emphasize the indispensability of a comprehensive multi-dimensional approach to development.

A NEW STRATEGY

This search has, within Africa, become a major preoccupation of African social scientists, institutions, governmental and

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(1) All reference to Africa in this paper are to Subsaharan Africa.
(2) Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan Africa; An agenda for Actions; The world Bank

Non-governmental organizations as well as Governments (3). A major document on the "Development strategy for Africa for the Third Development Decade" –which was adopted in 1979 in Rabat, Morocco, by the Conference of Ministers on the Economic Commission for Africa (EAC) and subsequently by the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the Heads of the Governments and States of the OAU in Monrovia – concluded:

"It was no longer desirable and feasible to replicate alien life-styles, production patterns and consumption patterns. Efforts to do so in the past had often led to a continuing state of unhealthy dependency, persistence of mass unemployment, poverty, wide and increasing disparities in the distribution of income and wealth and gradual loss of cultural identity. Approaches to planning development had been predominantly based on economic factors such as rate of growth of gross national product, indiscriminate acquisitions of foreign technology, etc. the international dynamics of growth had not led to self-reliant and self-sustaining economic development in most cases. Moreover, sizeable sections of the population, had been left out of the mainstream of development. There had been a notable persistence of intellectual colonization in many parts of Africa, which had weakened efforts to design new development patterns and life-styles rooted in the African situation which were fully consistent with African aspiration. There had been also a notable lack of systematic attempts to utilize and draw on traditional experience and knowledge in the field of socio-economic traditional experience and knowledge in the field of socio-economic development (1).

This concerns has led the African heads of states to adopt an

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(3) CODESRIA/DSRC Conference proceedings on "Social Science Research and National Development in Africa", Khartoum, 1978; the report of the "Symposium on the Future Development Prospects of Africa Towards the Year 2000"; and the report of the "seminar on Alternative Patterns of Development and Life Styles for Africa". " the Lag os Plan of Action for the implementation of the Monrovia Strategy for the Economic Development of Africa."

Alternative development strategy for the region – as reflected in Monrovia Strategy and Lagos Plan of Action – which is committed to the establishment of self-sustaining development and economic growth on the basis of self-reliance, the reduction of mass unemployment and the improvement of the standards of living of the mass of African people and a more economically and socially integrated Africa by the year 2000.

THE SOCIAL SCIENCE COMMUNITY IN AFRICA

A. Governmental and Intergovernmental

In addition to the various national universities and research institutes, the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, (IDEP), was created in 1964 at Dakar, Senegal, under the auspices of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA).

IDEP's mandate included: (a) Training of specialists and senior officials of Government institutions in charge of economic Development and Planning; (b) Research in support of education material and the establishment of solid documentation; (c) Consultancy services to be provided to African Governments, on their request, in economic planning.

A more recent development is the creation of the African centre for Applied Research and Training in Social Development (ACARTSOD), Tripoli, Libya, by the 3rd Conference of African Ministers of Social Affairs of the OAU (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, October 1980). ACARTSOD's mandate includes: (a) Training of high-level personnel required for research and training and the promotion of social development programs; (b) Organization of seminars, undertaking of applied research programs and the development of endogenous teaching and research materials; (c) Undertaking or contributing

to research aimed at promoting rural development programs; (d) Contribution to the formulation of national strategies for social development; (e) providing assistance to national universities and social work institutions in the field of training; (f) Initiating and maintain relations with other centres, institutions and organizations having objectives similar to those of the centre, within and outside the African region.

In carrying out this mandate, ACARTSOD will be guided by the conceptual framework for social development as approved by the conference of African Ministers of Social Affairs and Africa's Development objectives and priorities as outlined in LAGOS Plan of Action for the implementation of the Monrovia Strategy for Economic Development of Africa.

B. Non – governmental Organizations
The council for the Development of Economic and Social Research in Africa (CODESRIA) was founded by 35 African Research Institutes and University Faculties in 1973 in Dakar, Senegal. By 1981 its membership grew to 75 institutes and faculties. CODESRIA's main objective is to activate African social scientists and research institutes to undertake fundamental, as well as problem oriented research from a perspective which is more relevant to the needs of the African people, thus challenging the existing orthodox development theories which have often led many African countries to stagnation and perpetuated their under development strategies for Africa, through oriented research. Priority research themes: Rural Development in Africa Sociology of Development in Africa, Population Policy and Economic

Development planning in Africa, Industrialization and income distribution in Africa, Economic co-operation and integration in Africa, Monetary Problems in Africa, Special Problems of Landlocked and least Developed Countries in Africa, Africa and the new International Economic Order, Science, Technology and Development in Africa, Multinational corporation in Africa, The Public Sector and Development in Africa, Education and Development in Africa, Economic History of Africa, Culture and Development in Africa, Southern Africa, Self-reliance and Development in Africa, National, Class and Ethnicity in Africa.

UNESCO'S SUPPORT TO THE SOCIAL SCIENCES IN AFRICA: THE 1970'S : THE BEGINNING

In addition to contributing in the training of African social scientists by providing scholarships to member states through its regular and participation programs, UNESCO   contributed to the creation of the first intergovernmental institution for the coordination of social sciences research and documentation in Africa South of the Sahara in 1972 (CERDAS). CERDAS has organized with the help of UNESCO the following seminars:

-Problems of documentation in sub-Saharan Africa, Kinshasa 1976
- The role and status of the social sciences in Sub-Saharan Africa, Kinshasa, 1977
- Methodologies of Research in the Social Sciences in Sub-Saharan Africa, 1978.

However, like the Delhi and the Vienna centres in Asia and Europe, an evaluation of the CERDAS' 9 years operation has proven to be an unsatisfactory arrangement. It is felt that it might be

better to transfer CERDAS to a Zeirian institution with a degree of a regional vocation, just as was done previously with the Delhi centre. The challenge of the Development crisis in the region and the urgency of promoting the utilization of the social sciences in decision making speaks for the departure from the CEDRAS approach to the more flexible and mobile regional advisor's approach, and thus laying the emphasis, in terms of institution- building on the national institutions and lets the support of cooperation amongst them be a more realistic way of promoting a more meaningful cooperation.

In 1979 UNESCO with the assistance of CERDAS organized an important Expert Meeting on the Formulation of Social Science policies in Africa south of the Sahara in Kinshasa, Zaire, between 8 and 12 October. Prof. Harris Memel- Fote (Ivory Coast) was the Chairman, Profs. Claude Ake (Nigeria) and Mathias Oke (People's Republic of Benin), Vice- Chairmen. The rapporteur was Dr. Peter Anyang' Nyong'o (Kenya).
 The discussions were articulated around two major themes:

    a) ways and means of promoting the scientific and professional development of the social sciences in Africa;

    b) ways and means of promoting the utilization of the social sciences by decision-makers in the region.

        The discussions were organized around four clusters of issues:

    i)   analysis of the current situation of the social sciences in Africa;

    ii)   definition of criteria for a more relevant social science, in terms of content, substance, teaching, research, documentation, institutional and professional organization and funding;

iii)   conditions for, and constraints against, the Development of the
         social sciences ;
iv)   the social sciences and policy making in Africa.

The following Declaration and Recommendations reflect the outcome of
theses discussions.

DECLARTATION:

1. <u>The situation of the social sciences in Africa</u>
1.1 Social science in Africa today is a product of the colonial heritage; its
    principal characteristics should be analyzed so that a more relevant
    social science could be developed.
    This "received" and "mainstream" western social science contributes to
    the perpetuation of Africa's intellectual dependence and does not
    provide a proper conceptual framework for the understanding of
    Africa's social, economic and political problems. Its rigid tradition of
    compartmentalizing the study of man into various disciplines, its
    conception of society as an aggregate of individuals maximizing their
    self interests and its concern for order as a desirable societal goal
    constitute its major weakness.
    1.2 A social science that can provide an understanding for the changing
conditions of life in Africa today and be an instrument for bringing about useful changes,
is therefore

therefore necessary. It must concern itself with the democratization of society, social justice, freedom from oppression and exploitation and enhancing the dignity of man.

1.3 Such objectives cannot, however, be related unless social sciences – and the social formations in Africa – are <u>autonomous</u> and <u>self – reliant</u> interms of institutions, personnel and resources.

2 <u>An alternative and relevant social science</u>

2.3 While the need for an alternative and relevant social science has been from time to time recognized by a number of African social scientists and institutions, and while some of these have tried to change the current state of affairs, certain <u>constraints</u> under which they are found to operate, have limited their success.

2.4 Internally, social scientists are assessed by their research, teaching and publications. Yet, in African universities teaching loads often leave little room for research, resources for research are almost never under the control of the social scientists and publishing facilities are inadequate and largely under foreign control, through commercial publishers or university presses. Research institutions are facing similar problems.

2.5 Externally, policy makers in international and regional organizations as well as in African governments have a marked tendency to defer to foreign personnel and Europeans in farming out contracts for research or feasibility studies, thereby discouraging and demoralizing indigenous social scientists.

2.4   A relevant social science must contribute to the liberation of Africa from economic, social, cultural and political dependence, to the liquidation of under-development as well as to the understanding of the objective realities in this region. It should develop a strong professional base and increase its capacity to reproduce itself.

2.5 In the pursuit of a relevant social science the fact that African developments cannot be understood, let alone re-assessed and modified where necessary, without a fuller recognition of the forces, interests, processes and institutions outside the continent which shape and often determine those developments, must be taken into consideration.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In our determination to enhance the development of such an alternative social science, we make the following recommendations:

1. on the social sciences as a profession

1.1 Social scientists, at the national, sub-regional and regional levels, should organize themselves and seek legal recognition as a profession working in the interest of the society at large.

1.2 The efforts to create a qualitatively enhanced and quantitatively expanded social science community should rigorously be pursued not only through improving teaching, research, training and documentation, but also through informing policy-makers of social science work, and cooperating with them.

1.3 In order to create a more adequate social science, African, social scientists should give priority to :

(a) Involving social science more directly with the pressing problems of African societies;

(b) Establishing a sound and autonomous professional base;

(c) Striving for self-reliance in providing the resources for the production and dissemination of social Science knowledge;

(d) Looking more critically at methodological, normative, and ideological implications of the "received Social science" prevailing in Africa;

(e) providing the graduate and advanced training of African social scientists within Africa;

(f) increasing the output of textbooks and monographs and other teaching material by Africans.

(g) Diffusing such works in both independent African countries, the Liberation Movements as well as in professional and mass media.

1.4 African social scientists should consider as a matter of urgency conducting researches in the study of the extra continental forces, interests, processes and institutions that influence the development process in Africa.

2. on support for social science activities

2.1 The efforts of CERDAS, CODESRIA and similar institutions should be encouraged and better financed. We note with regret that these few institutions striving for the goals

Advocated above are poorly financed and obliged to rely heavily on non-African support.

We call upon African governments and the OAU to remedy this situation by increasing their financial support for these organizations. We also call upon heads of African universities, Directors of Research Institutes as well as individual African social scientists to give moral and material support to these organizations. International and regional organizations (such as ECA, UNDP and UNESCO), public and private funding bodies are also solicited to help in realizing this objective.

2.2 We note with regret that international organizations such as UNESCO, UNIDO, UNDP, World Bank, etc. are not making enough use of the available African social science expertise in research projects and consultancies even on African problems. We call on the United Nations system, the OAU and African governments to remedy this situation which is impairing the growth of social science knowledge and L effective policy making in Africa.
2.3 We urge UNESCO to prepare a convention to be adopted by its Member States, on giving preference to African social science expertise and institutions, when available, in social research feasibility studies, project evaluations, etc., concerning Africa.

2.4 Governments should support the creation and expansion of institutions for the production, processing storage and diffusion of social science data.

2.5 Data and publications should be made available in the major languages spoken in Africa. Ways and means of translation at research and documentation-centers should be urgently looked into.

2.6 African governments are also urged to recognize the need to share social science information, personnel and institutions across language and/or national barriers. A regional agreement should be arrived at through the OAU for recognition of diplomas and degrees granted by various African universities.

3. <u>on the utilization of social science research and data by policy-makers</u>

3.1 African social scientists should seek to present their work in various forms adapted to their target audiences (e.g. decision-makers, mass media and public opinion). Ways and means of launching an African social science magazine catering to large readership for various spheres of the society should be sought.

3.2 They should get organized so as to persuade the governments to utilize the social science research in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of national development plans.

3.3. They should engage in a continuous dialogue with governments on matters of research and public policies so as to be able to (a) better respond to their needs, (b) help policymakers to articulate their needs into clearly defined demands and (c) assist bureaucratic structures and practices.

to improve their use of social science research results and data. They should seek to institutionalize such relationships with the policy-makers.

3.4 In order to prepare the ground for the recommendations formulated in para. 3.3, they should launch research projects on the policy process in Africa and outside of Africa, but which have effect on this region.

4. <u>Implementation of the Recommendations</u>

4.1 These recommendations shall be diffused through UNESCO, regional organizations and national social science bodies - as widely as possible. It is important that university Vice-Chancellors and Rectors, Deans of Faculties, Heads of Departments, Directors of Research Institutes, Ministries of Education, etc. receive them.

4.2 The participants in this meeting shall take immediate steps at the national level, to involve the social science institutions, individual social scientists, decision-makers L and relevant government organisms, as well as the mass media, in further thinking and action on issues dealt with in this conference. This would include organizing seminars, public lectures and meetings with policy-makers and publishing articles, etc. and also efforts to establish national social science councils which would be autonomous and controlled by social scientists themselves.

4.3 A regional working group shall be set up, as soon as possible, so as to follow up the implementation of these recommendations,

under the initiative of regional social science bodies and with the assistance of Unesco and other international and regional organizations, as well as public and private funding agencies,

4.4 Unesco is requested to organize another meeting in the near future to pursue and evaluate the outcome of these recommendations.

THE 1980s A NEW DEPARTURE

In 1980, the 21st session of the Unesco General Conference (Belgrade has emphasized the responsibility incumbent on Unesco within the United Nations System to harness the resources of the social sciences to a search for the constructive solutions to present difficulties that the international community has a duty to provide specially those connected with the objectives of the Third United Nations Development Decade, the establishment of a new international Economic order and the development of international co-operation founded on justice and equal rights. It also stressed Unesco's essential duty of promoting the development of the social sciences themselves and to assist all societies (and specially so in the case of Africa) to acquire the ability to clarify and analyze their own problems, so as to be capable of unimpeded self-determination in full knowledge of the facts; encourage the development of the social sciences, both from the point of view of their concepts, methods and techniques and that of institutions, infrastructure and training at the international, regional and national levels; and to promote the attainment of endogenous and integrated development with man as its center, in

accordance with the unique character of each people, and to encourage to that end the use of methods and techniques of socio-economic analysis for development planning. (1)

Unesco and the Development of the social sciences in Africa(1981-1983)

Unesco approved an amount of $298,700 in its 1981-1983 budget to provide for the following: To promote regional co-operation in the social sciences, continued financial assistance will be given to the Centre for the Co-ordination of Social Science research and Documentation in Africa south of the Sahara (CERDAS) at Kinshasa (Zalre). An L evaluation will be made of the activities, functioning and future prospects of CERDAS, which was set up in 1974. Wide circulation will be given to the results of the research undertaken and to research materials.

Assistance to regional and national social science bodies, such as the Council for the Development of Economic and Social Research in Africa (CODESRIA), and to regional professional associations will be increased in order to encourage greater co-operation as regards training, research and documentation. It is also intended to arrange: a training seminar, under contract, on recent developments in social science theory and methods; assistance for the preparation and publication of interdisciplinary teaching materials; a meeting, under contract, to determine ways and means of conducting regional post-university education in Africa, taking into account the experience in this field of institution in Latin America and the Caribbean;

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(1) Unesco approved programme and Budget 1981-1983, 21 C/5.

Practical measures to promote co-ordination of research between Africa and the Latin America and Caribbean region; assistance for the setting up of a regional working group on social sciences and development policies, which will be required to make studies and put forward proposals with a view to making the social sciences more relevant and encouraging decision-makers to make use of them.

The regional adviser for the social sciences in Africa (under recruitment), based in Dakar, will, early in 1982 assist in the execution of the above-mentioned activities. In addition, the regional adviser will be responsible, within the organization's plan to decentralize its activities in social sciences, for maintaining continuous contacts with the social scientists and philosophers and their associations and representative bodies in the region, helping member states build appropriate social science facilities in universities and research institutes and develop documentation and training provisions as well as exchanges and cooperation and advising on ways to promote the social sciences and philosophical studies at the regional and national levels.

CONCLUSION

Unesco's thrust in Africa should concentrate on the development of Social Sciences infrastructure at the national, sub-regional and regional levels as well as the development of training and research.

Such activities could include:

1. The elaboration of sub-regional networking between social science faculties and institutions for the training of social science cadres at research level.

2. The elaboration of specialized research team8 in specific areas and in particular with reference to problems of the Sahel, changing agrarian structures, the effect on agricultural production, the access and use of education and the mass media in urban poverty areas and the use of social science methods in the recording and analysis of history.

3. The establishment of national, sub-regional and regional social ~science organizations.

4. The elaboration of appropriate curricula and textbooks in the social sciences.

5. The continued development of regional institutions of coordination and documentation.

Project areas:

1. Two sub-regions will be chosen as pilot projects for sub-regional networking.

2. Post-graduate training linked to applied research will be undertaken in order to assure trained social science teams on the issues mentioned in point 2 above and in a manner that assures continued field work, the measurement of

social change, the accumulation of knowledge and the basis for policy formation with reference to drought, change in rural areas, formal and informal methods of selection through social institutions - in particular education and the mass media, and the analysis of change over periods of historical time.

3. Encouragement of professional organizations of social scientists.

4. The assessment of curricula with reference to new knowledge in the social sciences, the indigenization of the social sciences, alternative models and paradigms.

5. Encouragement to regional and Pan African institutions in the social sciences.

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