

RE-THINKING PAN-AFRICANISM: DILEMMAS AND EFFORTS TOWARDS AFRICAN INTEGRATION

ABSTRACT

The history of Pan-Africanism is a subject that has attracted considerable interest among scholars and practitioners in African development issues. Pan-Africanism is associated with the quest for political independence by the early African leaders and freedom fighters alike. Soon after his country, Ghana, obtained independence in 1958 (the third country to do so after the Second World War), Kwame Nkrumah warned the African continent that without serious commitment to a people-centered development process and mutual reliance, and without political unity at the continental level, neocolonialism would continue to balkanize Africa and poverty will be perpetuated. The focus of this article is not simply to give coherence to a shared ideology of Nkrumah and other frontline African leaders, but also to critique the Pan-Africanist ideology, revealing its myths, falsifications and lacunae, reinforcing its strong points and identifying its new sources of energy and new challenges facing the African continent in dealing with integration and other common issues. Links were made between the notions of nationalism; ethnicity and other related issues that could impact on Africa's efforts towards achieving its much-needed economic integration. Conclusions were drawn on the premises of the new Pan-Africanist ideology, and its quest for African socio-economic growth and development. This article argued that the African Union/NEPAD strategies, if well applied, would result in the realisation of the Pan-African ideological goals and objectives in the new millennium.

INTRODUCTION

In its original form Pan-Africanism was naturally borne by non-state actors and deeply influenced by the African Diaspora and by the racism that pushed Africans together. Pan-Africanism was not simply a moment bringing together people of African origin; it was also an ideology that has left a strong imprint on African political thinking and sensitivities. It covered cultural, political and economic dimensions. Like all ideologies, Pan-Africanism set up a vision of what is desirable; it set norms by which adherents were

judged; it gave a semblance of cohesion to disparate interests. But like all ideologies, it has its blind spots, some of which have threatened to subvert its central objectives. If it is to maintain its relevance and vitality, Pan-Africanism must be subjected to constant critical re-evaluation and refurbishing. The history of Pan-Africanism has been characterised by seesaw-like shifts in emphasis as continental or Diasporic issues have become dominant. This is not surprising, given the fact that the imaginary of exile is quite different from the nation-building project of the nationalist at home. In Africa, as elsewhere, Diasporas have played an important role in the reinvention and revitalisation of the home country's identity and sense of itself. Today, with the capacity to participate in the political life of their homelands, there can be no doubt that Diasporic groups will be even more immediate to the rethinking of a new Africa. Mamdani, (1999:16), noting the contributions of the Creole of African intellectual work, seems to suggest that their alienation has given them unique insight and driven their Pan-Africanism in a much more transcendental direction, which has been the source of its vitality and attraction. This may be one of the reasons for its resilience among Pan-African intellectual's circles, even when it appeared to have disappeared from serious official discourse. Furthermore, unlike the prevailing forms of nationalism, it was freely adhered to and not imposed by the state. However, there is another side the day-to-day trials and tribulations of the national actors. It may have given it what has at times seemed an ethereal existence. This may also account for the extreme voluntarism surrounding it. Therefore, there is a need for a careful appraisal of the Pan-Africanist concept, with a view to aligning it with the contemporary continental and global initiatives.

ETHNICITY, NATIONALISM VERSUS PAN-AFRICANISM

While Pan-Africanism started as a *stateless* and *nationless* movement, since the 1958 conference in Accra, it has had to reconcile its more transcendental agenda with the national agenda of new states and nations. And since then the new agenda of Pan-Africanism has been more complex than its earlier variants, leading some to nostalgically long for the *Golden Days* when the Pan-Africanist message, task and articulation were much more coherent and straightforward and held a moral sway that was unchallenged.

The sheer size of the continent and the dispersion of peoples of African descent have meant that the Pan-Africanist project has had to come to terms with a wide range of identities, interests and concerns (Mkandawire 2004:2). The identities include gender, ethnicity, nationality, religion, race and geographical allocation, to name only a few (Murobe 2000:58). At times, the conflicts arising from some of these identities can put the Pan-Africanism objectives under severe stress (e.g. the tragedy of Darfur, Southern Sudan).

It is often argued that the failure of Pan-Africanism may be attributed to a lack of identification with Africa, because Africans are mired in their diverse identities. There is also a perception that, individual countries have firmly established successful national identities that somehow militate against the Pan-African ideal. Africa is probably the most emotionally evoked name of any continent. Its people sing about the continent, paint it, and sculpt it more than any continent. So African artists produce hundreds of icons of this continent. Even national anthems evoke Africa much more than individual countries.

Ethnicity has always been considered the most ubiquitous and most dreaded identity. Both nation building and development presupposed a strong state running a coherent nation. Ethnicity was seen as inimical to both. It weakened the state by the conflicts it engendered and the multiplicity of its claims simply denied the new countries a *national image* (Murobe 2000:63). The nationalist movement saw recognition of this pluralism as succumbing to the *divide and rule* tactics of the colonialists and neo-colonialist forces that were bent on denying African independence, or whenever they accepted it, they emptied it of any meaning by nursing the fissiparous potential that social pluralism always harboured, and so nationalism saw itself as up in arms against imperialism and the retrograde forces of tribalism. In the process something else happened: in combating tribalism, nationalism denied ethnic identity and considered any political, or worse, economic claims based on these identities as diabolic as imperialism, if not worse. Radicalisation of the nationalists through armed struggles was to banish ethnicity even

further from any serious political consideration. In those states where Marxism became the leading ideology, class analysis simply rode roughshod over any other social cleavages. Ethnic identities were something *invented* by the colonialists or the petty bourgeoisie locked in combat among themselves. It was part of a *false consciousness* that was bound to disappear through ideological struggle or as the development of capitalism made class-consciousness more salient. This may eventually come to pass but *false consciousness*, while subjective in its origins assumes an objective historical presence that can only be dismissed at one's peril.

The nationalist quest for identity was inadvertently transformed into a quest for uniformity. It also produced a rather schizophrenic political culture in which leaders were observed to be nationalist by day but tribalist by night. The nationalists can be excused for their conflation of tribalism and identity in many ways, forces ranged against it tended to abuse identity. For an example, the shock of Katanga in which Africa's worst enemies, imperialism and racism, championed tribalism against the central government was to so profoundly affect African nationalists' perception of ethnicity and regional claims that *Tshombes* and *Katangas* were seen behind every movement challenging the authority of the central government of Congo (Mkandawire 2004:3). Part of the paranoia about ethnicity stemmed from a one-sided understanding of how colonialism affected African identities. The usual view was that colonial rule fragmented African society. But as Nnoli (1998:16) persuasively argues as asserts by Mkandawire(2004:3):[despite the Machiavellian machinations of the colonial establishment in segmenting and fragmenting the colonized, the reality was that the socioeconomic upheavals unleashed by colonialism questioned people's erstwhile identities, and therefore led to the continuation of identity formation and boundary redefinition. This process of identity formation continued unabated]. The point, therefore, needs to be made that right through the colonial period, into the immediate post-colonial period, and now to the contemporary post-independence period, the processes of identity formation and boundary re-definition have continued.

An understanding of this process is just as important as comprehending the vicious *divide-and-rule* machinations of British colonialism or the political opportunism of the various factions of the ruling classes of the post-colonial state (Wilson 1923:87-88). It is the totality of these pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial experiences and identities, which form the substance of the *National Question* that has been frustrating every effort that could make Pan-Africanism a true reflection of African Unity and identity.

DILIMMAS OF PAN-AFRICANISM

The failure of African unity has not been because it has to contend with primordial ties against its broader claims. The new thinking about Pan-Africanism will have to start with such givens as Africa's rich tapestry of crisscrossing identities, its rapidly changing diasporas and its fairly fixed national boundaries.

Skepticism

A number of Africans exist who cannot find anything good in any African initiative. Such people or groups of people go around disseminating false and unconfirmed information on African development programmes. This is one of the major challenges that face every African initiative even before a programme takes off. It is one of the impediments that are likely to distort socio-economic development programmes in Africa. Various assumptions are made that undermine any constructive effort that is made (Ijeoma 2004:5). Therefore, it could be argued that there are possibly three approaches or ways of examining the ideology of Pan-Africanism. One may oppose it, ignore it or engage in it constructively and critically.

Clearly, there are advantages and disadvantages to each approach, but the last approach is encouraged by the African frontline Pan-Africanists. Such an approach is then, aimed at making sure that all segments of the African society are engaged fully, which is why Pan-Africanism is considered to be *Africa's own protectionist ideology*. Similarly, it can be argued that there is a general willingness among scholars, academics and other intellectuals on the African continent and in the diasporas to participate in the realisation of the Pan-Africanist ideology.

Bridging the Gap between Groups of Traditional Allied Countries

Co-operation needs to be fostered between the different African countries. A major challenge to the realisation of the Pan-Africanist ideology has been how to bridge the gap between the Anglophone, Francophone, Lusophone and Afro-Arabic countries, who are known to veer towards their traditional allies in the form of their *mother countries* (e.g. Britain, France, Portugal). Africa can no longer afford to rely on public officials who still view themselves as *black European* as these artificial ties compromise efforts towards Pan-African unity. In particular, the traditional language and cultural barriers will need to be addressed in conjunction with those of communication and infrastructure, for example, by building efficient and elaborate information technology links to run through the continent.

Maladministration and Corruption

Another major challenge for the Pan-Africanism is the need to deal with corruption and maladministration. Any aspect of weak public service ethics, not to mention criminal corruption, represents a huge challenge to the rational management of any society, however well established and secured its norms and procedures may be. Therefore, corruption and maladministration have serious implications for the implementation of any Pan-African projects and programmes. According to Della and Meny(1997:16), maladministration and corruption occur in every part of the world but especially in Africa. Whether one agrees with this assertion or not, the challenge remains how to adopt meaningful measures to minimise corruption or to stop its recurrence in many African countries. Enforcing the rule of law, addressing poverty and strengthening accountability measures in Africa will go a long way towards reducing the corrupt practices in African public and private sector institutions.

Leadership and Governance Challenges

The leadership and governance challenges in Africa include inter alia,

- providing the capacity to deliver and manage Pan-African programmes; processes and the required reforms;
- creating a common understanding of governance and leadership issues despite the diversity of the continent;
- setting standards, benchmarks and indicators for the elements of good governance that are acceptable and that actually measure correctly what has to be measured;
- curbing corruption and money laundering activities on the continent;
- developing and managing partnerships at three levels – between governors and the governed, between African countries, and between Africa and the rest of the world and especially other global economic blocs, and
- developing participative, people-based decision-making processes.

Artificial Borders

If the nationalist made the error of believing that ethnic identity was incompatible with nation building, Pan-Africanism runs the risk of falsely assuming that national identity inherently undermines the African initiative. The usual observation is that African borders were artificially carved out at a conference in Berlin. However, the problem is not, as is often suggested, the artificiality of the borders. All borders are social contracts and therefore artificial. It is also argued that nation-building projects have encouraged patriotism which has substantially narrowed political perspectives, often detaching nationalism from its Pan-African moorings working against the Pan-African ideal (Rangers 1993:243). It may be argued, however, that it was crucial for patriotism to undermine the Pan-African ideal, for example, authoritarianism allowed only a very narrow brand of patriotism, which often took on positive attributes. The nation-state in Africa was premised on the extension of the Westphalian privileges of nationhood to the

decolonised states. Such an order is characterized by the primacy of the territorial state as a political actor at the global level, the centrality of international warfare, the autonomy of the sovereign state to govern affairs within recognized international boundaries and the legitimacy of states that are ethnically diverse.

Similarly, it is arguable that precisely because colonial borders ignored much more *natural* or primordial affinities, they undercut ethno-nationalism. It has also made secession an extremely unattractive option in Africa (Rangers 1993:243). It is often ignored that none of the major actors in the wars in Angola, Mozambique, Liberia, and Sierra Leone have sought to dismember the nation-state. The acceptance of the nation-state and the rejection of ethno-nationalism suggest that Africans are much more comfortable with or at least, resigned to living in multiethnic states than many other cultures in other parts of the world.

Africa is home to multiethnic nationhood and an interlocking of multiethnic nations which ensure that regional unification emotionally's anathema to large sections of the population. In addition it is much easier to bring together countries with secure borders than those with contested borders. This article suggests that rather than continually harp on this obvious artificiality of African borders, Africa ought to work on rethinking the meaning of these borders and how they can be the basis of a new Pan-African identity that is at ease with the African people's multiple identities. It is argued that under the impetus of globalisation the project of *nation building* is passé, irrelevant and quixotic. For those with cosmopolitan inclinations, this is to be welcomed. For them the nation-states have become restrictive and exclusive. And within Africa it has provided a safe haven for the practicing of human wrongs behind the veil of national sovereignty and non-interference. Transcending such an order in a world of diversity is celebrated. Much of this celebration is of course, premature- if only because it does not have much relevance for the life world of human existence and political behaviour in much of Africa. Even among those whose horizons have been extended by globalisation, mobility beyond that of the imagination is still severely restricted as the developed countries close their borders and reinforce their regional identities.

Absence of National Anchoring

Integration in Africa seems to be a failure for lack of national anchoring. It has been conducted totally oblivious of national politics. Yet the politics of the constitutive national entities of Africa are crucial to the success of the Pan-African project. Some of Africa's most prominent political actors have sought an ideology and identity for Africa that would reconcile Pan-Africanism with nationalist aspirations - Nkrumah's *African Personality* (Nkrumah 1964:155), Senghor's *Negritude* (Sengho 1965:29), Nyerere's *African Socialism*, (Nyerere 1968:198), Kauda's *Zambia shall be free* and Azikiwe's *irredentism* (Mkandawire 2004:3). These were attempts at giving political expression to a deeply felt emotional identification with Africa by individuals who were at the same time leaders of national movements. And yet at the day-to-day political level, African regional integration has seemingly had no foundation. That emotional commitment to *African Unity* has never translated into national political programmes and has not had political resonance except in the negative sense that one does not openly attack the concept of African *Unity*. Despite the extremely high emotive force of Pan-Africanism and African Unity, neglect of their political and moral imperatives has never threatened the political position of anyone, let alone led to the overthrow of any government. On the contrary, leaders such as Nkrumah were accused of subsuming national interests under the Pan-African umbrella. National anchoring is crucial for African unity for the simple reason that quite a number of things that Africans wish Pan-Africanism had achieved – democratisation, social equality and development – are quintessentially national projects or premised on the nation-state. In many parts of the world these issues have been addressed rather successfully within the national context.

Authoritarian Rule

Probably the single most important barrier to national anchoring was authoritarian rule. The stifling political environment of authoritarian rule accounts for the absence of a political correlate to Africa's emotional commitment. It is this environment that made African unity a matter for heads of states. It explains the fact that the preamble to the charter of the OAU talks about *We the heads of state* and not *We the African people*.

It is this view that reduced the OAU into what Nyerere called a *committee of dictators*. So even if African unity was emotionally accepted at the popular level, the authoritarian political rule of post-independence Africa meant that considerations to these emotions would really be at whims and wiles of individual leaders. (Mkandawire 2004:4). The leadership of African countries in the last four decades was characterized by the following (Mkandawire 2004:4):

- Leaders that could ignore calls for basic things such as education and health could not be bothered with honoring such abstractions as the Lagos Plan of Action and other African and global commitments. Indeed a number of these dictators were the source of the destabilizing and divisive forces threatening national integration;
- Some have gone out of their way to foment ethnic conflict;
- Regional integration involves a partial surrender of national sovereignty. Used to absolute power over the affairs of the nation, the notion of higher political African instance was simply not acceptable;
- The tin pot dictators that have thus far lorded it over the region tended to conflate national sovereignty with their own power and were most likely to view any diminution of national sovereignty as an attack on their person. They therefore tended to block any transfer of authority to a higher regional instance;
- Not being accountable to anyone for the agreements they had entered into, and given the lawlessness and impunity of authoritarian government, such agreements had no force of law either the national or the regional levels.

The usual tradition was that heads of state, including military generals, met at regularly intervals to sign protocols of regional integration that would not have been debated, let alone approved, at the national level. Each government could then renege on the agreements without any domestic political implications. These dictatorial leaders would solemnly sign a treaty on regional co-operation, fully aware that they would not honour those obligations. They could enter and exit any arrangement simply on the basis of the personal relationship among the other members of the arrangement. This state of irresponsibility and unaccountability partly explains the

intriguing mosaic of regional schemes in Africa. Most African leaders have had no qualms joining any of the arrangements, even if they contradict the demand of other regional accords to which they were signatories. One effect has been a crisscrossing of regional arrangements—each as morally and politically justified as any other. If Africa is to unite, the spokespersons for the various constitutive elements of Africa will have to obtain their authority from the people. It is necessary that the platform for unity be derived democratically. Popular will to unite can only be given expression by democratically elected governments. The African Union and its development programmes such as the NEPAD initiative and Pan-African Parliament were born at a time for increased demand for democratisation and the end to authoritarian rule in many African countries.

Democratic non-interventions

The total decolonisation of Africa and the end of the scourge of apartheid dramatically changed the African political landscape and African priorities. South Africa's liberation brought onto the African scene a new vibrancy to debates about democracy and also permitted a shift away from problems of marginalisation and collective rights towards those of development, democracy, and human rights. Africa can no longer justify the violation of human rights in the name of *collective rights*. The democratisation of the continent may, therefore, augur well for regional integration as the new democracies take economic development seriously and see regional integration as a useful tool.

The new regimes share a number of values and are, therefore, willing to collectively accept a higher regional authority on a number of issues. The acceptance of a regional authority will also lead to a more open and collective debate on the future of Africa. Already it could be deduced, unlike past continental documents on Africa's integration, NEPAD has been heavily contested and more openly debated. This is not necessarily because it is any worse than its predecessors, but because it has been born in a much more political free environment. The argument here is not that democracy will automatically lead to Pan-African integration, but that it must be a central organizing

principle for Pan-Africanism. In any case, no lasting federal or regional scheme of which the composite member states are dictatorships has ever held up. Democratisation, by highlighting the rights of citizens, has quite unintentionally led to calling into question the citizenship of others, leading to the bizarre debates in Zambia and Cote d'Ivoire. Kaunda is suddenly a non-Zambian and Qattara is no longer an Ivorian despite the fact that both of them played distinguished and leading roles in their respective nations. The new spaces it opens can be abused to mobilize against the feeling for unity.(Mkandawire 2004:3) .

To transcend such positions democrats will not only have to politicise regional integration but also eschew or counsel against petty populism that exploits ethnicity and rejects the Pan-African ideal. In addition, democracy will only serve the Pan-African cause if it takes on the developmental dimension of Pan-Africanism. Thus far, however, democracy has avoided the substantive issues of material well-being and equity and focused on the more formal aspects of *good governance*—e.g. free and fair elections and transparency. Only developmental democracies will be responsive to the imperatives of *Africa Must Unite* and the institutional demands of regional integration. One major weakness of Pan-Africanism and Africa's regional arrangements has been their failure to protect the Africans from their homemade tyrants. Solidarity in the name of Pan-Africanism has cast a pall of darkness on horrendous deeds by African dictators – from corruption to genocide. One extremely important innovation in the new debates on African unity is self-monitoring. It is the final acceptance of the view that African states have a right to intervene in the affairs of its badly behaved neighbours.(NEPAD 2002:8).

The view that individual states had to be held to certain Pan-African standards has always been brought up in African politics. Julius Nyerere most dramatically raised it when he questioned the morality of having a murderous Idi Amin as the chairman of the OAU. The silence by the rest of Africa over the invasion of Uganda by Tanzania (albeit in self-defence) marked the beginning of a tacit acceptance of change of the doctrine of non-intervention. The setting of an African Commission on Human and People's Rights was

also such a tacit acceptance. The current version of this idea of mutual monitoring is the *peer review*

AFRICAN INTEGRATION

Once the importance of democracy to Pan-Africanism is recognised, the forces at the national level that are pushing for African integration may be recognised as well. Several debatable issues have been raised around African integration. They include the following:

- Are there any groups at the national level for whom regional integration may be worth expending effort on political mobilization and lobbying?
- What are the ideological trajectories of the old and new social movements in Africa?
- Which of these are likely to enhance, contradict, undermine or complicate the pan-African objectives?
- Can their goals be made to dovetail with the Pan-African project?

These questions are rarely raised in debates on integration in Africa. And yet, if regional integration is to have any political anchoring at the national level, key political actors must embrace it at that level. And more significantly, if Pan-Africanism is to have resonance among the new generation, it must align itself with struggles for democracy and social justice in post-colonial Africa. It must extend itself to protect Africans not only from the ravages of imperialism but also from those of its own predators. It must therefore pay greater attention to the new emerging voices on interests and social groups. If African integration is to succeed, it is important to have a fairly accurate view of the constituent economies. Perhaps the most damning flaw in the past experiments was the assumption that member states were somehow planned economies, when in fact, they were market economies. One major point in favour of African regional integration is the size-of-the market argument. An underlying arguments for African regional integration was that imports could be substituted by the collective production of consumption foods, but this argument collapsed in the face of the limitations of the Lilliputians markets of African economies (Mkandawire 2004:4).

Such markets did not allow for the production of intermediate and capital goods for the domestic markets, because they relied on economies of specialisation and scale. Size has not helped in the growth of an economy in Africa; a simple regression does not show any relationship between the growth and size of an economy. A strategy for integration in Africa may need to explore some growth strategy that could promote some sort of preferential treatment of the constituent member states. This would mean that individual producers might begin to enjoy the advantages of a protected market.

Economic Development

The problems that nation-states have created for Pan-Africanism have not been because nations took their national projects seriously, to the detriment of the Pan-African project. Something else has made the nation-project appear so hostile to pan-Africanism, namely that national leaders did not take their national projects seriously and efficiently to see that its consummation required the collective self-reliance that was so central to pan-Africanism. The founding fathers of Pan-Africanism were always acutely aware that one of the functions of Pan-Africanism was to develop the economies and the technological capacity of the continent. Over the years, the developmentalist agenda of Pan-Africanism and individual states has been watered down by both ideological shifts and the vicissitudes of adjustment during the *lost Decades* (Mkandawire 1999:14). With most of the economies tethered to the Washington Consensus, the interventionism of the development projects and the developmentalist thrust of thinking on regionalism as demonstrated in the setting up of the African Development Bank and the Lagos Plan of Action have lost their resonance.

The National Economies

As mentioned previously, for African integration to succeed, it is important to have an accurate view of the constituent economies. Despite the ubiquity of development plans, despite the dirigism so vocally decried by the Bretton Woods Institutions and despite the anti-capitalist ideologies of some of the regimes. It is true that the market system had not fully developed and there were many *missing* markets, but the fact remains that the

constituent members were highly open market economies. Structural Adjustment Programmes have made this argument otiose. The view that one was dealing with planned economies led to a fatal misunderstanding of the nature of the economies of constituent members and had serious repercussions for the thought processes around the economies and the functioning of the whole. Such an approach automatically led to emphasis more on complementarities and less on competition within a protected market and on planned and concerted allocation of economic activities. As a result, regional integration in Africa has been of the *plan mode* whereby efforts at regional integration have focused on deciding how to allocate what was conceived as essentially complementary activities in order to exploit economies of scale rather than on creating an internally competitive market, which is governed in such a way as to encourage regional industrialisation, while preparing local industry for eventual competition in the global market. The *Planning* approach has proved difficult to sustain. Firstly, there was the question whether the particular allocation of an industry was effective in terms of its development as an entity and in terms of the development of its components? Given the uncertainty about the outcomes of any investment, satisfaction or dissatisfaction with a particular allocation, would largely be based on subjective reasons. The second problem was the absence of enforcement mechanisms for decisions taken by regional entities worsened by the lack of respect for the administrative allocation of economic activities by member states. Such *slippage* could be attributed to a whole number of factors. The member states might never have fully accepted their lot in the particular allocation of industries. In addition, member states might never have enjoyed full control over the investment decisions in their respective countries. Where the logic of the administrative allocation of industrial activities collided with the global investment strategies of transnational corporations (TNCs), most states complied with the exigencies of the latter.

Lagos Plan of Action to the African Union/NEPAD Strategies

Both the African Union and New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) were born at times of the greatest external control of African economies by outsiders than at any time since independence. This was a period after two *lost decades* during which

many African countries were subjected to economic reforms guided by the *Washington consensus*. Today, there is a heightened tension between the assertions of collective self-reliance and the appeals for financial dependence. NEPAD is quite unusual in that there has been extraordinary interest on the part of many non-African actors. The enthusiasm and alacrity with which NEPAD has been embraced by the outside even before it has been adequately debated by Africans and clearly fleshed out in terms of goals, strategies and resource needs, should be cause for reflection. Africa's relations with the rest of the world remain fraught with unresolved contradictions and mutual recriminations. A number of donors have signed on to NEPAD as the basis for a new partnership. It should be recalled, however, that the goodwill of individual states notwithstanding, many of these same states are structurally imprecated in regional and global arrangements that militate against African interests or place their regional interests above African interests. The rich countries refer to this state of affairs as *incoherence* of investment, trade and aid policies of individual states, and it has been extensively debated among the donors themselves (Forster et al. 1999:26).

A Pan-Africanism premised on a benign world ready to underwrite Pan-Africanist dreams involves a leap of faith and unilateral disarmament that is irresponsible, to say the least. Concern with economic growth and an appeal to outsiders to help, has characterised quite a number of initiatives in the past. In the eighties the African states, adopted the *Lagos Plan of Action* simultaneously appealing to the World Bank to help them prepare a strategy for development. The latter led to the compilation of the report entitled *Accelerated Development: An Agenda for Action* popularly known as the *Berg Report*, which completely overwhelmed the *Lagos Plan of Action* because structural adjustment drove policies in individual member states. For many years, African governments have collectively sworn by the neo-liberal *Berg Report*. What may be new about NEPAD is that the conflict between the more structural continental vision and the neo-liberal, *market-friendly* Washington Consensus has been settled in favour of the latter. Historically, while Africans have been forced to accept impositions at the national level, they have, at the collective level, articulated more assertive positions about Africa's sovereignty, collective self-reliance and repositioning in the world order. In a sense,

NEPAD was the final collective admission of the new paradigm of policy-making to which individual members had already succumbed.

Shortly after the establishment of the NEPAD initiative, there was a need to provide further guidance to the deliberations, which would reinforce previous efforts aimed at the implementation of the Abuja Treaty. The treaty provides the basis for regional integration and identifies the Regional Economic Communities (REC's) as critical stakeholders for economic integration. Further efforts to operationalise the Abuja treaty became more apparent during the implementation phase of the NEPAD projects and programmes. At a seminar held in Abuja, Nigeria on 29 and 30 of October 2003, with the Chairperson of the Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee (HSGIC), President Olusegun Obasanjo and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Mr Alphonse Konare, NEPAD used the opportunity to get a clearer picture of the roles and responsibilities of all the stakeholders in Africa's development, ranging from country governments, the Regional Economic Communities, and the NEPAD Secretariat to the African Development Bank and other African development institutions. Some of the key issues that emerged from the seminar was that the RECs would still be used will remain for the implementation of NEPAD projects and programmes. African countries would be the central focus of Africa's foreign policies that are aimed at promotion of intra-African trade and investments. Similarly, the AU Commission convened a meeting that was held in Addis Ababa on 21-23 November 2003, to deliberate, among others, on the implementation of the provisions of the Abuja Treaty. The meetings observed that, in line with the Constitutive Act of the African Union, the RECs are key to the integration and economic development of Africa. Therefore, the RECs have a pivotal responsibility to mobilise and oversee the translation of the NEPAD objectives, goals and strategies into practical development activities at the sub-regional level and in the countries' constituencies.

Since the NEPAD initiative has been adopted as the socio-economic development programme of the AU, it has become important for national governments to align their development plans with NEPAD's principles, priorities and approaches. The individual

countries constitute the nuclei of all programmes and implementation actions. National governments have therefore; become the primary agents of development.

Consequently, they are expected to own and champion all projects and programmes, including trans-boundary projects. Importantly, ownership has to extend beyond governments to the private sector, civil society and communities. In line with the aforesaid, the NEPAD Secretariat has undertaken to engage with all the RECs that are recognised by the African Union. It is also important to make a clear distinction between the Regional Economic Communities, Regional Common Market Associations and the Customs Unions.

PAN-AFRICAN IDEOLOGY: AN APPRAISAL

The failures of the Pan-African objectives are often attributed to wrong thought, rather than to any objectively determined conditions. Thus, it is asserted, Africa would have been better off if one form of identity had prevailed over another, one understanding of the national state (the Eurocentric one) had been rejected or if only the ideas of the founding fathers had prevailed in their pristine form (Mafeje 2004:3). Such concentration on the ideational may be understandable given the intellectual foundations of Pan-Africanism and its self-conscious claims to an ideological status. And there can be no doubt that ideas will be decisive in the success or failure of the Pan-African objectives. This one-sided focus on the ideational fails to come to terms with the objective conditions that gave birth to the different ideas, and fails to come to grips with the reality that Pan-Africanism has had to contend with in different places and times. One major task that Pan-Africanism set for itself – the complete liberation of the continent has been achieved, but the continent continues to be economically dependent on the West in particular, as well as, on other rich countries such as Japan (Ramosse 2006:3). Other emerging economic powers such as China and India have started creating some offshore wealth in many African countries. However, with regards to the new world order on global socio-economic developments, many countries will be expected to record some economic progress within a few decades from now.

Pan-Africanism has not done well. The political unification and economic integration of the continent have thus far failed, (at least when judged against the dreams of the key figures of the Pan-African movement), as have the documents and plans prepared by Pan-African conferences. The declarations and rhetoric of the African leadership have similarly yielded little. Pan-Africanism has failed when judged against projects of regional co-operation on other continents. It has failed when judged against the well-articulated, widely shared understanding of the needs of the African people. It has failed when judged against the emotive force of Pan-Africanism in African discourse. These facts should not cast a diminishing light on the Pan-African vision writ large. It may be argued that Pan-Africanism, may or may not, ultimately make coherent the jigsaw puzzle of Africa's multiplicity of identities and interests, that it may not provide the continent with the real basis for addressing Africa's daunting problems. Yet despite its poor record, Pan-Africanism has tenaciously held its grip on the minds of Africa's intelligentsia. Up till now, the NEPAD initiative has not been able to achieve many of the strategies mapped out for achieving African integration. However, NEPAD has managed to bring African heads of states and government to speak with one voice on several common African challenge, including (though not exclusively) the matter of poverty and the economic backwardness of the continent.

NEPAD has not been able to implement strategies that could ensure positive results for African integration in the near future. Therefore, there is a need for continuous appraisal of the results, failures and challenges that have an impact on the implementation of most Pan-African projects and programmes. Perhaps a new strategy could lead the Pan-African ideology to its envisaged promised land.

CONCLUSION

The great incoherence of the nationalist projects arose from the failure to reconcile what were obviously socially pluralistic arrangements with political and economic arrangements that were monolithic and highly centralised. Pan-Africanism runs the danger of failing because it has misinterpreted its foundations and the basic units upon

which it will eventually be built. It is probably the case that had Africa taken another path, it would be somewhere else. While the counterfactual argument may underscore the elements of choice in the historical process, contemporary political actors have to act on the basis of where the path chosen has led them. One such starting point is the nation-state. Politically significant is that whatever missed opportunities produced so many states in Africa, these states need to constitute the building blocks of Pan-Africanism. The identities of these states are no more imaginary than those of any nation-state that constitute the present African union member countries. The present African union is made up of 53 countries on the continent, and collectively, these countries reflect important concerns of the citizens – human rights, democracy, equality, citizenship and social inclusion - are now being raised within the context of the nation-state even when the solution may eventually transcend the confines of the nation-state. Pan-Africanism must demonstrate that it is relevant to these concerns and provide both ideological and spatial contexts within which these issues can be adequately addressed. The vision that Pan-Africanism puts forward must be built not on the paths not taken but, on the lived histories of the continent and its people and on the constellation of social forces in the various spaces that constitute Africa. While Pan-Africanism is the most emotionally resonant continental ideology it has had little political success except perhaps in the arena of decolonisation. It is argued that much of this can be attributed to authoritarian rule that has not only constricted Africa's imagination but also considered regional cooperation as inimical to national interests because it might diminish the authority of local potentates. A more democratic and developmentalist project in which collective self-reliance is the guiding principle would ineluctably lead to the realisation that the pan-African vision not only resonates well with the African people's identities, but also provides both the ideological scaffolding and resource base for individual and collective progress. If one takes the national agenda seriously, one is led to Nkrumah's injunction: *Africa Must Unite*. This is because history and the current situation leave Africa with no other credible or viable option, than collective self-reliance. The new Pan-Africanism will have to take on a more democratic and more participatory character in which the Pan-Africanist project will be an aggregation, albeit not an arithmetical one, of the concerns

of new social movements for whom Pan-Africanism provides a new framework for addressing new generations and local or national agendas. Obviously, in such a situation, Pan-Africanism will have to reflect the synergies and contradictions, between the many social and political agendas. The role of the states will be to contribute to the imagination of a new democratic Pan-Africanism that will enhance the capacity of the continent to mobilise the vast human resources and natural wealth to lay to rest once and for all the scourge of poverty and disease that has haunted Africa for so long. African leaders and governments must identify the thread for weaving one inclusive tapestry out of Africa's great cultural diversity by using the opportunities being offered by the new African Union, the NEPAD initiative, the Pan-African parliament and other continent-wide initiatives.

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