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**Abstract of Longer Essay**

**THE END OF THE COLD WAR  
AND THE RISE OF DEMOCRACY?:  
BETWEEN AFRICA AND THE WEST**

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More than thirty years ago, when I was still based at Makerere University College in Uganda, I argued as follows: “*Aid totally without strings is an insult to human dignity.*” Even as long ago as that I was arguing that the real problem was not whether foreign aid had “strings,” but what kind of strings were attached. Absolute charity between governments without any expectations whatsoever was an insult from the giver to the receiver. It was like feeding a stray hungry dog. Nobody expected the stray hungry dog to render reciprocal service necessarily. But governments of human societies should be called upon to render some kind of reciprocal services provided those services are compatible with democracy and sovereignty.

Let us look more closely at the springs of motivation. The donor's motives for giving foreign aid, are usually *political*; the recipient's motives for seeking or receiving foreign aid are usually *economic*. That is the first asymmetry in development cooperation.

The giver seeks political satisfaction; the receiver may be in economic need. In giving aid Denmark is a political actor; in receiving aid Kenya has been an economic target.

The motives of the recipient in seeking or accepting foreign aid are not difficult to follow. There is perceived *economic need*, and there is sometimes *economic greed*. Governments seldom reject extra revenue — unless conditions for the extra money are truly insupportable.

On the whole, there is nothing complex about readiness to *receive* foreign aid. It is an inclination which is almost natural. But readiness to *give* foreign aid is a more fascinating human phenomenon. Why do some countries tax their own citizens in order to help or influence the citizens of other societies? Why have Scandinavian governments taxed their own people to help my people in Eastern Africa? What cultural, moral and political forces have been at work in this field of development cooperation?

My agenda in this essay is foreign aid to Africa generally — and not just from Scandinavian countries. It is not difficult to understand why Africa seeks and accepts foreign assistance. The continent has been a victim of political victimization, economic exploitation, racial humiliation and ecological damage for centuries. Africa needs time — a lot of time — to recover from these ravages of time. Until it recovers, Africa needs foreign assistance.

But what are the cultural and political forces at play among those to whom Africa has looked for help? What are the ultimate motives for giving foreign aid?

The main purpose for giving economic aid to Third World countries are:

- (a) *SOLIDARITY* — as in the case of United States' aid to ISRAEL until now. The giver and the receiver identify with each other.

- (b) *CO-OPTATION* — as in the case of United States' continuing aid to EGYPT (to win Egypt over to American grand design for the Middle East and militarily neutralize it in the confrontation with ISRAEL. This effort is in spite of the 2011 Arab Spring).
- (c) *ALTRUISM* — as in the case of Nongovernmental Danish aid to Kenya. This motive is closer to charity proper.
- (d) *SELF-INTEREST* — this is persistent in all official foreign aid. The *motives* of the governmental Donors for giving aid are usually *political*; the motives of the recipients for accepting aid are usually *economic*.

Meanwhile, the political culture of the world system has been changing.

Since the end of the Cold War the nature of the CO-OPTATION has altered. The main Western global mission is no longer to win *allies against communism*, but at its best it is to make genuine *converts to liberal democracy*, and to promote enterprise and market economies.

When cooptation was designed to win allies against communism, African dictators like Mobutu Sese Seko were protected by the West even against challenges from their own people (as in the case of the two Shaba rebellions in the 1970s — when the West and Morocco militarily saved Mobutu).

But now that the Cold War is over, cooptation is designed to win converts to democracy. A subtle change is *beginning* to take place. Instead of protecting African governments from their own people, there is now a Western temptation to protect African people from their own governments.

This latter is a better scale of priority — but it would have amounted to neo-colonialism had there not exploded in Africa a home-grown democratic movement from Algeria to South Africa, from Madagascar to Ghana. North Africa's spring of 2011 was only the latest pro-democracy African manifestation.

Has the decline of Marxism-Leninism in Eastern Europe resulted in the decline of SOLIDARITY in global North-South relations? Has solidarity as a motive for aid to the Third World disappeared in Eastern Europe?

Does the Left in the West normally have a greater basis of solidarity with the Third World than do members of other ideologies?

Has the decline of communism lost the Third World some important friends? Most former members of the Warsaw Pact have since become much more eager to please Washington than to support the aspirations of developing countries. No wonder France is sometimes irritated by the excessive Americophilia of former satellites of the Soviet Union which have now entered the European Union.

## THE DE-LENINIZATION OF MARXISM

What has been happening in Eastern Europe — is it the end of Marxism? Or is it the De-Leninization of Marxism?

Stripping Marxism of its Leninist revisions:

- (a) Concept of “*democratic centralism*” — usually more “centralism” than democracy
- (b) Concept and strategy of “*vanguard party*” — the Communist Party as the sole conscience of the working class.
- (c) From *Corporate monopolies* of capitalism to *party monopoly* of communism. *Centralized* economy.
- (d) Strengthening of the structures of the *state*. Far from the state “withering away” Leninist and Stalinist reforms over-consolidated it. [Statism].

The de-Leninization of Marxism in Eastern Europe has abandoned

- (1) Democratic centralism
- (2) Communist party’s monopoly power
- (3) Excessive role of the state in the economy and polity

One more Leninist contribution is in danger — Soviet opposition to *Capitalist Imperialism*.

There is much in Lenin's contribution to Marxism which deserves to die: His critique of imperialism is not one of them. But for the time being the process of de-Leninization is quite comprehensive. What were once comrades-in-arms against colonialism became collaborators with apartheid in South Africa in the 1980s.

The demise of Leninism in Eastern Europe has resulted in the decline of anti-racism as well. Eastern European countries in 1990 started moving almost obscenely towards full resumption of relations with the apartheid regime in South Africa before the racist structure had begun to be dismantled. Some newly "democratized" Eastern European countries seem to have started violating international sanctions against Pretoria almost as soon as they held their own first multiparty elections in Europe.

The Soviet Union itself in 1990 started using a subsidiary of a South African company (DeBeers) to market its diamonds for Moscow — something which would have been unthinkable before *glasnot* and *perestroika*. Liberalization in the former Warsaw Pact members meant in 1990 their greater readiness to do business with the world's leading racist regime, Pretoria.

On the negative side, former members of the Warsaw Pact lost all interest in supporting Third World causes. Leninist anti-imperialism seemed to be as dead as other aspects of Leninism.

V. I. Lenin had added things to Marxism some of which were responsible for the present crisis of socialism worldwide. V. I. Lenin had added the following to Marxism:

- Vanguard Party
- Democratic Centralism
- Statism
- Marxism as ideology of development (which in the end failed to deliver economic goods)

But Lenin also rescued Marxism from ethnocentrism and racism. Marx's historical materialism had once applauded British imperialism in India — as a force which was destroying older pre-capitalist Hindu forms progressively towards capitalism as a higher phase. Engels also applauded French colonization of Algeria as two steps forward in the social evolutionary process. Engels and Marx, in other words, were so Eurocentric that their paradigm legitimated European imperialism.

It was Lenin who put European imperialism on trial with his book *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*. From then on Marxism became one of the major anti-imperialist forces of 20th century history. Now that even Marxists in Eastern Europe have got de-Leninized, *socialist anti-imperialism has been in decline*. White Socialists are far less likely to support Black liberation today than they were two or three decades ago. De-Leninization has strengthened the bonds between White Socialists and



White Imperialists. Foreign aid from Poland and Hungary to Africa may take a long time to be resumed.

### **BETWEEN POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC LIBERALIZATION**

Most African governments have recognized neither *government by consent* nor *development by consent*. The people have played only a limited role in deciding developmental priorities. Africa's political experience has been swinging between too much government (*tyranny*) and too little government (*anarchy*).

Westerners urge Africans to privatize their economies. Even more urgent is the *dis-privatization* of the state itself. Many African countries have no real public sector — since the state itself is privatized.

Since the 1980s Africa has felt two major pressures — the pressure for *economic liberalization* (privatization, reduced bureaucracy, realistic currency exchange rates, free trade, marketization).

In the same period Africa has felt the internal and external pressure for *political liberalization* (multi-party system, competitive election, transparency and open government, pluralism).

Should political and economic pluralism have come together in this way? Or should there have been a sequencing?

There is also the *POLITICAL ECONOMY DILEMMA*.

Once upon a time Kwame Nkrumah said “Seek ye first the political kingdom and all else will be added unto you.”

Did Jerry Rawlings in the 1980s reverse the dictum? “Seek ye first the economic kingdom and all else will be added...?”

Thus there is the special theoretical challenge posed by Ghana in the mid-1980s as compared with the original Nkrumahist position. Should economic recovery precede political recovery? Should economic liberalization precede political liberalization?

South Korea and South East Asia did take that second order of priorities: pursuing the economic kingdom first. The People’s Republic of China has done the same — pursuing economic liberalization without political liberalization.

Will China avoid the Gorbachev collapse — collapse of empire, of party, of country’s constitution and potentially of self?

Jerry Rawlings submitted Ghana to the rigours of structural adjustment and economic liberalization. And he waited until 1991 when domestic and international pressures were too great before announcing a timetable for political liberalization. Jerry Rawlings restored multiparty democracy in Ghana. Rawlings started as a dictator and later became a leading democrat. On the other hand, Nkrumah had started as a democrat and ended his regime as a dictator.

Nkrumah was perhaps proven wrong in his optimism that the political kingdom would be enough as a key to ultimate Africa's redemption. In retrospect, has Jerry Rawlings been proved right about the economic kingdom as being primary?

If Nkrumah attempted to master "the political kingdom," and Jerry Rawlings attempted to master the "economic kingdom," do we need a third messiah — a Ghanaian prophet who would urge "Seek ye first the *cultural kingdom* — and all else will be added unto it?"

Perhaps what Africa needs is *cultural engineering* — purposeful utilization of culture for developmental and progressive goals. Where does a country like Nigeria fit into this kind of cultural reform? Where do other African countries?

The full answer lies in the womb of history.