

# GLOBAL SOUTH

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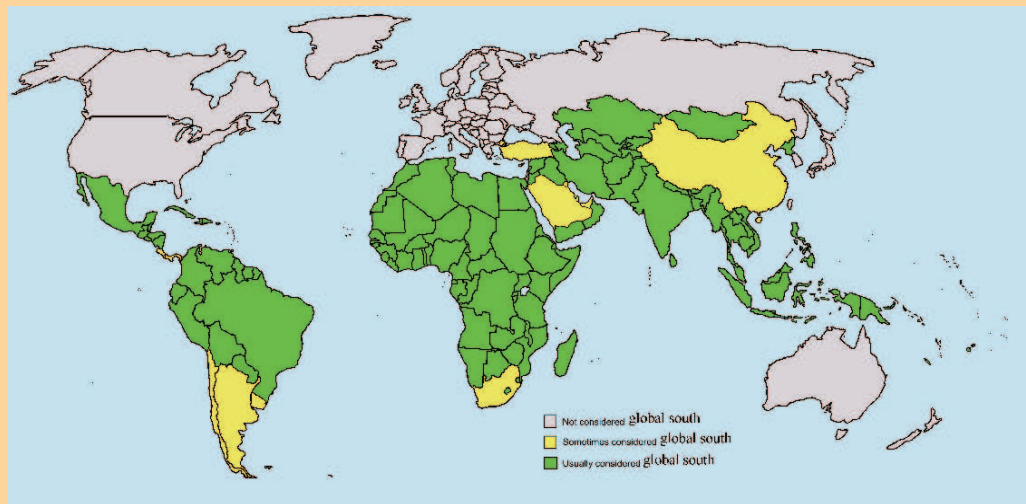


# EDITORIAL



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The recent terrorist attacks that took place in Pune, (India) were a shocking eye-opener for most of us living in India, or indeed anywhere else. It once again showed the vulnerability of 'common' men living 'ordinary' lives in the southern countries. The attacks happened on thirteenth February at a very famous German bakery in Coregaon Park, a common hangout for the younger generation. For many, the worst part of this particular blast is that no terrorist organisation has even claimed or given any reasons for committing such an atrocity. This has strengthened the impression that to plant a bomb somewhere and kill some people has become child's play for terrorist organisations.

The greatest effect that these attacks have had is perhaps in its basic objective— to create terror. Nobody knows who would be the victim of the next terror strike, when, by whom, or why. And yet, the War on Terror goes on, with myriad and shifting actors laying out roles of various durations. But movie awards, not least from the Academy, seem to be the only thing they are winning.

Or are they? What about those who went out to vote in face of the threat and reality of terror attacks in the recent elections in Iraq? And whoever came out on top at the hustings, was not democracy the real winner? If this represents a victory for the spread of certain global notions of governance and state, the spread of other global trends cannot even be argued to be universally beneficial. And this includes the most global of all trends, globalisation.



Globalisation has indeed been something that we have been tracking for quite some time now— its evils and its benefits both being areas of discussion. In this issue, we present another article on globalisation, but this time on its relationship with networks of terror and violence in the African continent. Mark Bolak Funteh explores this murky world in his article titled *Africa in the era of Globalisation: The Problems of Ethnicity, Peace and Security*. Funteh casts light on the territorial warfare that is taking place in modern-day Africa and proceeds to show that this whole state of insecurity and violence in the continent is an outcome of “Globalisation” of the armaments market. If terror is a spectacular problem, then the South is also plagued by others that are more terrifying in their everydayness. Percyslage Chigora and Tobias Guzura, in their article, talk about one such ill in the context of Zimbabwe, where they sketch a dark picture of the magnitude of corruption that has infected the Zimbabwean universities— right from the administration to the faculty, at times drawing even the students within its fold. Hakeem Tijani explores a positive side of globalisation and talks about strengthening of the African states for withstanding the impact of globalisation, through the formation of a collective against the dominance of northern countries. Another coming together is charted by Abdullaev Ravshan who writes about Turkish reformers in their attempt to build an intellectual network standing at the crucial juncture of the early twentieth century, wading through the complexities posed by the dual forces of tradition and modernity.

In the *Encounter* section we republish an interview of the noted postcolonial literary theorist Bill Ashcroft conducted by Dhritishankar Sen. The *Archive and Field Notes* section carries a travel account by Jaddiel Diaz, elaborating his experiences, both academic and otherwise, in Lima. Two conference reports on *Renegotiating Intimacies: Marriage, Sexualities, and Living Practices (II)* and *Cultural Studies Workshop* are presented in the *Across the South* section. Jishnu Dasgupta writes a review of the film *Kurbaan*, in the *Reviews* section. Thus the issue ends with the same theme, terror, that it began with.

Happy reading!!

# CALIBAN'S DREAM— An Interview of Bill Ashcroft<sup>1</sup>

Professor Bill Ashcroft who teaches at the University of New South Wales, Australia is a founding exponent of post-colonial theory. His book, *The Empire Writes Back* co-authored with Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, was the first text to examine systematically a field that is now universally referred to as “post-colonial studies. His other publications include: *The Post-colonial Studies Reader*, *The Gimbals of Unease: the Poetry of Francis Webb*, *Key Concepts in Post-colonial Studies*, *Edward Said: the Paradox of Identity*, *Edward Said*, *Post-colonial Transformation*, *On Post-colonial Futures*.



## Dhritishankar Sen

Dhritishankar Sen did his Masters in English literature from the University of Calcutta. He did his Research Training Programme from Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta. He has written regularly for the Calcutta daily, *The Statesman*. His repertoire include significant interviews with academicians such as Professor Bill Ashcroft, Nobel laureate Jean-Marie Gustave le Clezio and the Afro-American Pulitzer prize winning poet Yusef Komunyakaa. His research interests includes modern critical theory, philosophy and children's literature.

### **How would you say postcolonial theory is going to shape up in the new millennium?**

Globalisation is a diffused, unstructured and fluid process, one that can be changed at the local level. So a lot of people think that globalisation is an extension of imperialism. But what I am saying is that globalisation spins out of control of the imperialist domination because it is a transgressive capacity in people to consume and produce.

Since 11 September, the hyper-nation i.e. the US has had the capacity to intervene in this diffused globalisation. For the US administration today, there is no real difference between its interests and the world's. So now we have a situation where a kind of classical imperialism has raised its head and intervened into the diffused and circulating processes of globalisation.

The postcolonial theory, developed to analyse the literary production of the colonised world, discovers strategies that can be useful even today in coping with a huge hyper-imperialism and those strategies focus on the concept of representation. Postcolonial writers show by taking English, the dominant colonial language, and writing in a way that represent their reality, they can transform English literature and this representation, although it extends way beyond literature, is still the fundamental feature of dominance and hegemony in the world.

Postcolonial theory, developed to examine literary texts from colonised societies under British imperialism, can have something to say about the contemporary dominance of the hyper-nation.

**The anti-colonial discourse in your book *The Empire Writes Back*, has a hegemonic undertone. Do you agree?**

I think nation and discourse of nation have been very powerful in helping to release countries from colonial domination. But a national discourse has the capacity to take over from the imperial and propose a discourse in which the nation represents something that does not actually include everybody to live in the country. That discourse might be a discourse of myth, of religion that generally operates in the interests of those in power. So a national discourse, although it is a very powerful thing in anti-colonial resistance, can develop its own hegemonic and monolithic character.

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**Do you think that the postcolonial literatures of the new millennium would be absolutely free from cultural hegemony?**

I will not call it a cultural hegemony necessarily because a lot of cultural production is dominated by indigenous practices. Rather, what we are going to witness is much more of an intervention of indigenous knowledges and a transformation of global practices by local knowledge, by local strategies particularly in terms of sustainability and in economic agrarian production. Even in terms of literary production, self-representation is happening. The appropriation of films in India is a very powerful example in this case. I think the traditional knowledges are actually going to become a part of the transformation of the global concept.

**What will be the importance of trans-national literacy in postcolonial studies?**

Postcolonial studies, I guess, is about trans-national literatures that is, literatures that communicate across nations but at the same time involve people who move across nations writing literatures. So trans-national literature is a general term that includes literatures from formally colonised societies, literature of diasporic societies and literatures written in a trans-cultural way within a single language like English. All these things have an impact on postcolonial studies.

**What will be the impact of technology, consumerism and globalisation on postcolonial literatures of the new millennium?**

I think postcolonial literature was developed in a particular situation in the British Empire. The same strategies that were developed there are appropriated in globalisation technology. Globalisation, I think, is subject to the same transformations at the local level, like postcolonial literature was. So what I am saying is that in the new millennium the postcolonial studies, whether it retains that name or not, is going to have more and more relevance to the global cultural phenomena.

**You once wrote, “the postcolonial writer is consigned to a world of mimicry and limitation”. How far is it true of the present postcolonial writers?**

I think it is very true because there is a lot of mimicry that goes on in cultural production. Sometimes it is just a plain copy but very often mimicry. The minute it happens, the mimicry becomes what Homi Bhabha calls ‘menacing’. So mimicry is still very much a part of a global process and has a potential to disrupt and subvert.

For 200 years the Orientalist discourse of Western societies represented the Arabs as cunning, murderous and dangerous. Osama bin Laden has fulfilled that Orientalist prophecy. I would like to make a distinction between that sort of thing, bombing the WTC, and more subtle transformative resistance to global and hyper-nation pressures. So what I am saying is that there is much more subtle, effective and cunning ways to resist power than simply to bomb the World Trade Centre.

**You have called 11<sup>th</sup> September a “representation of an Oriental discourse”. Why?**

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**Why do you think that English Literature has been discovered very recently and specifically for India?**

It is true because English Literature did not exist as a discipline before it was invented to colonise India. So India is very important in the history of English Literature. It was not until the 1890s that English was first taught in Universities in England. English was invented to colonise India but was reproduced and established as a field to civilise the whole of the Empire. That is a sort of function it has had up to the present day and postcolonial writers disrupted that for they have taken the language and disrupted the idea of the great canon of English literature.

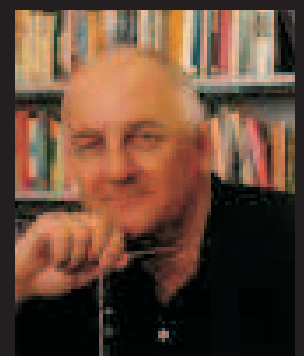
**After postcolonial literature, what next?**

Postcolonial studies have been contentious since the day it was born. Everybody is trying to say that it is over. But I do think that postcolonial studies have a lot to say about globalisation. In other words, globalisation studies will become more and more based on the insights that can come from postcolonial studies.

**What are you writing next?**

I am writing a book on language and postcolonial literatures called *Caliban's Voice*. Unlike Caliban in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, the colonised, who has been taught the Empire's language, I would say, can do more than curse. They can transform the language and can use it as a tool of self-representation and I want to show the way in which that has happened in writing.

Bill Ashcroft



# Turkestanti Reformers and Ideological Processes in the Islamic World in the Early Twentieth Century

This article deals with the intents of as well as processes initiated by Turkestanti reformers in the early part of the twentieth century. It shows how they built international networks and negotiated complex questions involving tradition and modernity, East and West, a longing for a glorious past as well as a desire to build a future. In doing this, it takes into account how these were informed by larger trends within the Islamic world as well as the context provided by the repressive Tsarist state.



Abdullaev Ravshan

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Over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth century, in accordance with their increasingly modern societies and outlooks, liberal Muslims have tended to reinterpret many aspects of the application of their religion in their life in an attempt to reconnect with the original message, untouched by harmful cultural influences. This is particularly true of Muslims who now find themselves living in non-Muslim countries. Such people may describe themselves variously as liberal, progressive or reformist (in application but not in the tenets of the faith); but rather than implying a specific agenda, these terms tend to incorporate a broad spectrum of views which contest conservative, traditional interpretations of Islam in many different ways.  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liberal\\_movements\\_within\\_Islam](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liberal_movements_within_Islam), accessed on 15. 02. 2010.

As is well known, aspirations for religious, ideological, and cultural reforms have emerged at various times in many countries of the Islamic world. The symptoms and signs of spiritual renaissance again appeared in the early twentieth century in West Asia, in North Africa and in Islamic regions of the Russian Empire. In that period, colonial policy of European powers to a certain extent brought to the fore the problem of Islamic civilisation 'surviving' under the impact of external cultural pressures. This in turn, objectively accelerated and strengthened the consolidation processes in the countries of the Islamic East. In these countries, various components of nationalist ideology, patriotic notions and anti-colonial liberation movements, seriously affected the thinking of the most educated, elite layers of Muslim society.

Many ideological concepts formed in this environment were directed not only towards the preservation of spiritual values and national identity, but also to the realisation of cultural emancipation, modernisation and rapid liquidation of the political and socio-economic backwardness of the Muslim world.

Spokesmen of reform during the specified period were well-known enlighteners, philosophers and reformers such as Muhammad Abdo, Malkom Khan, Ismail Gasprinski, Mahmud Tarzi, Djamal ad-Din al-Afghani and others. Undoubtedly, they were people who were highly educated for their time and had outstanding abilities as organisers and leaders. Their tireless energy had been directed, first of all, to the realisation of educational and socio-political transformations, leading to what was seen to be essential to national interests and the logic of the historical process.

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It is necessary to emphasise that the Muslim reformers' activities were not limited only to the boundaries of their nation-states. Therefore, in particular, it is known that at the end of the nineteenth century, the Afghan educator al-Afghani lived in France where he, with a group of adherents, ran a political weekly 'Al-Urva al-Vuska' ('Reliable Buttress'). The French philosopher and scientist as well as a noted Orientalist E. Renan, commenting on this phase of al-Afghani's life, wrote

I got acquainted with Sheikh Dzhamal ad-Din two months ago. Not too many people have influenced me. Sheikh Dzhamal ad-Din is the best bearer of ideas that we proclaim as ideals. I had been struck by his intellect and surprising abilities, love of freedom, nobleness of his character and frankness. It seemed to me, that I talked to one of the ancient luminaries, and that I was staying face to face with Ibn Sina, or Ibn Rushd, or with one of those great people who had struggled for the deliverance of mankind.<sup>1</sup>

Malkom Khan, the outstanding Iranian public figure of the time, who devoted his life to the ideas of enlightenment, spiritual, and socio-political revival of his motherland, emphasised, Our purpose is to eradicate the ignorance and stagnation of our coreligionists and to achieve prosperity of their native land by dissemination of knowledge and science in the midst of the broad masses. Our purpose is to raise high the banner of freedom and equity and to allow the people to

quietly build their own life, to go along the way of well-being and to achieve prosperity.<sup>2</sup>

The Muslim reformers also tried to understand the sources of backwardness of the once powerful states of the East as a result of colonisation by the Western world and called on the people to wake up from 'their long hibernation.'



Djilmal Ad -Din Al-Afghani

Thus, one of the ideologues of the Young Afghan movement, Mahmud Tarzi, believed that among the reasons for the decline of Afghanistan was its isolation from the external world and its ignorant defence of prejudices and harmful stereotypes. Being cut off from the advanced currents of modern life, Afghans, in Tarzi's opinion, lost the opportunity to borrow the best things and ideas from Western civilisation. They could only have access to the leftovers that Europeans exported to their colonies. Tarzi was one of the first Afghans who tried to prove that successes of the Europeans should not be attributed only to the military power of the Western states, but also to culture, economy and industry.

In the theoretical works of many reformers, the appeal invariably was to restore the former power of Islam and Muslims through simplification of rites and clearing of all foreign and fanatical issues. The process of reinvigoration of spiritual and social values launched in this period in the Islamic countries, analogous to the reformation movement in Christianity, was focused on reintroducing democratic traditions as the dominant idea within the fold of Islam. The reformers sought to reconsider the socio-philosophical rubric of Islam from the positions of the development of culture, science and education, as well as (and this is the main thing) from the standpoint of the tasks of anti-colonial struggle.

It is necessary to note that during this period, ideological currents and certain concepts represented a rather motley palette with numerous shades and semitones, but, nevertheless, its whole colour was determined by the core problem of survival of the Islamic world as a civilised community. The reformers were of the opinion that the main obstacle in the way of economic, cultural and spiritual revival of the countries in the Muslim East during this period was the colonial policy of the leading European powers.

Another equally important factor in their eyes that retarded national growth was the dissociation and absence of unity between Muslim people and their political elites. Thus, the Young Afghan newspaper *Siradj al-Akhbar*, stated, 'The European colonisers saw that we do not care about each other and consequently they gradually managed to grasp part of our land soaked in the blood of our brothers, fathers and ancestors.'<sup>3</sup>

At several moments in history, the idea of Muslim unity emerged as the unifying foundation of various socio-political powers with the aim of independence. By the beginning of the twentieth century in Russia, as is well known, the Tsarist regime was following, for many decades, an extraordinarily unrealistic national policy towards the conquered territories and the people who inhabited them (known as Russification). This provided a fertile breeding ground for ideas of Islamic unity. This idea of Muslim unity (later designated by the term 'panislamism') constituted a sphere of 'a special interest' for the Tsarist imperial administration. Probably because the so-called 'panislamic' doctrine appealed to all members of the Muslim community of imperial Russia,

irrespective of national and social distinctions. They represented a great danger to the state, ‘confusing the minds’ of millions of ‘Russian’ Muslims and raising ‘separatist’ sentiments. It may be assumed that it was this circumstance that impelled the police department to issue special notices in which criminal investigation departments were recommended ‘to constantly keep an eye on the senses of the Muslim population’ and ‘panislamic’ literature.<sup>4</sup>



**Ismail Gasprinsky**

During these years, the main group of supporters of the ideas of reform and consolidation in Turkestan were the *jadids* (reformers). Turkestani *jadids* (Abdulla Avlony, Mahmudhoja Bekhbudii, Abdulkadyr Shakurii, Munavvar Kary, Abdurauf Fitrat and others) were perfectly aware that to expect a spiritual awakening under the conditions of colonial underdevelopment, ignorance and intolerance was ridiculous and naïve. The experience of failed revolts at the end of the twentieth century had allowed them to draw the conclusion that national energy needed to be concentrated on a qualitatively different level. During the first period of their activity, they concentrated their basic attention on problems of enlightenment and education, and undertook serious efforts to establish closer contacts with reformers from adjacent states and Muslim regions of the Russian Empire.

The enormous influence of the *jadids*’ political activity influenced many of the revolutionary events of the beginning of the twentieth century in the East such as the constitutional movement in Iran (1905-1911), anti-colonial uprisings in India (1905-1908) and the Young Turk revolution of 1908. The attempts of the Russian authorities to isolate Turkestan from the external world were thus hardly successful. Despite all the obstacles and restrictions, the flow of information from these ‘restless’ and ‘mutinous’ countries continued to come into the region. The *jadids* received various newspapers, magazines and books that were issued by well-known eastern reformers and educators. Thus, an intelligence report of the Turkestani police department, in those days, read the following, ‘With the purpose to propagate the idea of association of the Muslims in old Bukhara the newspapers are distributed such as: “Siradj al-Akhbar”, “Sirotil Mustakim”; the following books: “Maktubat-Istambul”, “Saloi-Hindi”, “Munazarai-Farangi” etc.’<sup>5</sup> The materials published in these induced the readers to critically rethink the problems of progress and national development in an eastern society under colonial, or semi-colonial rule.

The articles and books by the leaders of the liberation movement in which they called upon dependent nations to unify in the name of obtaining freedom and equality excited great interest. Mass inflow of progressive literature from the ‘awakening’ Asian countries inspired the Turkestani *jadids* to develop and edit local periodicals. Dozens of newspapers and magazines began to appear in almost all the large cities of Central Asia. Among them were *Tarakki*, *Shukhrat*, *Khurshid*, *Sadoi-Turkistan*, issued from Tashkent; *Samarkand*, *Oina* in Samarkand; *Turon*, *Bukhoro-i-Sharif* in Bukhara; and *Sadoi-Fargona*, *El-bairogi* in Kokand, etc. The national press promoted activation of political life in the region.

In the first decade of the twentieth century, the direct connections between the Turkestani, Khivan and Bukharan *Jadids* and nationalist and reform organisations in other countries in the East also grew appreciably. Thus, for example, after the Young Turk revolution of 1908, the Bukharan reformers send their most outstanding representatives such as Abdul Vakhid Burkhanov, Abdurauf

Fitrat, Usman Hojaev to Turkey. Before the World War I there were more than 250 students in Turkey from Bukhara alone.<sup>6</sup> The latter, supported by the Young Turks, created in Istanbul the ‘Constantinople Society of Dissemination of Useful Knowledge.’<sup>7</sup> After returning from Turkey, Afghanistan, Russia and other countries many young *jadids* began active propaganda and involved hundreds of new people in their organisations. They also created such societies and organisations as ‘Tarbiya-yi-aftol’, ‘Padarkush’, ‘Umid’, ‘Nashri-Maorif’, ‘Barakat’, ‘Gairat’, ‘Tarakkiparvar’ and a number of other societies.



Mahmud Tarzi

From the very beginning, the societies and organisations of the local reformers were under constant vigilance by agents of the Turkestani Police Security Department. Regarding this, a confidential employee serving in the police agency wrote in his report,

Some local dignitaries and influential merchants, who lived and received education in Constantinople, under the guise of manufactory company ‘Barakat’ in fact established the Union of the Muslims-Reformers with the purpose of unifying and a raising the cultural standards among the natives.<sup>8</sup>

The police soon received information from their network of spies that the “‘Umid (Hope) Society” was organised with the purpose of participating in and contributing to the all Muslim book trade, the profit from which would entirely go into supporting the New Method (that is, *jadidist*-À.R.) schools.”<sup>9</sup> The police agents, describing the “harmful” politico-ideological activity of another *jadidist* organisation, “‘Tarakkiparvar” (“Reformer”) emphasised that,

The ‘Tarakkiparvar’ party members by their deliberately false interpretation of newspaper information (about the events of the First World War), confuse the population and settle among them various gossip about the weakness of Russia, and the probable separation of the Muslims from it and formation of an independent state by the latter.<sup>10</sup>

Such reports forced the Russian official authorities to adopt the most resolute and repressive measures in relation to the *jadids*. However, the contact of the Turkestanis with like-minded people from other regions proceeded and the national resistance lasted and gathered strength.

**The *jadids* wanted to associate themselves with modernisation of a Turkestani society. They remained faithful to the idea of escaping from cultural isolationism and they well understood the necessity of adopting more advanced socio-political goals and uniting Muslim thought worldwide. The *jadids* were also supporters of such systems of governing that could provide them such freedom, and civil and political rights as found in democratic states. In the following years, these strategic tasks of the reformers were reflected in provisions of the programme of new political organisations of the *jadids*.**

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the *jadids* (“Shuroi-Islomiya”, “Turk Odami Markaziyat Firkasi” and others).

However, in their opinion, that should not mean mechanical introduction of elements of Western civilisation into the Turkestan environment that would simply create a superficial imitation. Instead the *jadids* called for the integration of Western principles with the rich spiritual heritage specific to Turkestan, harmoniously bringing them together, and thus creating the conditions for their own national revival. As we have already stated, the ideological orientations of the *jadids* were formed under the influence of the ideological currents that penetrated into Turkestan from the adjacent Muslim countries.



**Malkom Khan**

Nevertheless, here also the external influences were not appropriated wholesale and implemented. These ideas were inevitably refracted through the complex prism of locally time-tested concepts and traditions. The ideological views that had developed in Turkestan in particular never adopted an uncompromising opposition of the Christian West or the revival of the World Caliphate during the period of anti-colonial struggle as occurred in a number of other theatres of similar strife.

There is no doubt that the reformers understood the huge role which Islam played within the life of the Central Asian society over the centuries. Nevertheless, they did not seek to integrate with the rest of the Muslim world in any absolute sense. They considered it an impossibility to reconcile the idea of the creation of an all-encompassing Islamic state with the reality of separate countries at various levels of development and had no wish to relinquish their national sovereignty and individualism.

In the propagation of ideas of integration in the Muslim world, which appeared at the beginning of the twentieth century, the *jadids* saw only an opportunity for the establishment and maintenance of closer spiritual, political-economic and cultural contacts between various Islamic peoples. In their political activities, the reformers preached the idea of unifying the Muslims and the most tolerant, democratic part of the Europeans in their common struggle against colonialism, despotism and backwardness.

1 Cited by I. Hakimov, “Djamal ad Din al-Afghani, filosof i reformator”, *Asia and Africa Today*, 12, 1989, p. 49.

2 Cited by N. Talipov, *Obschestvennaya mysl v Irane v XI- nachale XX vekov* (A public idea in Iran in the 19th - beginning of the 20th centuries), Ī, Nauka Publishing House, Moscow, 1988, p. 90.

3 Cited in D. Ochildiev, *Mladoafganskoe dvizhenie*, Fan Publishing House, Tashkent, 1985, p. 75.

4 See A. Arsharuni, Gabidullin Kh. Ocherki panislamisma i pantyrkizma v Rossii (Essays on panislamism and pantyrkizm in Russia). Ī., 1931, p. 111.

5 TsGA RUz, f. I-461, op. 1, d.2178, l.17.

6 TsGA RUz, f. I-461, op. 1, d. 2115, l.19.

7 See *Novy Vostok*, 4, 1923, p. 90.

8 TsGA RUz, f. I-461, op.1, d.2178, l.23.

9 TsGA RUz, f. I-461, op.1, d.2107, l.44.

10 TsGA RUz, f. I-461, op.1, d.1968, l.31.

Pics source:

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# Africa in the Era of Globalisation: The Problems of Ethnicity, Peace and Security

Globalisation has been seen by most schools of thought as a positive force in the context of the world economy. Others have, however, focused on its destructive impacts especially in Africa. This paper follows the second school. With the disintegration of the USSR and the decline of Communism, the international balance of power changed as the Cold War came to an end. While the danger of a nuclear holocaust has apparently subsided, the former big players are no longer concerned with most of today's armed conflicts or threats to security.

Just in the past two decades in Africa over six million people have died in such conflicts. Insecurity, especially domestic ones, in Africa have an increasingly high propensity to spill over borders, resulting in regional security dilemmas. This paper, based on data from published sources, attempts at evaluating the role of globalisation in encouraging such insecurity in Africa, observed through the lenses of the ethnic conflicts that are diffused beyond national boundaries. In this light, it attempts to identify the causes of such conflicts and the management of internationalised African ethnic conflicts in the era of globalisation.



## Mark Bolak Funteh

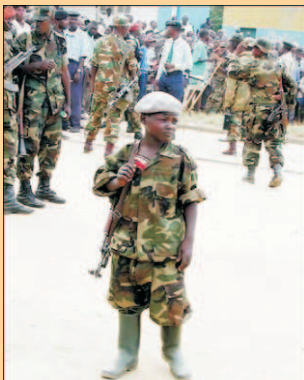
Mark Bolak Funteh holds a Ph. D. In History. He is currently a lecturer of History at Higher Teachers Training College of the University of Maroua, Cameroon. He has previously published on indigenous African techniques of Conflict Prevention and Peace Building; Women, Conflict and Peace in Cameroon; Missionaries and the Mutation of African Societies and the Church as a Peace Seed in African Conflicts.

## Introduction

Globalisation is a concept that refers to a number of things that have happened over the past two decades, an unprecedented opening up of economies and an accelerated circulation of products, services, capital, ideas and people.<sup>1</sup> These movements are accentuated by an explosion of new technologies in information and communication, whose most visible impact is the reduction of space and time; giving rise to the ‘global village’. As indicated by Thierry de Montbrial, the choice of the term globalisation instead of evoking interdependence or transnationalisation evokes a major movement of observed interaction from 1945 to 1980 between actors of the international system.<sup>2</sup> Don Keet emphasises the transnationalisation aspect of this phenomenon.<sup>3</sup> He notes that globalisation is the ever-increasing extension of these elements within and across the world, and their dependent inter-linkages and mutual influences. He says these inter-linkages and influences at the political and social levels represent the engagement of national governments and bodies in multinational organisations and international institutions, people and communities in formally constituted as well as emerging transnational social and political moments.

According to liberal economic logic, the globalisation process naturally leads to the creation of new non-national territorial divides as is the case with monetary zones or integrated world markets, which in turn generate types of regulations or socio-political interactions that may be cooperative or conflictual. As regards the former, one may, for instance, cite the acceleration of the financial markets. Globalisation has activated the dynamics of fragmentation in certain spheres of the international system, including Africa. In fact, without minimising the positive impacts of globalisation on the world’s economy, some scholars have denounced some of its real or imagined shortcomings.

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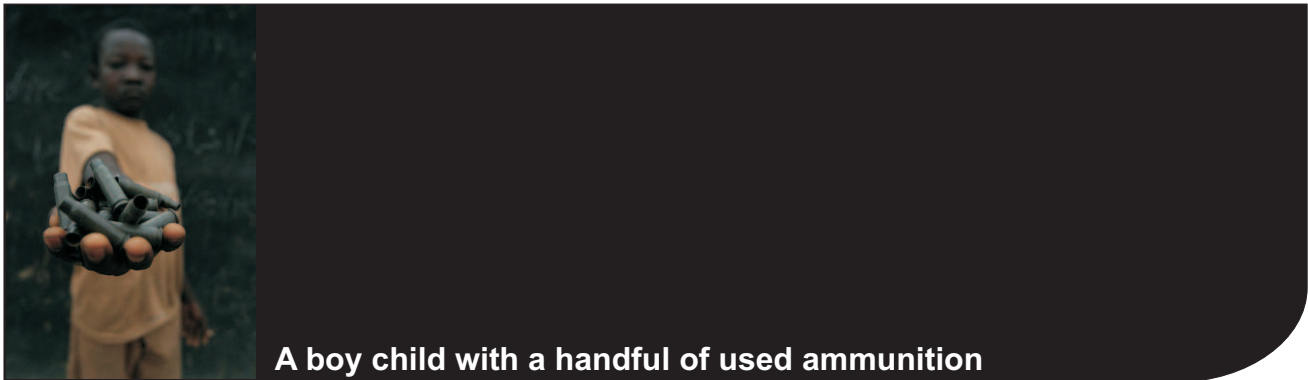


**A child soldier among adults**

Benjamin Barber castigates what he terms the ‘me world’ culture, which to him is responsible for the birth of a ‘universal consumption society which would not be made up of tribes or citizens... but only this new race of men, women (who) are consumed.’<sup>5</sup> Like Barber, Eduardo Galeano condemns the ‘society of incommunication,’ which to him characterises globalisation. He maintains that it ‘creates a dictatorship of unique speech, unique image, which are more devastating than those of the unique party.’<sup>6</sup> In any case, globalisation has been held to be one of the factors responsible for the generation of some conflicts, especially ethnic differences in the African continent. In the last two decades, domestic ethnic conflicts had been more common than interstate conflicts, and when



these conflicts were diffused and escalated, they threatened and jeopardised regional peace and security. Diffusion involved information flows from one state or ethnic community to another that already contained a high potential for ethnic conflict. The new information networks served to inflame ethnic tension. Escalation involved ethnic groups forging alliances with transnational kinship groups with the result often being spillovers, border conflicts or irredentism, and of course regional insecurity.



**A boy child with a handful of used ammunition**

### **Conflict propellants threaded in within the context of globalisation**

Whether or not ethnic conflicts become transnationalised depends not only on historical circumstances already known and accused of being responsible, but also of immediate circumstances embedded in the context of globalisation. Of course, the historical factors were largely traced to the invention of tribes, and with the removal of colonial social control mechanisms, the stage was set for the unleashing of 'tribalism' in the post-independence period.<sup>7</sup> The more immediate causes can either be categorised as precipitants or facilitating factors, which include increase in the circulation of light arms, the proliferation of drugs, increase of refugees and refugee camps and real or imagined fears of an ethnic group that incumbent elites are either unwilling or unable to make credible commitments to protect them against ethnic hostilities.<sup>8</sup>

The circulation of light arms was a crucial issue that propelled the occurrence of ethnic conflicts, among others. The end of the Cold War undid an ideological barrier, which specified sales conditions and selected clients of arms traders in the South according to their affiliation on the East-West political chessboard. The relative pauperisation of buyers made sales in light arms more attractive in such a way that they could be acquired by states, but equally by armed groups with little means. According to the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Lome, Togo, five million light arms (semi-automatic rifles, machine guns, mortars, anti-personnel mines, grenades and light missiles, just to name a few) circulate in the world, 40 per cent of which is illicit. Seven million of these circulate in West Africa alone, coming from most of the seventy known light arm-producing states. These equipments, which are cheaply bought through the internet<sup>9</sup> have had a great role in creating conflicts, especially inter-ethnic wars. Wast Jones explains that most suppliers and acquirers of light arms meet online where their deals are made. He argues that the purchase of these arms is synonymous to the recruitment of soldiers even across national borders through the same means: The internet.<sup>10</sup> Njoi Walters compliments this by stating that before the Tutsi rebels (RPF) from Uganda invaded Rwanda in the 1990s, they created an opinion sampling box in the internet from where the opinion of many Tutsis about the issue was sought, yielding a positive response. It was also through the box that many potential soldiers showed interest and were recruited for the task. Walters claims that the foundation of Tutsi success was their 'communication bang', without which the Rwandan genocide of 1994 could have been avoided.<sup>11</sup>

In fact, out of the 25 major conflicts identified in the world in 2006, for instance, Africa harboured thirteen, which killed more than 1500 people.<sup>12</sup> Apart from this, the number of people killed by these arms in the 1990s stood at about three million, of which 90 per cent were civilians, of which 80 per cent were women and children.<sup>13</sup> Generally speaking, the rather increasing insecurity

in Africa within the last decade undoubtedly evokes the problem of obsolescence of rules and norms which today govern the conduct of hostilities during war. For want of a professional army that controls entire territories in a number of major states, the provision of the Geneva Convention (12 August 1949) to institute international humanitarian law seems elusive in the continent.<sup>14</sup>

Besides the loss of life, the series of conflicts that engulfed the continent was directly responsible for the absorption of the scarce socio-economic resources of states for military expenditure. In this context, the Institute for Research on Peace in Stockholm puts expenditure on arms in the countries of the continent at USD 17.8 billion in the 1990s. Certain governments involved in war spent more than 60 per cent of their national budgets on arms purchase<sup>15</sup>.

Therefore, due to the availability and easy mobility of light arms, it was easy for people of different ethnic groups to acquire them in order to take up the defence of their kith and kin whether or not they were from the same state. At times, such alliances were extended to other situations. The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), for example, was witness to bloody casualties when it played host to regular armies allied to the regime of the late President Laurant Desire Kabila (Angola, 2,000, Namibia, 2,000, Burundi, 2,000 and Zimbabwe, 10,000) or which were opposed to him (Uganda 9,000, Rwanda, 10,000, Burundi, figure unknown). The current situation in this country is still precarious, with the influence of the Rwandan militiamen.

The destructive nature of the legal instruments of wars of new conflicts discussed here, and in particular the insertion into armies of child mercenaries (instead of child soldiers), are partially variable, a fact often used as a justification in the propaganda of a phenomenon that exacerbated transnational ethnic conflicts, namely the proliferation of drugs. Some decades ago, nobody could have thought of including Africa in the list of continents involved in the illegal sale of drugs. But the situation changed with the passage of time, following the adjustment of the liberal economic system, improved air and land transport, and especially due to the efficiency of the electronic banking system that allows the laundering of dirty money. The drug economy generates USD 400 billion in a world market of about 200 million consumers of whom only a minority are to be found in Africa.<sup>16</sup> A rise in drug circulation and consumption by young child mercenaries, be it 'soft' drugs like marijuana or 'hard' ones like cocaine and heroin, persisted in Africa, especially during the 1990s, following close on the heels of the phenomenon of the 'global village'. The outcome was obvious: A heightened ferocity in the behaviour of belligerent youths. The introduction and expansion of this drug culture on the continent equally ushered in the war of cartels with related regional security implications. Such a negative evolution would be added to another security worry in Africa within the context of this new world order: That of refugees and refugee camps.

Because the proliferation of arms and drugs was at the forefront of encouraging the escalation of ethnic conflicts on the continent, the problem of refugees became a direct consequence (see table I below). Some of the refugees were placed in camps, mostly outside the host countries, like in the case of the Great Lake region in Africa, and most of them constituted nurseries for the recruitment of soldiers, mercenaries and child mercenaries. These camps that were supposed to be administered by international humanitarian organisations were placed under the firm rule of military chiefs who tried to reconquer and capture power in their countries of origin and lead wars in their host countries in the interest of local factions or supported their kin in neighbouring countries. Such activities in the camps violated the provisions of the African Charter on Refugees of 1969 that prohibited all political activities under such circumstances. The reality of acts perceived in Rwandan refugee camps situated at Uvira East of the DRC, saw the recruitment of the first contingents which accomplished the unbelievable epic success in Kinshasa alongside Kabila in 1997. This of course was far from following the prescribed political neutrality.

**Table I**  
**The Flow of Refugees in Africa since 1990<sup>17</sup>**

Place of Asylum	Mostly From	Number
Algeria	Western Sahara, Mali and Niger	5,220,000
Burundi	Rwanda	1,20,000
Cote d'Ivoire	Liberia	1,40,000
Ethiopia	Somalia, Sudan, Djivout and Kenya	2,90,000
Ghana	Togo and Liberia	3,08,000
Guinea	Liberia, Sierra Leone and Ethiopia	85,000
Kenya	Somalia, Sudan and Ethiopia	6,40,000
Liberia	Sierra Leone	2,25,000
Senegal	Mauritania	1,20,000
South Africa	Mozambique	68,000
Sudan	Eritrea, Ethiopia and Chad	90,000
Tanzania	Rwanda, Burundi, DRC, Mozambique	4,50,000
Uganda	Sudan, DRC and Rwanda	7,03,000
DRC	Rwanda, Angola, Burundi, Sudan and Uganda	2,30,000
Republic of Congo		13,32,000
Zambia	Angola, DRC and Somalia	1,25,400

Karl W. Deutsch notes that often armies made up of adolescents and refugees were financed by diasporic networks implanted from abroad. These veritably stateless armies were often in conflict with armyless states,<sup>18</sup> which were themselves obliged to recruit mercenaries or solicit the assistance of kinship networks or friendly neighbouring communities or states to counter internal rebellion, which were most of the time better organised (the recruitment was mostly done in a similar way to that of the RPF, as explained earlier).<sup>19</sup> It was the prevalence of these elements instituted by the new world phenomenon in Africa that caused ethnic conflicts to become rampant, internationalised and constantly jeopardised regional peace and security, as with cases of the disjointed ethnic conflict in Liberia and the invention of 'tribalism' in Rwanda and Burundi.

### **Some ethnic conflicts diffused beyond national boundaries**

Although the military coup staged by Sergeant Samuel Doe, an ethnic Krahn, in 1980 against Americo-Liberian President Tolbert had ethnic undertones, the conflict was contained within Liberia. The depths of ethnic tension in the country did not manifest itself until after an abortive coup in 1985.<sup>20</sup> Doe believed that the coup was instigated by members of the Gio ethnic group, and so began to systematically persecute them and their kin, the Mano. On 24 December 1989, a sophisticated, well organised and armed opposition force, the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), led by Charles Taylor, invaded Liberia from Ivory Coast and targeted the Krahn and their ethnic kin, the Mandingo, both supporters of Doe. However, the opposition force later split into six movements based on ethnicity; the most significant being Taylor's United Liberian Movement for Democracy.

The level of ethnic violence reached astounding proportions, recording more than 750,000 Liberian refugees, with over 100,000 seeking refuge in neighbouring Sierra Leone,<sup>21</sup> where, masterminded by Taylor's arms connections, a civil war erupted. Peace attempts were instituted by the Economic Community of West Africa States' Cease Fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG). This five-nation force, led by Nigeria, was able to contain the trouble. But owing to the transnational nature the issue had assumed, and lack of a unified opposition, peace was difficult to achieve. Ivory Coast, Sierra Leone and Guinea continued to support NPFL; and the NPFL supported the opposition forces in Sierra Leone.<sup>22</sup> The support of various rebel forces by neighbouring states contributed greatly to the escalation and protractedness of the conflicts, despite the best efforts of external actors to make peace.

The ethnic tensions in Rwanda and Burundi on their parts were virtual mirror images of one another. In each country, the Hutu made up about 85 per cent of the total population while the Tutsi accounted for 14 per cent, although they all spoke the same languages; Kirundi in Burundi and Kinyarwanda in Rwanda. They also shared the same customs and had historically lived relatively harmoniously for centuries before the colonial period. Because of their ownership of cattle, the Tutsi historically established a patron-client relationship with the Hutus. However, the rule of the minority Tutsi was more rigidly institutionalised in Rwanda than in Burundi.<sup>23</sup>

The Belgians after taking over the colonial rule of Rwanda from the Germans following World War I, like their predecessors, ruled through the existing political arrangements, and showed preference towards the Tutsi in the assignment of administrative and military positions, as well as educational opportunities. The authority of the Tutsi became extremely harsh towards the Hutus. It was in this context that there emerged a sense of collective Hutu identity, and the late 1950s, with the 'wind of change' blowing all over the colonised world including in colonies neighbouring Rwanda, a Hutu national movement began to take shape. Its ethnic character was reinforced in political competition that accompanied the struggle for independence. In 1960, after several years of guerrilla warfare, Hutu insurgents succeeded in overthrowing the Tutsi political leadership, and independence came in 1962. The Tutsi were purged from government and the army, and systematically discriminated against. Some of the Tutsi became refugees as a result in countries surrounding Rwanda.<sup>24</sup>



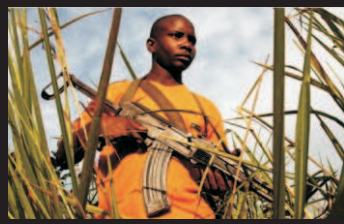
Cover of a recent book on the issue

Those Tutsi in exile in Uganda initially were totally marginalised in that country, but eventually many young Tutsi of Rwandan descent, joined the ranks of the National Resistant Movement of Yoweri Museveni (the Tutsi have an ethnic affinity with the Hima of Museveni) in his fight to overthrow Idi Amin and subsequently the regimes of Milto Obote and General Tito Okello. With this experience and the availability of easy access to arms in and around Uganda, and with Museveni's support, many Rwandans took up arms against the Hutu regime in Rwanda, following the formation of the Rwanda Patriotic Front with the aim of reclaiming Tutsi citizenship rights. The ethnic tensions within Rwanda escalated when this force of 10,000 armed combatants invaded northern Rwanda in 1990, causing havoc throughout the country. Hutus, now intensely fearing for their physical safety, conjured up memories of alien Tutsi from 'Ethiopia' returning to once again

impose feudalism on a much more numerous Hutu, an unacceptable prospect for the latter. But the ceasefire and political settlement brokered by the Organisation of African Unity in Arusha, Tanzania, in 1992 that recommended power-sharing between the factions came to nothing when President Habyarimana, who had a Hutu background, was assassinated in April 1994 by Hutu hardliners.<sup>25</sup>

This led to a frenzy of genocide against the Tutsi by the hardline Hutus and also Hutu civilians, who got caught up in the hysteria and succumbed to the spell of their leadership who systematically called upon them to purge the society of the Tutsi. More than 500,000 Tutsi and moderate Hutus were murdered in a brief three-month-period. The weapons used in committing the genocide in most cases were small arms as well as traditional weapons. In an effort to halt the carnage, the RPF resumed full-scale war against the Hutu militia and the Rwandan army, routing them and forcing millions of civilian Hutus to flee across the borders into Zaire and Tanzania. They took control of the country and established a government of national reconciliation, albeit under Tutsi leadership.<sup>26</sup> Yet, for Hutus in exile, this commitment was not credible because of past experiences and because of the fear of vengeful retribution on the part of the Tutsi who would like to see those involved punished for their deeds.

Of course, the culprits were brought to book, not on the basis of revenge, but to serve the cause of justice. The Rwandan criminal justice system was utterly overwhelmed. An estimated 140,000 persons were accused of having participated in the genocide and were incarcerated in hopelessly overcrowded, stockade-like prisons.<sup>27</sup> With extremely limited resources, the new government struggled to provide the 39 lawyers necessary to prosecute all those detained. On 1 September 1996, the government passed a law designed to help expedite the process. The new law divided the accused into four categories: Organisers and notorious killers; murderers; those who committed assault that did not result in death; and those who committed crimes on property, like looting. The new law also introduced the idea of plea-bargaining with the hope that some suspects would provide information in exchange for licences to assist the prosecution of those who committed more serious crimes.<sup>28</sup> Even with the new law, court officials were forced by limited resources to depend on the highly standardised processes and rigorous rules of evidence used in formal court proceedings, and were criticised by accused and victims alike.



**Guerilla in the grass-fields**

By contrast, the United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), set up in Arusha, Tanzania, received millions of dollars of funding to prosecute fewer than seventy accused. With a fraction of those resources, the domestic court of Rwanda by 2003 conducted over 6,000 trials, an impressive number, but one that still represented only a small percentage of the detainees awaiting trial. With far too many people to prosecute through usual channels, officials instituted a new system, known as the *gacaca* based on traditional community hearing used to resolve disputes. This problem simply highlights one of the difficult problems that Rwanda faces, even at present, in rebuilding a society after the devastation of the genocide in which over half the country was implicated.<sup>29</sup>

In contrast to Rwanda, ethnic stratification in Burundi was less rigid.<sup>30</sup> A mediating role was played in Burundian society by the institution of *ganwa*, the princely oligarchy. Princes could be from either the Hutu or the Tutsi, but custom regarded them as ethnically distinct from the rest. However, Belgian colonial rule, as in Rwanda, came to undermine the traditional system. The colonialists handed out ethnic identity cards, and established a caste system very similar to that of colonial Rwanda. The Tutsi came to be favoured in all aspects of life.

There was, in Burundi, a peaceful transition to independence under Tutsi leadership. Although, some Hutus played a limited role in government after independence, most were purged from power by subsequent regimes, both military and civilian. Some of them, inspired by the social revolution in Rwanda, attempted to push for their group's rights in Burundi. At the same time, the Tutsi leadership in that country was determined not to suffer the fate of the Tutsi overlords of Rwanda. They feared that the Hutu-dominated government would systematically violate their rights as citizens. Burundian Hutus attempted revolts in 1965, 1972 and 1988.<sup>31</sup> With the great circulation of arms and drugs in the sub-region, they got access to them and launched a serious ethnic struggle against the Tutsi in 1991, but they were brutally repressed.

After 1990, with the encouragement of France and other patrons, Burundian Tutsi leadership began opening up the political system. In 1992, the first multi-party constitution was introduced. In the subsequent national election in June 1993, Melchior Ndadaye, was elected the first Hutu president of Burundi. However, the military continued to be dominated by the Tutsi and the hardliners in Tutsi society. They refused to compromise. At the same time, the Hutu extremists pushed for a rapid purging of the Tutsi from positions of power. Ndadaye chose a gradualist strategy by utilising a formula for including the Tutsi in his government and integrating Hutus into the military officers corps.

Ethnic tension continued to be diffused until Ndadaye was assassinated in 1993, and the Tutsi-dominated military seized power once again. In the aftermath of the coup, an estimated 100,000 people on both sides lost their lives. Both factions utilised the arms they acquired, as well as rumour and myth, to incite the killings and to justify extreme acts of ethnic violence. As many as 700,000 Burundians fled to neighbouring countries, and more than a million others were displaced inside the country.<sup>32</sup> Through the mediation of third parties such as the UN and the OAU, Burundi was able to restore a fragile democracy by April 1994, under Hutu leadership. The OAU engaged in preventive diplomacy in an effort to head off the escalation of ethnic conflict, but this failed as a Tutsi-led military coup toppled the civilian government less than two years later.

Although transnationalised ethnic conflict is relatively rare in Africa today, there is increasing concern in the international community with the necessity of the creation of mechanisms to manage domestic conflicts that have the potential to spill over borders. History has shown that permanent solutions to such conflicts are nearly impossible; therefore, success is more likely if prevention and management of deep-rooted and potentially violent ethnic conflicts is achieved. Individual countries might engage in various strategies for internally eliminating or managing ethnic differences.

### Promoting peace and security in Africa

The most common options available for the elimination of ethnic differences range from genocide to total assimilation.<sup>33</sup> The incident of ethnic cleansing attempted in Rwanda in 1994 was clearly genocide. This option is almost impossible to effectively implement today because of the outcry it ultimately raises in the international community. Genocidal adventures today are normally halted before they can run their course.

**The assimilation option is also difficult, if not impossible, to implement in situations where integration is tantamount to the establishment of hegemonic control in accordance with the cultural preferences of the reigning ethnic group. Successive Sudanese governments, for instance, attempted this project, but failed precisely because the objects of assimilation were not willing to cooperate in the destruction of their cultures. Also, all of the governments of modern Ethiopia have tried and failed to assimilate disparate ethnic communities into a state with a common ethnic identity.**

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the destruction of their cultures. Also, all of the governments of modern Ethiopia have tried and failed to assimilate disparate ethnic communities into a state with a common ethnic identity.

Another common option for eliminating ethnic differences that might become transnationalised would be partition or secession. This was attempted by the Ogaden Somali in 1977-78; it became a goal of some members of Ethiopia's Oromo ethnic group; and it was seriously considered by both sides in the Sudan conflict, but it yielded no result.<sup>34</sup>

Methods for managing ethnic differences as opposed to eliminating them within a country vary from the strategies adopted by national leaders to the intervention of external actors. Domestically, leaders may engage in policies of hegemonic control or transparent state-society relations. The objective of the second alternative is to build trust. There are four main trust-building options for national leaders: Demonstration of respect for all groups and their cultures; formal or informal power sharing; elections according to rules that ensure either power-sharing or the minimal representation of all ethnic groups in national politics; and federalism or regional autonomy.<sup>35</sup>

African leaders are increasingly realising that in the long run it is not wise to adopt hegemonic control as the strategy for management of ethnic conflict. Wherever this has been tried, it has failed. This point is amply made by the Ethiopian and Sudanese experiences. As difficult as they are to achieve, trust-building approaches to managing ethnic conflicts in Africa seemed to hold the greatest promise. In almost all cases where national leaders adopt such approaches, they will probably be initially viewed with suspicion by groups who have previously felt insecure. However, through actions and policies which demonstrate the commitment of government to respecting all groups and cultures, confidence and trust can be engendered.

Power-sharing is becoming very popular in Africa with the most successful experiments being those of Burundi, Djibouti, South Africa<sup>36</sup> and recently, Zimbabwe. In the first three cases, a conscious attempt was made to assure ethnic groups that they had group representation at the level of national government and some measure of regional autonomy. Confidence-building measures such as these are best seen as new ethnic contracts.

**Nevertheless, rather than genuine power-sharing, what is more common in Africa is for the continent's political leaders to demonstrate only a tentative commitment to power-sharing and to present only the appearance of attempting to form governments that are characterised by broad ethnic representation at the leadership level that gives merely the indication of being concerned with social equity and the equal worth of all individuals and groups. The predominant intention of leaders is to keep the international community (particularly the west) unable to reach any sound judgement with regard to the peace and prosperity of their nations, thereby building a degree of trust, avoiding being taken to task and thereby excluded from any economic benefits that might accrue from it.**

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South Africa's first multiracial, multiparty elections were held in 1994, under modified proportional representation rules. No single party was able to achieve an absolute majority, while some parties proved to be electorally non-viable. Subsequent negotiations resulted in the sharing of

executive power by the two strongest parties, the African National Congress (ANC) and the National Party (NP), and the appointment of the leaders of other parties who did well in the election to significant cabinet posts.<sup>37</sup> This seemed to have been enough to engender wide confidence in South African society that the country's leaders were committed to protecting the rights of all citizens irrespective of their race or ethnicity. Consequently, negotiations over a new social contract as represented in a permanent constitution proceeded with a minimum of serious conflict or ethnic/racial tensions.



Children of Midnight : Congolese Child Soldiers

Federalism or regional autonomy is another approach that can be used to build trust among groups that earlier felt threatened. However, this approach is likely to fail unless leaders are willing to make credible commitments and to demonstrate consistently that they respect all citizens. Sudan unsuccessfully attempted a strategy of regional autonomy. It was undermined by what proved to be a hegemonic project on the part of Islamic fundamentalists. Nigeria, with 31 states, has been relatively more successful at making federation work in the wake of the Biafran Civil War. Federation was chosen as a strategy in 1979, in an effort to avoid severe ethno-regional conflicts in the future. Since then, there have been no further serious threats to the maintenance of Nigeria's national boundaries. In Cameroon, the issue of federalism is currently under serious reconsideration. However, no matter what strategies are chosen, success largely depends upon the will and commitment of the leadership in question. If leaders are not prone to compromise and to operate transparently, ethnic tensions are bound to re-emerge, and in some cases the resulting tensions will turn into conflicts.

Increasingly, some observers believe that preventive diplomacy should be employed to address both inter-state and intra-state sources of conflict. The objective of such a strategy would be to head off conflicts through diplomacy before they erupt. This approach has two dimensions, namely early preventive diplomacy and late preventive diplomacy. The former involves effective and skilled diplomacy as soon as tensions become apparent and the latter involves application of force to persuade adversarial groups to desist when conflict appears to be imminent. A corollary to this approach would be the preventive deployment of peacekeeping troops in order to serve as a deterrent to conflict.<sup>38</sup> But to be effective, such deployment should be robust, involving a sizeable contingent of appropriately armed peacekeepers with clearly defined rules of engagement.

Once conflicts occur, preventive diplomacy and preventive deployment must give way to peace-making. In such cases, arbitration and mediation on the part of third parties is called for. Such actors might be internal to the troubled country, and represented in persons of high moral standing, or people who appear to be neutral to the given conflict, or individuals with widespread appeal. Nevertheless, in case of the most intractable conflicts in Africa, the trend seems to favour the intervention of external actors: Individuals such as former President Jimmy Carter of the USA or Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa; government officials representing one or another major power; representatives of the UN; the Organisation of African Unity [OAU, now African Union (AU)]; or sub-regional organisations such as ECOWAS and the Inter-Governmental Agency for Drought and Development (IGADD). Under the auspices of the OAU, former Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere provided his good offices between 1995 and 1997 to stem the spread of ethnic



conflicts in Rwanda and Burundi.<sup>39</sup>

In the aftermath of the Cold War, the controls exercised by the superpowers over regional clients in Africa have been removed and the possibility of growing incidents of transnationalised conflicts increased. The realities of this situation encouraged African leaders to seriously reconsider the norms of external intervention to settle domestic disputes.<sup>40</sup>

The UN, like the OAU, has historically supported the idea of the inviolability of the national boundaries of African states that existed at the time of independence. Consequently, it has been unwilling to become involved in adjudicating boundary disputes among neighbouring states, and it has generally stayed out of mediating domestic conflicts, except for its intervention in the Congo crisis in the early 1960s. At the time, many observers seemed to believe that this action would serve notice that the UN would intervene anywhere in Africa where a communist threat was perceived. However, the Congo operation proved to be unique and was never repeated. Despite its record in this area, in the 1990s the UN began to rethink the notion of state sovereignty and the norms of intervention in domestic disputes. This was prompted by Iraq's brutal repression of the Kurds in the aftermath of the Gulf War. Also, the civil war in Somalia catalysed the UN into action first on humanitarian and then political grounds.



Warfare as leisure

In the spring of 1992, the organisation committed peacekeeping troops to Somalia in an operation called United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNSO I). The primary motivation was humanitarian. The force was to clear the way for desperately needed food deliveries to an estimated 1.5 million Somalis threatened by war-induced famine. In late 1992, the Security Council authorised the deployment of a US-led military force, UNSOM II, to protect relief workers as they attempted to reach at-risk populations. Whereas the US defined its role in strictly humanitarian terms, the UN envisioned a wider role for UN forces: Disarming the armies of local warlords and creating an enabling environment for the restoration of a Somali national government.<sup>41</sup> The latter objective proved to be a failure, as the UN was unable to make peace among warring leaders of ethnic factions or to build peace by creating an enabling environment for the return of a civilian government based on the trust of the general population.

The lessons of Somalia have in part forced the leaders of the international community to look more carefully at the possibility of regionally based approaches to the regulation of ethnic conflicts that either are or have a good possibility of spreading regionally. Following the UN's embarrassment in Somalia, its former negotiator in the conflict, Mohamed Sahnun, asserted,

[T]he UN headquarters must establish strong permanent and functional relationships with the regional organisations so that they can coordinate their response to specific needs in different regions of the world. The current system is not adapted to the post-Cold War international environments and routinely reacts to crises through improvisation.<sup>42</sup>

Apart from the failure of adversaries to make credible commitments in the course of third party negotiation, much of the blame for failures of such efforts must be laid at the feet of the international community, which has always been reluctant to intervene either coercively or non-coercively in conflicts where the major actors do not perceive their vital national interests to be at

stake. Even when regional actors, despite lacking the resources to do so effectively, are willing to attempt to manage their own problems, the international community has historically been reluctant to provide support to regionally based interventions. This has particularly been so in the case of African disputes.

The OAU has been, from time to time, willing to try and engage in peace-keeping in domestic conflicts that were regionalised, but it never had the wherewithal to do so effectively. Such was the case with the first major OAU peacekeeping effort in Chad in 1981-82. It was underfinanced and plagued by logistical problems.

The most successful inter-African peace keeping effort was that mounted by ECOMOG in 1991, with the objective of restoring peace in Liberia. This was due, among other reasons, to the promptness of its intervention, its mastery of the origin of the conflict, the unity of opinion in the army and its political will and determination to establish peace in Liberia. After five years of peacekeeping, the West African unit of ECOMOG was augmented by troops from Uganda and Tanzania. By August 1995, some semblance of order had been restored, and a government of national reconciliation had been agreed on by warring parties.<sup>43</sup> Although it was founded to manage conflict among member states and to represent their interest in international fora, the OAU played more of a reactive role in addressing threats to the national and regional security, working through informal channels rather than through established mediation and conciliation institutions.

### Conclusion

The foregoing analysis attempted to examine the influence of globalisation on the African continent. With the world operating as a 'global village', much has been achieved by individuals as well as nations, but such a phenomenon has not been entirely beneficial for Africa. Some of its contents, mostly the laundering of dirty money, circulation of illicit arms and proliferation of drugs, proved to have affected this part of the world negatively as several ethnically based conflicts escalated to engulf the continent, especially during the 1990s. Such conflicts were often not domestically confined, but most operated on a transnational basis and assumed a transnational character, spilling over to other neighbouring states, with far reaching ramifications. In fact, for such conflicts to be minimised in Africa, any peace effort must find ways through trust-building among constituent ethnic groups. The governments, which must create the perception of being transparent and honest, must also prove the credibility of their commitment to respecting and protecting the rights of all groups. This can happen only through the demonstration of faith on part of political leaders to social justice and to a political system that operates according to the principles of democracy. This would go a long way towards effective conflict management and peace-building.

However, such efforts of managing conflicts could be effective if only the mechanisms are in place to pre-empt the occurrence of such conflicts. The most effective pre-emptive mechanism would be for nations to close their borders to illicit arms and drugs and/or their collective efforts for peace and security should lay emphasis on combating the laundering of dirty money. Past experiences show that all these vices constitute severe threats to peace in the continent in the post-Cold War era as they have greatly contributed to the escalation of dormant or inactive ethnic variations and differences. In fact, this is the dominant perception of Africans about the ways to ensure peace and security in the era of globalisation.

The terrible ethnic experience of the continent has caused most African leaders to learn positive lessons, which have prompted many to increasingly come to feel that security, stability and development of every African country affects every other African country. Such a perception was first noted in 1992, at the OAU Summit in Dakar, Senegal, where a resolution was passed calling for the establishment of the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention and Resolution. The mechanism was formally approved the following year, but it remained unclear as to how much authority it would have to intervene in the affairs of member-states. Early indications were that OAU member-states did not adopt an attitude conducive to the establishment of a Wilsonian multi-lateral collective security management system. In fact, it would be better to say that it was unclear whether the notions

of state sovereignty and the norms of intervention would indeed be altered in the process of implementing the mechanism.

The primary objective of the AU mechanism was said to be the ‘anticipation and prevention of conflicts’. In situations where conflicts occurred, the mechanism was supposed to be responsible for undertaking peace-making and peace-building activities. In the case of severe conflict, there was the provision for the organisation’s cooperation with the UN. Such was the case in late 1996 when African troops were committed to the humanitarian force organised under UN auspices to insure the delivery of food and other relief supplies to Rwandan refugees in the war-torn Great Lakes region of Central Africa.

The obstacles, chief among them being lack of finances, to the successful implementation of the mechanism remain formidable. Bilateral aid donors and the UN made contributions, but much greater resources are needed. At its 1995 Summit, the OAU made some tentative strides towards addressing some of its funding needs. First, the Secretary General threatened cutting off speaking and voting rights for leaders of countries who had been tardy in paying their dues, which immediately generated some twenty million US dollars. Second, the leaders in attendance demonstrated a firm commitment to the mechanism by agreeing to place their armed services on standby for possible intervention in increasingly unstable areas like Burundi. These actions were preceded by the inauguration of the Cairo and Zimbabwe Centres for African Crisis Solving. Eventually, the OAU planned creating a continental ‘rapid deployment force’. Troops would be drawn from standing national armies and trained and deployed from one of the two centres. The forces would operate under the aegis of the UN. With the creation of the African Union, such dreams of the OAU appear to have gained the possibility of being transformed into realities, and it has made a good start by intervening in the crisis in Sudan.

But the worry about the success of the AU, according to Gareth Evans, is about funding difficulties, which still preoccupy most conflict analysts, given that Africa comprises 53 of the poorest countries in the world, many of which are characterised by unstable politics and food insecurity. Most of their armies are also not very large and yet some have already spent too much on military purposes.<sup>44</sup> How then will they afford to participate in the mechanism of peace and security over time? Who is to pay for the training and upkeep of the elite troops a country must make available to the inter-African peace keeping force? Will the AU be able to assert its assigned authority in the face of prolonged crises? Will the mechanism be obstructed by member-states that have yet to buy into the new conceptualisation of national sovereignty and norms of intervention of this new organisation?

In order for the African efforts at solving ethnic conflicts to succeed, especially those that spread regionally, the activities of outside actors cannot be confined to peace-keeping, that is, the containment of actual military activities on the part of ethnic adversaries. The challenge will be to develop effective political strategies for peace-making. Most often severe ethnic conflicts are inspired and promoted by leaders with their own personal agenda, like the case of Darfur in Sudan. Unless there is a leadership willing to declare its commitment to peace, and is willing to demonstrate that it is serious to this commitment, tension will remain and may even escalate. The most urgent and necessary measure is to desist from buying and selling illicit arms and/or supporting rebel and mercenary actions across national boundaries.

<sup>1</sup> For more details about globalisation, see Jouna Mama, *La mondialisation et l'économie Camerounaise* Editions Saagraph et Fondation, Friedrich Ebert, Yaounde, 1998, pp. 21-46; Thierry de Montbrial, “Le monde au tournant du siècle”, available on [www.ifri.org/downloads/montbrial00\\_1.pdf](http://www.ifri.org/downloads/montbrial00_1.pdf), accessed on 08.02.2010.

<sup>2</sup> Montbrial, “Le monde”, p. 14.

<sup>3</sup> Dot Keet, *Integrating the World Community Political Challenges and Opportunities for Developing*

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# The Patterns of Corruption in Institutions of Higher Learning in Zimbabwe: A General Overview from State Universities 2000–2008

Zimbabwe, at the turn of the new millennium, has seen an increase in the number of institutions of higher learning driven by the growing number of people demanding higher education. The government is trying to create these new institutions to meet the development goals of a Southern country. The creation and overall development of these institutions is accompanied by growing corruption. This paper seeks to analyse the dimensions of corruption that have emerged and to evaluate the specific types of corruption that have affected the overall nurturing of the human resource base necessary for the development of Zimbabwe.



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## Introduction

To begin with, it is important to highlight, as the Zimbabwean case shows, that corruption, among other factors, has had serious negative impacts on service delivery and overall achievement of set objectives and expected outcomes. One of the ways in which corruption affects development is a distortion of resource allocation. Institutions of higher learning, whose numbers have increased to cater to a growing demand in higher education, were historically thought to be immune from corrupt practices by virtue of their centrality in the training of leaders in commerce, politics and society at large. But recently it has been seen that corruption has impacted education as in all other sectors. This has been happening in the context of an increased demand for education following independence in Africa.

In the light of the economic and political environment prevalent in Zimbabwe in the twenty-first century, these newly created institutions had to grapple with a number of challenges, which in turn, have led to the emergence and exacerbation of corrupt practices. This has resulted in an increasing loss of confidence and the rise in cultural practices that affect the educational institutions, which are places for imparting knowledge and making people more disciplined. This paper seeks to provide a general overview of the occurrence of corrupt practices in Zimbabwe's state-owned universities. The paper begins with a study of the background to corruption in institutions of higher learning, providing a conceptual and comparative framework of analysis with other institutions globally, particularly those in the Southern countries. It will then provide in detail the patterns of corruption in the state universities paying particular attention to causes, forms and impact. Further, the paper examines and evaluates the solutions that have been put in place to combat corruption. Policies that need to be taken into consideration to win a war against such malpractices will also be proffered.

## Historical Background to Corruption and its Prevalence in Institutions of Higher Learning

Philip G. Altbach in defining corruption noted that a dictionary definition which captures it as an 'impairment of integrity, virtue, or moral principle... inducement to wrong by improper or unlawful means', well captures the meaning when it comes to academia and institutions of higher learning.<sup>1</sup> However, it is important to state at the very beginning that one needs to separate some acts of mere incompetence and inadequacies by some actors and those that fall under corrupt practices.<sup>2</sup>

According to Miynt U, corruption is defined

as the use of public office for private gain, or in other words, use of official position, rank or status by an office bearer for his own personal benefit. Following from this definition, examples of corrupt behaviour would include: (a) Bribery, (b) extortion, (c) fraud, (d) embezzlement, (e) nepotism, (f) cronyism, (g) appropriation of public assets and property for private use, and (h) influence peddling.<sup>3</sup>

**Corruption denotes the abuse of power or authority vested in an office for personal gain. In essence it is subversion of public interest by personal interest or simply put, anything that negatively affects clean administration of the institutions of higher learning. The overall effect is that the best qualified people for the job cease to count because loyalty rather than ability to do the job directs appointments. When it comes to the admission and grading of students the best qualified are denied places and good grades, which go to the less deserving who are related or somehow connected to office-bearers and those who determine grading.**

To exemplify, in a corrupt institution or state 'productive resources are deployed in such a way that they favour those in power, their relatives and yes men or women.'<sup>4</sup> It is also important to highlight that corruption is largely a hidden transaction which the involved parties like to keep secret and that the 'most widely condemned practices (e.g. kickbacks on government contracts) are also the most hidden, while more visible practices (e.g. forced private tutoring) tend to be more tolerated.'<sup>5</sup>

El Hadji I. Sall differentiates between what is

termed 'according to rule' corruption and 'against the rule.' Facilitation payments, where a bribe is paid

to receive preferential treatment for something that the bribe receiver is required to do by law, constitute the former. The latter, on the other hand, is a bribe paid to obtain services from the bribe receiver is prohibited from providing.<sup>6</sup>

In other words, corruption denotes the abuse of power or authority vested in an office for personal gain. In essence it is subversion of public interest by personal interest or simply put, as this paper does, anything that negatively affects clean administration of the institutions of higher learning. The overall effect is that the best qualified people for the job cease to count because loyalty rather than ability to do the job directs appointments. When it comes to the admission and grading of students the best qualified are denied places and good grades, which go to the less deserving who are related or somehow connected to office-bearers and those who determine grading.

The key to understanding corruption is the discretionary powers the office-holder has in relation to certain benefits and services he can dispense. Crucially, it is difficult to have control on these powers since excessive checks will lead to failure of services. According to Miynt, this is also related to the concept of economic rent, which says 'a person who owns... a special asset can charge more than normal price for its use and earn economic rent or monopoly profit.'<sup>7</sup>

The concept of economic rent and how it is directly linked to corruption has aptly been captured by Klitgaard's equation (as cited by Miynt):  $C=R+D-A$ , where  $C$  stands for Corruption,  $R$  for economic rent,  $D$  for discretionary powers, and  $A$  for accountability. Miynt explains this to mean, ... [T]he more opportunities for economic rent ( $R$ ) exist in a country, the larger will be the corruption. Similarly, the greater the discretionary powers ( $D$ ) granted to administrators, the greater will be the corruption. However, the more administrators are held accountable ( $A$ ) for their actions, the less will be the corruption, and hence a minus sign in front of  $A$ .<sup>8</sup>

Miynt says corrupt tendencies are likely to emerge if

Administrators are granted large discretionary powers with respect to interpreting rules, they are given a lot of freedom to decide on how rules are to be applied, to whom and in what manner they are to be applied, are vested with powers to amend, alter, and rescind the rules, and even to supplement the rules by invoking new restrictive administrative measures and procedures; and there are no effective mechanisms and institutional arrangements in the country to hold administrators accountable for their action.<sup>9</sup>

This has been the case when new institutions are being set up as is the case in Zimbabwe's state universities in the twenty-first century.

The occurrence of corruption in institutions of higher learning has a wider scope than once thought in conventional wisdom. It occurs or originates at almost all levels of the higher education sector, i.e. at the political, administrative, and classroom level. The taxonomy of corruption in the education system in general thus begins at the political level through procurement and accreditation. Here the buyer is the educational institution and the seller is the government, usually the ministry of education. At the administrative level it involves obtaining illegal entrance to specialised programmes, having grades raised through illegal payments, including those for normal educational services (housing, library use, computer access, information access, administrative procedures, etc.). The buyer is the student and the seller is either a member of the faculty or the administration. At the classroom level, obtaining requisite information, assistance in students' work, accessing relevant and lucrative attachments, etc., the student becomes the buyer and the seller a member of the department.

In Zimbabwe, corruption has become entrenched in institutions of higher learning as a result of substantial changes in the political and economic system that have taken place at the turn of the century. This has been coupled with increased number of state universities accompanied by increased enrolments.

Corruption in state universities (apart from those that take place at the political level) occurs at specific times in the educational calendar. Those that involve students usually occur at the beginning of the semester during admissions and in the run-up to and during the examination period and when grants are allocated.



## The Patterns of Corruption in State Universities

### *Causes of corruption*

Conventionally, selfishness and greed are thought to be the two most powerful forces stoking corruption the world over. Some individuals practice corruption, not only to get richer than their colleagues but also to be admired for their skills in outwitting authorities. Because of selfishness, corrupt people turn a blind eye to the suffering that their corruption inflicts on others, and they justify bribery simply because they benefit from it. The more material benefits they amass, the greedier they become.

However, as the Zimbabwean case demonstrates, it is important to note that there are other factors emanating from the environment that need a close review and analysis. For institutions of higher learning in contemporary Zimbabwe, there is a clear correlation between economic factors and corruption.<sup>10</sup> Various stakeholders in institutions of higher learning are short of money and this puts great pressure to alter systems and regulations for the purposes of obtaining benefits. Faculty members and administrators may be looking for ways to supplement woefully inadequate salaries in a society lacking other opportunities for employment. For example, a lecturer earns 2 trillion Zimbabwean dollars and this is only enough to buy a loaf of bread.<sup>11</sup> Further, the economic environment existing in Zimbabwe in the 21st century has seen most workers in state universities living below the poverty datum line, which as of 2008 was at USD 150 when the average lecturer salary was USD 5. This coupled with external pressures to admit and promote students with monetary and other benefits increases corrupt tendencies.

At the same time, employees feel resentment over bad management or pay levels that they think to be unfair. This makes them feel justified in making false expense claims or taking bribes. People with pitifully low wages come to feel that they have no option but to demand bribes in order to make a decent living. And when those who extort bribes or pay them to gain an unfair advantage go unpunished, few are prepared to swim against the tide.<sup>12</sup>

Politicians seek money to use for patronage, which they argue to be essential to prevent political instability and unrest. Faculty and administrators with woefully low salaries serve the moneyed classes who are prepared to go to any length to get their wishes fulfilled. Officials need extra money to maintain their standards of living if salaries have not been raised to match inflation, to meet commitments for housing, car, school fees, etc.

Politicians and officials who fear loss of office seek corrupt benefits as a cover, especially if they can expect no pension. University officials resort to corruption for a secure retired life. At the same time, once one becomes corrupt, one will try by all means possible to ensnare as many colleagues as possible within his or her rackets. This might be caused by weak leadership qualities which lead to hiring people closely linked to oneself to curtail the emergence of dissenting voices when things go wrong

The other cause is cultural. According to Altbach, (T)raditions of higher education also play a role. Universities everywhere have European roots and organizational patterns— they may not be well suited to some non-Western societies. This historical disjunction may make it easier for corruption to take hold. Further, in many developing countries, universities were part of a colonial system, and the values of subservience were to some extent put into place by the colonial powers. Countries without deep academic traditions may also have looser ties to the traditional values of academe.<sup>13</sup>

Some societies have evolved systems without well-developed meritocratic norms and hence are often prone to academic corruption. The idea that someone can be promoted or can receive an academic degree because he or she is from a particular group or has certain familial links is seen as acceptable. Moreover universities have personnel from different institutions across the world where norms that are regarded as corrupt are often also not questioned.

Another cause that is central in Zimbabwe's state universities is that the institutions are politicised. Thus, nonacademic norms of many kinds impinge on universities paving the way for corrupt tendencies. Where affiliation to political parties is the basis of appointment to certain offices,

it has a great bearing on the functioning of the institutions as political consideration rather than professionalism takes precedence. In practical terms it means, therefore, that political parties become active on campus, dominating 'academic governance bodies and [putting] their followers in positions of influence.'<sup>14</sup> In essence, where politics is injected into academic institutions, forces determining decisions become located elsewhere other than in the university itself.

The direct result of party politics infiltrating into university administration is the emergence of a weak leadership among student and staff. A weak leadership is responsible for permitting corruption to entrench itself in the university. As corruption entrenches itself in the organisation the chances of a strong leadership becomes more improbable.

Students and other stakeholders also want to satisfy their needs and wants without working for them. For students, obtaining a qualification with better grades with minimum effort is worth the hassles and risks accompanying corrupt practices. Maintaining and enhancing corruption becomes the *sine qua non* of the existence of other beneficiaries, particularly cronies of the corrupt officers.

### ***Dimensions of corruption***

As it pertains to students, corrupt practices emerge from the admission process itself. Admission is for sale in some institutions. Well-connected applicants or those who bribe or otherwise influence the academic authorities responsible for admissions gain entry regardless of their academic qualifications. In such situations, graduation is a virtual certainty, whether or not a student completes the required academic work— a process sometimes smoothed by further bribery or influence-peddling.<sup>15</sup> When appointments are made on the basis of who one knows, one becomes loyal to the appointer not the public that is supposed to be served. Cases of improper rearrangement of admission lists and illegal changes in the quotas of students who pay and those who do not pay full fees abound across the country.

The next stage where corrupt tendencies are visible in most institutions is that of examinations. The variety of means used to cheat at examinations is long and, in a perverse way, is indicative of the inventiveness of a corrupt system. In some places, professors or administrators collude with students by selling examination papers in advance or by 'fixing' the results. In countries where oral examinations are common, there are further possibilities for corruption. Professors will at times openly solicit bribes for grades of an exam. For example, some faculty members will exchange sexual favours for passes right from the continuous assessment (coursework) stage up to and including the examinations proper. Thus, teachers are openly abusing their right to examine in order to ease or benefit certain students or in some cases, are making their examinations more difficult in order to get a bribe.

In other cases, students manage to steal question papers and sell them in advance to others. Websites are now selling research papers to undergraduate students, who then sometimes submit the papers as their own. A quick survey indicated that a significant proportion of students admit to cheating at examinations from time to time. Students also have the tendency of paying another student to take an exam on their behalf.

In some situations lecturers also have the tendency of forcing students to buy their texts or modules in order to pass an exam. They also make such texts and modules prerequisites for all students taking their courses. Where oral examinations are involved such as those in foreign languages and dissertation defences, such arrangements have occasionally been unfairly manipulated to the disadvantage of targeted students consequently benefitting those favoured by lecturers.

Thirdly, records are manipulated for the benefit of some students. For example, when tabulating marks at the end of a semester some grades are changed to improve the overall grades of students. At the same time, some authorities will also try to influence situations such that the records of the failures of their relatives and cronies can be removed from the system. This is rampant in situations where institutions use outdated data management systems that are deliberately left in place for easy manipulation.

The fourth area is that of the library and access to computers since in most institutions, such

resources are at a premium. In this regard, some students are allocated rare texts for use over long periods of time while others never get the chance to use such texts. Such 'unconnected' students also rarely get the chance to use computers, which are usually far outnumbered by the student population—a situation where each student should get the minimum possible time if they are all to get the chance to use these resources.

There is a fifth dimension of corruption pertaining to students. Regulations pertaining to registration procedures and timing are often relaxed. As a result inflation erodes the value of fees the students are to pay, since they tend to pay at the end of the semester rather than at the beginning. Examination regulations are also left unenforced or changed from time to time as and when it suits the powers that be.

On the part of the staff, corrupt practices start from the point of employment. Academic posts are often 'sold' in the sense that those seeking appointments to lectureships or professorships must curry favour with selection committees through gifts or other emoluments. In some cases, academic posts are also awarded on the basis of ethnic and geographic backgrounds. Emergence of categories, like Wasu (from Manicaland), and Wezhira (from Masvingo), have led to recruitment and promotion along geographical lines. In such cases, an individual in a position of influence will ensure that his kith and kin get positions as and when vacancies arise.

Second, in matters of promotion, there is a tendency for information regarding the operation of the committees remaining the preserve of a chosen few. Some who are not privileged will never get to know the stipulated dates when it is time to apply for promotion. In universities with a rigid academic hierarchy, senior academics often promote their friends or perhaps colleagues without regard to the qualifications of the candidates. Furthermore, a pervasive gender bias exists (e.g. the bypassing of objective student assessment criteria). This also constitutes an abuse of power, and, therefore, an act of corruption. A promotion and/or recruitment purely on the basis of gender is a form of corruption that entrenches the interests of men.<sup>16</sup>

Third, in the case of staff benefits, only a few privileged and well-connected members with prior knowledge of the availability of scarce commodities manage to benefit from these. When the rest of the staff members get to hear of the availability of these they would have long since run out. For example, in an environment of scarcity, such commodities like fuel, cement, foodstuffs would under normal circumstances be equally distributed amongst all staff members, but this does not happen in the majority of cases as only a chosen few get to enjoy these.

Fourthly, resources necessary for research which should also be enjoyed equally by all teaching staff end up being reserved for a connected few. Funding to carry out research and attend conferences and workshops, which should be the lifeblood of any academic, is abused for the benefit of a few. This also has adverse effects on publications as the 'economy of affection'<sup>17</sup> will affect peer review mechanisms often allowing plagiarism and publication of weak papers. Although plagiarism can be found in almost every academic system, in some it is widespread and tacitly accepted, at least no one asks too many questions, and the penalties for detection are few. In some instances, corruption in this field may produce results or even entire research projects. Lecturers and professors also tend to take students' work and publish it as their own.

Fifthly, the division within a university which is responsible for the allocation of office space, and residential accommodation is also wide open to corrupt tendencies. Such a division will be inundated by staff members requiring that they get residential services and office space. Office-bearers who have the power to make such allocations often extort bribes.

In the prevailing economic environment, many universities are now trying to generate income by designating various modes of entry with differential fee structures. This has given opportunities to lecturers to practice another form of corruption. Instead of teaching different categories of students separately, for which they also get paid separately, they resort to teaching them together. This, however, is in response to late payments made by corrupt administrators in order to benefit from the highly inflationary situation. Lecturers also offer illegal coaching sessions to students who can pay for them.

There is a high degree of general misappropriation of resources such as bond paper, printing facilities, and photocopying services. Staff members are in the habit of using institutional resources such as computers, printers, photocopiers and bond paper to do tasks that benefit them individually such as typing, printing and photocopying of student assignments, dissertations and books for payment.

When purchasing commodities, supplies and assets, normal tender and procurement procedures are either circumvented or tenders are awarded to those who are prepared to pay bribes to get the contracts or tenders. Where tenders are not necessary, lower-level staff are in the habit of inflating quotations and awarding the orders to their cronies. Academic staff also habitually make claims for tasks that they do not do, such as out of campus activities like supervision of students on attachment. When accounts are settled, sums paid back are rendered so miniscule by inflation that they do not affect the staff members concerned. Many institutions also lose large sums through the payment of salaries and other benefits to ghost workers. The high rate of staff turnover at state universities has led to this practice becoming widespread.

Departments of students' affairs is also one open to abuse and corrupt practices, for instance in the allocation of on-campus accommodation. Officials often take bribes for such allocation. The same is true of the security wing of universities, which are willing to turn a blind eye to students' misdemeanours such as squatting, cooking, drinking alcohol on campus and other offences.

### *Impacts of corruption*

In general, it has been recognised that corruption hurts the poor disproportionately by diverting funds intended for development, undermining a government's ability to provide basic services, feeding inequality and injustice and discouraging foreign investment and aid. In Zimbabwe's state universities, corruption has fueled a general decline in standards, high rate of staff turnover, increase in the rates of academic failure, and inability to attract donors and private sector players.

Nepotism in recruitment leads to a lack of quality among academic and non-academic staff, jeopardising not just the development of the institutions but the country in general. This impact may be difficult to assess at this point in time, but its repercussions will become apparent in the long-run.

Corruption has become so widespread that it is spiralling out of control, severely impacting governance.<sup>18</sup> Those who have tried to rein it in have often been victimised by colleagues and superiors. Whistleblowers risk losing benefits and opportunities. Further, students nurtured in such a corrupt system will only end up promoting it throughout their own careers, contributing to the development of an underground political economy.

We have already said that in a corrupt system, the privileged and the well-connected enjoy economic rent. The concentration of wealth in the hands of a few, distorts consumption patterns to feed the lifestyle of the new and extremely rich university elite. In Zimbabwe, this involves imports of a large variety of luxury goods like expensive consumer goods. Corruption also enables mid-level managers in present day Zimbabwe, whose salaries are just adequate to buy a loaf of bread, to afford a decent living.

**The battle against corruption is difficult to wage as long as salaries remain so low that survival demands resort to illegitimate practices. The issue of complicity compounds the problem further. When corruption infiltrates the highest levels of education institutions and the state itself, it becomes difficult to fight as those in charge of oversight are themselves implicated. Underlings thrive, knowing that they have the protection of the bosses. Even in the few cases that the culprits are actually caught and punished, they are invariably the small fry. Given the highly political nature of appointments of the top university bras and their seeming invulnerability, the crusade against corruption has to begin at the highest echelons. This requires political will at the national level. Unfortunately, national leaders are not concerned with the petty corruption that plagues universities.**

**Challenges in ending corruption**

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In this context, an interesting initiative is being undertaken in Zimbabwe through a programme called Tip-Off Anonymous. It enables members of the public to act as whistle-blowers while protecting their anonymity. For such initiatives to work, what is required a multi-sectoral approach and the involvement of all interested parties.

**The Future of Corruption in Institutions of Higher learning**

There are many mechanisms that a country or a university needs to adopt to lessen the possibility of corruption and to lower the perception that it is corrupt. These include codes of conduct for faculty, administrators and students; statements of honesty on websites available to the public; university 'courts' to hear cases of misconduct; and annual reports to the public on changes in the number and types of incidents.<sup>19</sup> However commitment to end corruption has been hampered by the people concerned themselves. Alina made it clear that recognising corruption and being able to do something about it are two very different things.<sup>20</sup> In essence, therefore, the eradication of corruption requires that in addition to abhorring it there should be a clear will to weeding it out. Thus, if institutions of higher learning are to eradicate corruption, there is an urgent need to adopt a 'principled pragmatic' approach with strategic interventions that do not impose overly idealised standards.

The first step is effective policy intervention so as to acquire information about the experience and cost of corruption. One recommendation is that regular surveys be conducted, aimed at exposing areas where corruption is rampant and that their findings be published. Evidence from one such study indicated that with surveys being conducted at two points in time, the decline in corruption was significant, suggesting that when the possibility of exposure and professional embarrassment is real, the propensity to engage in corruption declines. Institutions of higher learning need to engage in intensive awareness-raising on modes and types of corruption as a prelude to tackling it. As the Internet has become a major tool of research and information-dissemination, Zimbabwean universities have to explore it if corruption is to be curbed.

State universities should continuously ensure that the underlying importance of quality, equity, efficiency and transparency in higher education is constantly emphasised and promoted. In this regard, they should strive to motivate and build capacity among students, including their representatives, to create a more transparent university environment.

In addition, all stakeholders, including the media, decision-makers and government should be involved in addressing the problem. Unfortunately, there is a lack of NGOs dealing directly with issues of higher education. In other words, the fight against corruption requires an alliance between the state, the civil society, the students, and the staff associations.

Capacity-building and institution-building through increased financial support is central to the task of ending corruption. Funds will also go a long way to improve effective teaching and research. Also, academic institutions require autonomy to build and support academic culture and values.

Institutions of higher learning need to establish independent and controllable quality assurance and accreditation systems with a mandate of setting up clear tools for assessing quality. This can in the long run plug a number of loopholes manipulated in the pursuit of corrupt practices.

Another area requiring immediate attention is the management of traditional exams, which needs urgent improvements if not a total overhaul. The academic community itself must understand that without integrity and meritocracy there can be no true university.

The international community should not be left out in the fight against corruption in the developing world. Developed countries specially have a huge responsibility to help poor institutions to develop with at least the minimum resources required.

Generally, there must be recognition that every corrupt transaction has two parties to it. We all have a responsibility to try to crack down on both ends of these transactions and contribute towards exposing malpractices that hamper development of the higher education sector not only in Zimbabwe but Africa as a whole. Ignoring the menace will have a negative repercussion for Africa's development.

To find holistic solutions, all institutions (local, national, regional and international) must engage with local political processes and societal structures to end corruption rather than relying on narrow technical solutions. It is apparent that poor governance has failed to curb corrupt practices.

**The education sector is the largest or second largest budget item in most countries, and opportunities for corrupt practices are numerous. It is difficult to measure the prevalence of corruption but it is fair to estimate that it is widespread in South and South East Asia, and endemic in many countries in the Balkans, the former Soviet Union and Africa.**

**Where corruption is rampant there is a great risk that social trust may wither away and that the development potential of whole countries may be undermined. Adolescents often become familiar with corruption at schools and universities. When this happens, a central role of the education sector- namely the imparting of ethical values and behaviour- becomes impossible, resulting in corruption becoming the norm at all levels of society.**

**<http://www.u4.no/themes/education/educationmainpoints.cfm>, accessed on 20.02.2010.**

## Conclusion

It is important to note that a number of factors have contributed towards the emergence and the exacerbation of corrupt practices in Zimbabwe's state universities, particularly in the 21st century. These practices are found in almost all units of a university, and involve key stakeholders in the system itself. As we have highlighted, the negative effects that have resulted are enormous and if no energies and resources are employed to curb its spread, higher education institutions in Zimbabwe will face total collapse. We would like to move away from conventional recommendations that always leave the solution of the problem to the police, legal institutions and the key actors in these malpractices. For Zimbabwe, any solution should focus on a holistic approach that calls for the participation not only of the local but also the external actors, including international donors. The researchers contend that as long as resources remain scarce and continuously dwindle, corruption in state universities is not going to disappear in the immediate future and the risk of corruption becoming institutionalised will gain momentum. In essence, the reality of corruption in state universities in Zimbabwe must be exposed as a central problem, paving the way for its comprehension and its total elimination.

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2 <http://www.u4.no/themes/education/educationwhere.cfm>, accessed on 29.01.2010.

3 U. Miynt, "Corruption: Causes, Consequences and Cures", *Asia-Pacific Development Journal*, 7, 2, December 2000, available on [http://www.unescap.org/drpad/publication/journal\\_7\\_2/myint.pdf](http://www.unescap.org/drpad/publication/journal_7_2/myint.pdf), accessed on 29.01.2010.

4 Jacob Akol, "Corruption: The Difference in the Style", *New African*, July 2004, p. 56.

- 5 <http://www.u4.no/themes/education/educationwhere.cfm>, accessed on 29.01.2010.
- 6 El Hadji I. Sall, "Reduction of Corruption in Africa: A Tremendous Challenge", <http://www.unis.sn/corruption.pdf>, accessed on 29.01.2010.
- 7 Miynt, "Corruption: Causes, Consequences and Cures".
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 Ibid.
- 10 Altbach, "The Question of Corruption in Academe".
- 11 This figure is in terms of the currency of Zimbabwe as it was before its revaluations between 2006 and 2009. The effect of the revaluation, however, was temporary, as spiraling inflation took hold almost immediately thereafter, restoring the general conditions described in this article, if not the specific details.
- 12 "What Are the Causes of Corruption?", [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/doc/2004-02/09/content\\_304379.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/doc/2004-02/09/content_304379.htm), accessed on 15.03.2010.
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- 14 Ibid.
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- 17 G. Hyden, "The Economy of Affection Revisited: African Development Management in Perspective", in Henrik S. Marcussen (ed.), *Improved Natural Resource Management*, available at [muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal\\_of\\_democracy/v010/10.4hyden.html](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal_of_democracy/v010/10.4hyden.html), accessed 13 September 2008.
- 18 "Africa after the Africa Commission: What Priorities for the German G8?", available on [http://www.odi.org.uk/events/G8\\_07/reports/Corruption.pdf](http://www.odi.org.uk/events/G8_07/reports/Corruption.pdf), accessed on 29.01.2010.
- 19 "Society for College and University Planning the Cost of Corruption in Higher Education", [www.scup.org](http://www.scup.org), accessed on Thursday, June 12, 2008.
- 20 "Africa after the Africa Commission".

# New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) as the Strategic Response to the Globalisation Challenge

This article examines the African Union's New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) as a continental strategic response to the impact of globalisation. With such problems unleashed by globalisation as polarisation of wealth and poverty, inequality between the North and the South and the wide gap between states and citizens, it has become imperative for African states to restructure and re-institutionalise their institutions with a view to meet these challenges. Strengthening African states is a *sine qua non* for development in order to keep pace with the transformations being wrought by globalisation. This is because globalisation has redirected, reshaped and refocused all aspects of relations in the international arena and has, therefore, made it so competitive that an uncooperative state will be swept away by the rampaging tide of globalisation.



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## Introduction

The word 'new' in the initiative devised by the African Union, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), to bring development to Africa refers to the impact of globalisation on Africa and the necessity for institutional, structural and policy changes for this continent. This necessity has enveloped big, small, developed and developing countries. Within the state, powers hitherto held by national governments are transferred downward to other stakeholders in development such as non-state actors (multi-national corporations, non-governmental organisations and civil society) and other tiers of governments— with a view to achieving development. While the impact of globalisation is important, we must remember that development does not just happen; policy measures have to be put in place before it can take place. This intrinsically means that development is a contingent outcome.<sup>1</sup> This is also true for Africa.

Development is a contingent outcome because of the fact that it occurs after effective policy measures to address the seemingly endless problems of Africa are put in place. It is in this regard that NEPAD was formed in 2001 as a regional strategy to respond to the challenges of globalisation. Therefore, institutions in Africa have to be restructured and structures re-institutionalised with a view to making African states strong. Strengthening African states is *sine-qua-non* for development and also in keeping pace with the dictates of the transformational trend of globalisation. It is against this background that paragraph 61 of NEPAD document states that the top priorities be 'structured in the same way as the strategy outlined and these priorities may be revised from time to time by the Heads of State Implementation Committee.'

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## Globalisation and Development in Africa: Conceptual and Empirical Exposition

Globalisation has been defined within the context of the international economic and political regime. According to F. Chesnais, globalisation is defined as

the international economic and political regime, which follows from the adoption by practically all the governments and political elites in the world, of the policies of liberalization, regulation and privatization as well as of the ideology and domestic politics of *laissez faire* and *enrichissez-vous* (enrich yourself).<sup>3</sup>

Chesnais' definition cannot be totally accepted because globalisation is an economic and political regime brought by the developed states of the North and forced on the developing states of the South; hence globalisation has brought different outcomes. While the North has benefited from globalisation, the story of the South is pathetic for the reason that globalisation has created two unequal partners in the same voyage with one heavily empowered by globalisation and the other left to the whims of this power. The impact of globalisation has meant that the South, including African countries, is at the receiving end of the spectrum. Globalisation has continued to increase economic and political polarisation both between and within countries. Especially between south and north.<sup>4</sup> Table 1 below provides information on the impact of globalisation on inequality between the rich and the poor.

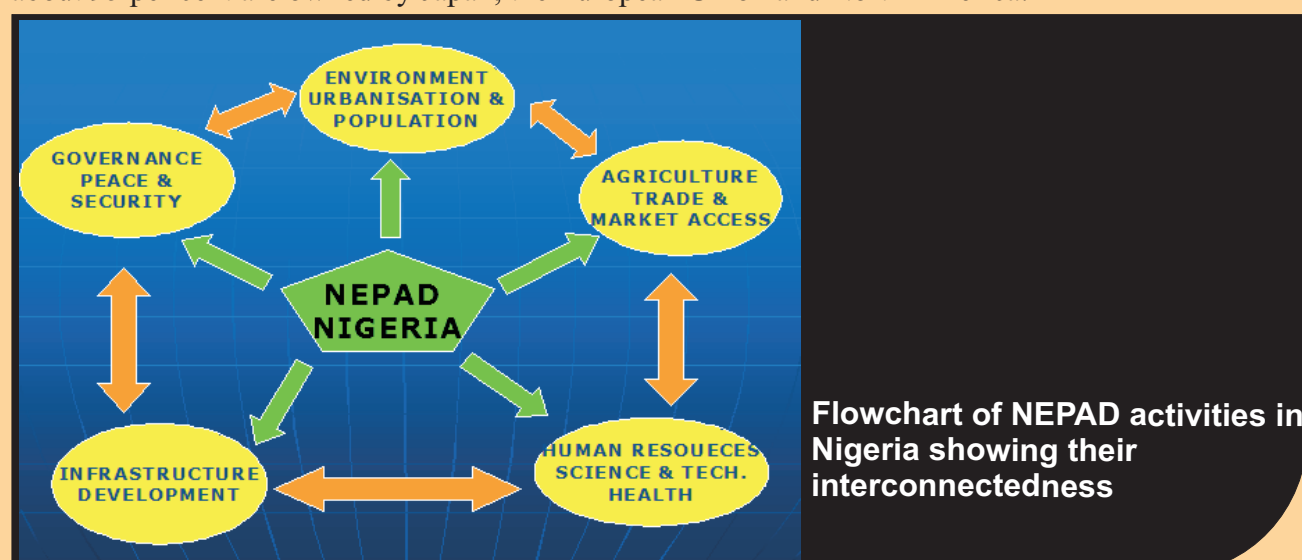
**Table 1: Global Income Distribution, 1960-1990<sup>5</sup>**

	Percentage of global income going to richest 20 per	Percentage of global income going to poorest 20 per cent	Ratio of richest to poorest
1960	70.2	2.3	30:1
1970	73.9	2.3	32:1
1980	76.3	1.7	45:1
1990	82.8	1.3	64:1

In 'Economic and Political Failure of Globalization in Africa', S. Aluko begins the discussion on the note that globalisation has been in existence for a long time. He puts it thus— even in the ancient and medieval world when international trading companies were formed, promoted and financed by states, governments and groups of individuals to explore and at times, pillage and conquer distant and less privileged communities and countries for the benefit of the more privileged ones. The Phoenicians, the religious crusaders, the European slave-dealers and their collaborators and the colonisers operated internationally and in the globe-world of the time.<sup>6</sup>

Aluko states that the protagonists of today's globalisation are the same groups of countries and races. The crux of this discourse is that the same groups of people/countries/races are still at the receiving end of the impact of globalisation, that is, the developing countries. The old pattern of interaction that made African countries under-developed is still in practice; however, the methods, the processes and the nomenclature have changed. Obviously, while the old globalisation had its 'globalisers', who depended on their national governments for support and sponsorship, the new 'globalisers' attempt to minimise or neutralise governments in their economic contacts.

With the growing interaction in world trade, developing countries, particularly those in Africa, have not benefited from today's globalisation. For example, in 1997, Third World countries with about 85 per cent of the world's population had only 21 per cent of world trade and about twenty per cent of world income. In the last sixteen years, about 85 per cent of international capital investment took place in the country of Japan, and the countries of the European Union and North America, compared to about 45 per cent of such investment between 1980 and 1990. Of the 5,000 multi-nationals and strategic companies and corporations controlling about 75 per cent of world trade today, about 95 per cent are owned by Japan, the European Union and North America.<sup>7</sup>


**Flowchart of NEPAD activities in Nigeria showing their interconnectedness**

### Globalisation and Institutional Strengthening in Africa

In terms of globalisation as it operates today, the Northern and Southern states are institutionally different. This explains why developmental approaches, interventions and initiatives have to be indigenously focused and guided. It is this that can guarantee the sustainability of development in Africa. Sensing the trend in the global arena where the state has lost its territorial sovereignty to the torrential tide of globalisation, Africa should reposition itself to these challenges. Achieving development in Africa therefore means that the continent has to be 'reconnected'. This can be done by strengthening its institutions— political, economic, social and cultural. Again, African institutions should be made flexible and available for the inescapable re-adjustment, which should address the entire range of problems.

The states of the North have made themselves flexible and available for the changes while the states of the South are still wallowing in the past. This strength on the part of the Northern states and the weakness on the part of Southern states and a host of reinforcing factors are responsible for the difference in the level of development. The difference in the way the two react to challenges is born out of the difference in levels of institutional sophistication. The low level of institutional capacity in the developing countries, African countries in particular, is reflected in an unfavourable balance of trade, migration of skilled workers from the developing countries to the developed ones, low-level market competition as well as unhealthy trade liberalisation. Trade liberalisation, one of the key tenets of globalisation that has come to 'institutionalise' capitalism, has meant the influx of cheap goods into Africa, which doubly compounds the problem of industrialisation in Africa. This makes the states in the developing countries different from the Southern states. What the states in South share with the states in the North is legal sovereignty, not effective sovereignty.

A. Mason opines that developed states are quite different from states in the other regions, that is, the peripheral states.<sup>8</sup> She believes that the only characteristic the developing countries may share with the states in the North is the international legal sovereignty. In an era of globalisation, states can be made to have effective sovereignty by strengthening their institutions and instruments,<sup>9</sup> but the states in Africa are so weak and 'disconnected' that there is a dislocation at the level of institutions and instruments. Development is a function of institutions and instruments in the state; they are the means to be used by the state to bring about development. It, therefore, implies that globalisation, as currently reflected in international political and economic transformations, does not take into consideration the idiosyncrasies of African states.

**Globalisation, as far as African countries are concerned, is meant to rapidly develop the teeming African population; its essence is to translate government into governance in which the latter (government) reforms the former (governance) and further transforms the people for the better by providing for their basic needs. In the developing world, the impact of globalisation has been negatively felt and the key tenets of globalisation as liberalisation and privatisation have not improved the lot of African states, hence there is unevenness in the level of development between the states in the South and the states in the North.**

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Globalisation is the outcome of some 15 years (1978-1993) of major and very conscious effort in institution building on the part of industrial lobbies in the US and Europe, coupled with 'radical' moves in the areas of politics and finance by the governments of major powers. At some point in the early 1990s it acquired a very central additional dimension, which is that of draining savings, non-invested income and financial liquidity from the whole world towards a small number of countries possessing large, secure and attractive financial markets.<sup>10</sup>

R. Tooze dubs the asymmetrical global interdependence ‘uneven’, while R. Petrella reveals the nature of the unevenness when he argues that:

The process of technological, economic and socio-cultural integration amongst the three most developed regions of the world (Japan plus the NICs from South-East Asia, Western Europe and North America) is more diffused, intensive and significant than ‘integration’ between these three regions’ and the less-developed countries, or between the less developed themselves.<sup>11</sup>

It then follows that the clamour by the North to bring development to the South is mere rhetoric as revealed by the nature and level of unevenness. Uneven globalisation creates the opportunity for developed countries to build ‘a novel, quite particular pattern of investment’, income distribution and consumption— what the French Ecole de la Regulation names an ‘accumulation regime’— based on the inflow from other parts of the world of capital but also of human resources.<sup>12</sup> The manipulation referred to here has a lot in common with elements of dependency theory, which argues that contact between developing countries and the Europeans has exposed developing countries to an exploitative social order. This manipulative trend should be stopped if development is to come to the developing countries.

It is in the light of what globalisation portends for the developing countries that attempts have to be made at putting in place mechanisms to face the challenges. Other regions of the world have responded by putting their resources together and integrating their states with a view to, first, challenging the impact of globalisation on their regions, and, second, reducing the concentration of world economic activities in the hands of powerful developed regions such as the European Union and the United States.

In order to face the challenges and pull their resources together, regionalisation has been adopted as a mechanism to keep in pace with the global trend. C. Oman notes that ‘today regionalisation is in part a response to globalisation; it is also shaping globalisation— in all the major regions— and helping, at the microeconomic level to drive it.’<sup>13</sup> So, regionalisation has been devised as a pill against the agony of globalisation. Paragraph 28 of the NEPAD document states:

The world has entered the new millennium in the midst of an economic revolution. This revolution could provide both the context and the means for Africa’s rejuvenation. While globalization has increased the cost of Africa’s ability to compete, we hold that the advantages of an effectively managed integration present the best prospects for future economic prosperity and poverty reduction.<sup>14</sup>

Even though regionalisation has its adverse effect, as it tends to be overprotective of regional trade, which doubly weakens the internal competition of markets as well as limits the scope of economic and political activities, it is a mechanism that facilitates the regions to accumulate wealth in the international arena. So, Africa, just like many regions of the world has embraced regionalisation by forming NEPAD.

### **Trends in Africa’s Failed Developmental Strategies**

Since African countries attained independence in the late 1950s and early 1960s, they have searched for an approach to development that can make the continent achieve its aim and meet its people’s yearning for better standards of living. The decade of the 1960s was difficult for most African countries in addressing the problem of lack of development. On the one hand, development was perceived as a political instrument which was used by the colonisers to continue their colonial rule over the colonised territories. On the other hand, the African nationalists considered development as a political ideology which was used to garner support from the African people. Both negate the real meaning of development, which is to make life better for the African people. This problematic solution has returned to reinforce the cause of underdevelopment in Africa.

The politicisation and radicalisation of the people continues unabated today. Radicalised people have kept agitating for improvement in standards of living. Such conceptual entanglement as the use of development for a political means of controlling the minds of the people became a causative factor of underdevelopment. This has led to wrong approaches being adopted to tackle African problems as evident in a shortsighted, short-term approach as Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs). For example, in Ghana, Nigeria, Liberia, Egypt, Algeria, where SAPs have

been introduced, evidence abounds to show that their economies became worse after the introduction of the programme.

In the 1970s, the struggle continued and one of the approaches adopted was the Lagos Plan of Action for the Economic Development of Africa (1980-2000) adopted in 1979 by the Organization of Africa Unity (OAU) in Monrovia. Several economic reforms were embarked upon, notably those advocated by the international financial institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) that are rooted in neoclassical polices. This is responsible for many African countries deregulating their prices and reducing their role in economic activities. These, again, had limited success.<sup>15</sup>

It is through this western theoretical exposition that past strategies have been viewed. J. Daniel opines that ‘strategies which see no alternative but that of accommodation to the international capitalist framework only heighten the problem, rather than offer any solution.’<sup>16</sup> C. Ake talks about the fuzziness in strategies adopted by African leaders in bringing development to the continent.<sup>17</sup> Often, the problem is that they focus on just a few issues, without looking at them holistically. The measures states employ are also often derivatives and do not have the kind of coherence that would make them effective in terms and strategy.

In the 1990s, the search for development continued in Africa and such approaches as United Nations New Agenda for Development of Africa (UN-NADAF) formed in December 1991 and, in March 1996, the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa (UNSI). The UN-NADAF had set a target of at least six per cent average annual economic growth. To realise this target, UN-NADAF had concluded that USD 30 billion in Official Development Assistance (ODA) would be needed from donor countries in 1992 and that ODA would grow at an average of four per cent a year. Throughout much of the 1990s, the average economic growth in Africa was three per cent.<sup>18</sup> The failure of this programme (as throughout the decade the target was never met) signals the necessity of a ‘home-grown’ development approach like NEPAD. As K. Levitt puts it,

For the past twenty years the developing world has been adjusting to the agendas of the IMF and the World Bank. It is time to reclaim the right of nations to policy autonomy, the right to make the best use of one’s own resources, and the right to engage in the international economy on one’s own terms. The right to development is a citizen right and its realization is a priority obligation of national governments. States— not the IMF or the World Bank— have the right and the duty to formulate the appropriate national development policies<sup>19</sup>

Again, other approaches such as increased and diversified export, particularly agricultural export, proved abortive. Export promotion as a strategy did not bring much success because it was limited by external demand, a situation that has spelt doom for Africa apropos of the manufacturing market. This has also aggravated the problem. For example, in 1990, the total export of goods from Sub-Saharan Africa amounted to USD 67,877 million and 20 per cent of the total was for manufactured goods. It rose to 33 per cent in 2001 when the total export of goods was USD 91,624 million.<sup>20</sup> This is in sharp contrast with what is increasingly a global reality of Africa having to compete with others in the economic sphere. This is too small a portion of the merchandise export in the global economy. Florizelle Lisser, Assistant United States Trade Representative for Africa, believes that the USD 14.1 billion recorded by Africa as exports to the United States from 37 countries eligible for African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) was, in her words, ‘a rather small part’ given that much of African trade exports are made up of petroleum products.<sup>21</sup>

### **Development, Globalisation and Institutional Reform in Africa**

The impact of globalisation on development has necessitated institutional reforms in all realms in Africa. In the international political system, this major transformation has brought a radical shift in political relations of the world. Such a shift from anti-people systems of government such as totalitarianism, communism and fascism to representative democracy, that occurred in Eastern Europe and later overwhelmed Africa, has brought about a corresponding shift in the economic realm from a command or mixed economy to a people-centred, liberalised economy that seeks to improve the well-

being of the people. This transformation does not come alone. It has led to the emergence of economic liberalism. It therefore brings along the tenets of capitalism as its philosophy. S. T. Akindele, *et al*, quoting A. MacEwan, express their agreement with this position when they say:

Globalization could be directly defined from the institutional perspective as the spread of capitalism (MacEwan, 1990). However, it is germane to adumbrate that the collapse of the Eastern bloc in the late 80's and early 90's led to the emergence and ascending of a global economy that is primarily structured and governed by the interests of Western behemoth countries, thus, facilitating the integration of most economies into global capitalist economy.<sup>22</sup>

African countries should respond to this transformation because globalisation, rather than destroying pockets of cruelty the North have inflicted upon Africa through colonisation, imperialism, slave trade etc, has actually reinforced the contours of this misfortune. So, in order not to make globalisation convoluted in Africa, the continent should respond to the challenges. Globalisation is a kind of continuum, which has two distinct ends. While at one end of the continuum we have the robust states of the North— whose institutions have been strengthened— and the not-so-well-off states of the South whose states have been institutionally and structurally weakened. G. Smith and M. Naim put it succinctly

Globalization surrounds us all in turmoil, and propels our lives through its confusion of contradictions. It empowers some people while it impoverishes others. It celebrates the market and jeopardizes economic growth. It is an engine of invention, a machine of destruction. It liberates and defeats. It invites us to share the pleasures of a common culture while it menaces heritage, tradition, and beliefs. Globalization mocks the state and demands more of it, validates democracy and subverts it. All our assumptions and institutions of governance are put at risk in its disorder.<sup>23</sup>



NEPAD Logo

### Political Institutions

The Russian coup of August 1991 and the forced shutdown of the parliament in October 1993 signified that Russian political institutions were not strengthened in the preceding period. This weakness has affected the economic institution as leaders have not made use of their political will for the reform of the economy. They have not taken the reforms as a component of governance. The kind of reforms that have been going on in Africa are likened to the Russian experience. It is one that tends to strengthen the regime and not the institution. We have to distinguish between regime-strengthening and institution-strengthening. Regime-strengthening is short-term and ends with the administration that puts it in place. In other words, the 'death' of the administration could be the death of the policy put in place to strengthen the state. Again, regime-strengthening is often accompanied by unguided detailed blueprint.

On the other hand, institution-strengthening is a long-term, indeed, life-long process, which surpasses the tenure of its initiator. It is not merely a matter of administrative policy, and in most cases, it requires the support of constitutional changes. This means that unlike the regime-strengthening that serves the administration that put it in place, institution-strengthening seeks to build capacity for the state. Almost all African states are 'developmentalist' in the sense that they

hold tight the control of the macro-economic planning of their countries. In the present era of globalisation this has to be relaxed by transferring power hitherto held by the states to the private sector. This is because the political elites who control the affairs of the states use their powers to their own advantage. F. Bourguignon believes that institutional dynamics are linked to the role played by political elites. He states:

Many of these institutional dynamics are linked to the key role played by elites. Thanks to the control they often have on political power they can promote reforms or block them. In both cases they act in their own interest or according to their own view of some superior principle of social justice in the case of “benevolent” elites. The dynamics of institutions— in the economic or political spheres— depends crucially on the way these elites think and behave and, of course, on the degree of control they have on the public decision-making process.<sup>24</sup>

The building of political institutions in Africa should also involve repackaging of democracy to suit the society. The inherent heterogeneous nature of African society demands that political institutions have to be reformed. Western democracy does not totally fit into African society unless repackaged with some indigenous ingredients. The highly pluralistic societies of the North have developed their political institutions (particularly with respect to adhering to the constitution, rule of law etc.) to such an extent that their conflict management method has been made easy. Africa does not have such an institutional capacity, hence problems of ethnic/tribal crisis, religious crisis and communal clashes have continued to threaten democracy in many a heterogeneous state in Africa.

**The Hutu and Tutsi ethnic problem that led to wanton genocide in the 1990s, the catastrophically frequent tribal clashes among the three major tribes of Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo in Nigeria and the Sudanese endless and senseless killings are a pointer to the necessity for a home-grown democracy that can strengthen the African political institutions. Since 2003 when the fight broke out between the government and the ethnic minority, several thousands of people have been killed. Election into political office should take into cognisance the peculiarities of African societies as the one explained above. Little wonder such a rotational doctrine has been, though yet to be institutionalised, put in place in the election of the president of Nigeria. Ndulo states that the tragedies in Rwanda, Somalia, Liberia, Congo and Sierra Leone are consequences of failed constitutional arrangement.**

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Paragraph 80 of the NEPAD document showcases its commitment to the strategy to strengthen political and administrative frameworks of African states in line with the principles of democracy, transparency and rule of law. The commitment is further enshrined in paragraph 81 which contains an undertaking by participating African states to promote good governance.

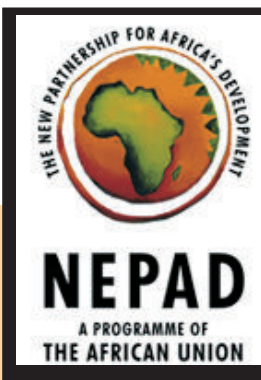
### **Cultural Institutions**

Western culture has negatively affected Africa’s development, which is not unconnected with the wrong notion that development is exogenous. Development is subjective and value-laden, which means that it should be endogenous in its focus. Development cannot be achieved if it is master-slave, top-down intervention. E. Kiawi and J. Mfoulou, citing G. P. Hagan, attest to the fact that the modern administration representing western cultures failed to recognise the importance of indigenous

cultures in development. It did not allow for the participation of the majority of the people in decisions affecting their destinies.<sup>26</sup>

A top-down intervention, as the western approach portends, makes African culture subservient to western culture. This has implications for the institution of the family in the African cultural setting. The former Singapore Prime Minister, Lee Kuan Yew, expresses this view about the importance of culture on development in an interview with F. Zakaria. He states that:

We used the family to push economic growth factoring the ambitions of a person and his family into our planning. We have tried, for example, to improve the lot of children through education. The government can create a setting in which people can live happily and succeed and express themselves, but finally it is what people do with their lives that determines economic success or failure. Again, we were fortunate we had this cultural backdrop, the belief in thrift, hard work, filial piety and loyalty in the extended family, and, most of all, the respect for scholarship and learning.<sup>27</sup>



Nepad Logo : The 2006 Version

### Economic Institution

The borderless bridge between world politics and economics has been made possible by globalisation as, according to Tooze, 'these changes are wide-ranging but include changes in the nation and extent of production and trade, the growth of very large corporations, the internalisation of finance, and the linking of people and business through world communicational networks.'<sup>28</sup> With this innovation in the international political economy, it is apparent that the changes would affect the national governments.

### NEPAD and the Structure of the African Economy

NEPAD is a new initiative formed in July 2001 by African Union. It can be said to be indebted to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as encapsulated in its objectives:

- To achieve and sustain an average Gross Domestic Product (GDP), growth rate of seven per cent per annum for the next fifteen years;
- To reduce the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by half by 2015;
- To make progress towards gender equality and empower women by eliminating gender disparities in the enrolment in primary and secondary education by 2015;
- To reduce infant and child mortality ratios by two third by 2015;
- To provide access for all who need reproductive health services, etc.<sup>29</sup>

NEPAD is a well-packaged initiative that deals with almost all aspects of African problems. The initiative being home-grown, lays stress on African integration. Having realised the need for Africans to take the bull by the horns, African countries have institutionalised a mechanism, African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), for self-assessment. NEPAD too, is an indigenous initiative that seeks to rebuild its institutions, as is attested to in paragraph 49 of the NEPAD document.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

Developing countries should put in place mechanisms to address the unevenness inherent in globalisation so as to achieve their developmental goals. It has been shown that in this era of globalisation, much more finance has flown out of Africa than the rhetorically characterised bitter



pillars of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and ODA. To redress this trend, the intrinsic value of development should be understood. This is that major reforms have to be put in place both politically and economically. In fact, it is the political factor that ought to form the bulk of the reform. This is because of the fact that it is the political realm that determines the economic plane.

Decisions taken on building of institutions, adjustment of policies and refinement of processes serve a political goal and make use of instruments— market competition, reducing regulation and policy consistency— as economic means. Even in the era of globalisation where such tenets as liberalisation, deregulation and privatisation have become the building blocs for economic relations among states, it is still a political function. These tenets are issues of distributive equity, which tend to shift control of processes and ownership of resource from state to the non-state actors. It is a political issue of (re-) distribution of resources, which aims at bringing about development by turning resources around.

Sensing the failure of the past strategies, African states should accept NEPAD as their own strategy to combat the defects of globalisation by strengthening their institutions and going through a general process of restructuring. African states should reform their economies by intensifying the drive towards diversification. This can be done by concentrating on exporting finished products. This would make African countries competitive in the international economy. Partnership should be extended to the Asian countries; South-South cooperation should be favourable to Africa by channelling its export to their markets.

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Pics Source:

[Http://nepadaprmnigeria.org/doc-template\\_clip\\_image005.gif](http://nepadaprmnigeria.org/doc-template_clip_image005.gif)

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# Memoirs of a postmodern traveler<sup>1</sup>

## Jaddiel Díaz

Finally, the first yawning rays of sunlight penetrated the windows of Terminal III of the José Martí airport. While the passengers of the flight from Copa waited passively, a young 26 year-old professor of the University of Havana, historian by profession, anthropologist by heart, took small paces around the terminal, trying to speed up the clock.

This was the first time I had left my country, and as someone said, considering political, social, and geographical elements, leaving Cuba is like losing your virginity again. An hour later, the plane took off, and already from the air, when the coasts of Cuba had barely disappeared from view, I felt an immediate nostalgia for the poets of the *décima*. Taking off provoked a sigh of gratefulness to all those who had helped in my participation in the event, in which so many obstacles had to be overcome; with it came a sense of the debt I owed them to fulfill their expectations and the objectives of gaining experiences, participating in excellent conferences, updating bibliographical resources, exchanging investigative experiences, and representing my country admirably.

Upon landing in Panama, the first and only stop in the flight, the impact was surprising, it being the first land I had set foot on outside of Cuba. This nation of Central America has for me a special significance in the professional realm, since I wish to study the messages and social uses of the *décima* in this territory. The *décima* is the name of a one-hundred year-old poetic verse used in the popular sectors to publicly disseminate information, and it constitutes the central theme of my doctoral

thesis. Given the opportunity, I could not help but make the most of my presence as a guest to investigate the survival of the phenomenon of the *décima*; I asked certain vendors and workers at the airport about this cultural phenomenon.

Three hours later, I reached Peru, and now, the climate showed elements of Andean heat. An exchange of words with Alam, the taxi driver from the hotel, was enough to reaffirm the strange and fabulous experience that had begun in the plane. '[Being from Cuba,] You only need to announce your nationality for hundreds of questions to rain down about salary, *mulatas*, medicine, news of Fidel, changes in Cuba, depending on the interests of the speaker.' Being away from my country not only allowed me to come to know a new world, but I also became aware of the perceptions of this world about my country.

**In general I came to understand the importance of forming local interpretations with theoretical profundity, defiant imagination, and a sense of the comparative. I realised that in studying universal tendencies we must not lose our own opinions and we ought not reproduce them as direct manifestations of the theory. If we can travel this difficult path, we can find a methodologically alternative path to studying Latin American history.**

The first night, I could not believe I was in Lima. I walked through the park and conversed with the hotel staff. Later I left for my room to read and rest my feet, since a week earlier I had suffered a sprain in the Sierra del Rosario, a chain of mountains found in Pinar del Río, where I write life stories and investigate the culture of the *campesino*. The following day, at the opening of the SEPHIS workshop on Alternative Research Methodologies: A Latin American Perspective, organised by the Institute of Peruvian Studies in Lima, Peru, we all met each other, and I finally was able to meet Rosa, who had given me such encouragement to come, even when my participation in the event seemed impossible.

Twelve days of conference, from 31 August to 11 September 2009, included conversation, tutorship, and presentations resulting in an incomparable experience. The methodical and particular style which dynamised the sessions of work—masterful classes by Marisol de la Cadena, Cecilia Méndez, Lilia Moritz, and Elizabeth Jelin—inspired us to re-position and re-orient our investigative directions, and ask ourselves questions about new and alternative ways of observing problems in our investigations, and explore innovative theoretical positions. The advice of Cecilia Méndez about the necessity of creating alternative forms of seeing and writing history will always remain in my memory: How to avoid boundaries of anthropology and break linguistic barriers of northern academia, which tend to be discriminatory toward Latin American productions? The advice of Marisol about using *theory* has been vital, taking me through the complicated theoretical paths of Michael Foucault and Bruno Latour. Her work on race in Andean religion have motivated my desire for analysing in future the perception of *el negro* and *el indio* [the black and the native] in the Caribbean region. For her part, Lilia Mortiz introduced to me new perspectives of image analysis, keeping in mind themes of gender and race. Due to similarity between Brazil and Cuba in relation to the slave trade, her presentation on nineteenth-century art from Rio de Janeiro inspired ideas for future comparative studies, not only through art but also photography and images from *cordel* literature. Professor Elizabeth Jelin helped me resolve a vital problem for my field work in Cuba in opening doors to the complex world of memory and recommending more objective methods for the organisation of information.

In general, I came to understand the importance of forming local interpretations with theoretical profundity, defiant imagination, and a sense of the comparative. I realised that in studying universal tendencies we must not lose our own opinions and we ought not reproduce them as direct manifestations of the theory. If we can travel this difficult path we can find a methodologically alternative path to study Latin American history. Beyond the classes, we participated in engaging

conversations and exchanges of ideas— in the streets, at the hotel, during meals— in which we gave mutual advice to improve each others' works. Questions about the realities of our countries were also common, and we exchanged information about national humor, which left us amazed at the immense universe of the imaginative Latin American.

The visit to Pachacamac, wisely coordinated by the organisers of the event, resulted in one of the most spectacular experiences of my life. As we ascended towards the temples, we observed the house of the Virgins of the Sun. The streets of sand from past millennia carried me to the past, and evoked a strange and foreign sensation of surprise and nostalgia. I remembered then my experiences as professor of *History of America*, when I would dream between books of the remote possibility of visiting traces of Inca culture.

The Liman life also left me in reflection about the way in which we travel, conscious yet unconscious that we are ambassadors and informants of a cultural identity. On one occasion, due to a profound passion for Cuban music, the group decided to go to a club where a salsa group was playing. From this experience, I learned that I was the only Cuban who did not know how to dance. Luckily, I found in the group a friend from Rio who told me he was the only Brazilian without an aptitude for dance. We were not alone in the struggle against stereotypes, but finally we all made an attempt on the dance floor. Without any doubt, the event made me reflect upon the advice of Fabiola Bailón, a Mexican *hermana*, and lover of Cuban salsa, barely upon returning to Cuba, I immediately asked a few of my friends to teach me to dance *casino*.

Apart from classes and *paseos*, friends, or rather, brothers were the most important aspect of this trip. We were all children of an adorable mother named Rosa Vera, and younger brothers of Pablo Sandoval, intimate friend and advisor. It would seem that we had been selected by our psychological characteristics to interact in a group. It could be said, even, that twelve days are sufficient to love each other, but not to fight with each other.

I passed two months in Lima, and already it is not just a fabled space on a map and an interesting city in the pages of Latin American history, but a place where a young professor, historian by profession, anthropologist by heart, found another family.



Participants at the Lima Workshop

# Report on Renegotiating Intimacies: Marriage, Sexualities, Living Practices (II)

Madhurima Mukhopadhyay is currently pursuing Ph. D. at the School of Women's Studies, Jadavpur University, Kolkata. She is also associated with projects under the School. Her background is English Literature and Comparative Literature in which she has done her B. A., M. A., and M. Phil. She is working on Bengali Women's Travel Writing in the colonial period for her PhD. In addition to her Ph. D. work, her areas of interest are globalisation, marriage and intermediation in the context of contemporary Kolkata. She has published book reviews and articles on comparative literary studies and cultural studies.



Madhurima  
Mukhopadhyay

Volume 6 No. 2 April 2010

The School of Women's Studies, Jadavpur University, Kolkata organised a two-day National Conference titled *Renegotiating Intimacies: Marriage, Sexualities, and Living Practices (II)* on 22-23 December 2009 funded jointly by Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung(RLS), Germany and Indian Association for Women's Studies (IAWS). This Conference was a follow-up of the National Conference in December 2008 organised on the same theme and inspired by the School's critical engagement with a project entitled, *Renegotiating Gender Relations in Marriage: Family, Class, Community in Kolkata in the Era of Globalisation*, popularly known as the Marriage Project, funded by RLS, Germany. This was intended to be a continuation of the previous conference and showcase the research work carried out in the third and final year of the Marriage Project. The need was felt to focus on some important issues on the theme which were not addressed in the last conference. The present conference included three themes namely: Intermediation of Marriage, Marriage and Violence, Marriage and Structures

of Caste/Class Hierarchies.

The Conference was inaugurated by the Vice-Chancellor of Jadavpur University, Dr. P. N. Ghosh. He brought to notice how gendered roles in family and marriage are interlinked with the worldwide trends of very few women taking up careers in science and technology. Dr. Rochona Majumdar, Special Guest, made a presentation on her recent book *Marriage and Modernity* (2009) where she problematised the concept of arranged marriage as monolithic and traditional. The evil practice of dowry and forms of expressing women's agency were highlighted in her speech as an integral part of the book. Professor Sanjukta Dasgupta of Calcutta University chaired the session.



Inaugural address of the conference. P. N. Ghosh, Vice Chancellor, Jadavpur University (centre), along with Sanjukta Dasgupta (right) and Rochona Majumdar (left).

The next session was chaired by Professor Samita Sen, Director, School of Women's Studies, where the team members of the RLS project presented the Marriage Project findings and analysis. The first presentation by Madhurima Mukhopadhyay highlighted the role of individual choice and agency in marital decisions and the underlying tensions with the normative structures. The role of marriage intermediation was importantly highlighted in this paper. Diya Dutta's paper focused on complexities of caste and class and its importance in marriage in the contemporary globalised Kolkata. Nandita Dhawan, the co-ordinator of the project made a presentation on gender, class and marriage analysing the ways in which gender categories of the legal, cultural and social structures of marriage are important in the construction and perpetuation of class differences.

As a continuation to the Marriage Project's presentation on marital choice was the paper on violent marital choice in TV reality shows by Swati Ganguly. She spoke on the concept of 'arranged marriage' in India and the indices set by popular media of the patterns of humiliation and abuse that patriarchy routinely and systematically subjects young women to; by establishing desirable 'norms' of feminine perfection. The paper focused on the phenomenon of the television reality shows taking *Lux Perfect Bride* as a case in point. Violence in marriage was also explored by Suvradip Dasgupta who tried to investigate why men take to violence. Suvradip pointed out that some recent surveys have revealed a strong link between masculinity and marital violence. Masculinity is associated with the role of provider, protector and procreator. This notion of masculinity brings to fore an equation of power and maleness. It is observed that whenever the man fails to perform any of the above mentioned roles he perceives it as a threat to his masculinity and consequently becomes violent towards his wife.



Participants of the Conference, Session 1A

Intimacies were viewed through various lenses. Nishi Mitra and Pooja Nair's presentation was very unique and interesting because it deviated from the general structure of academic papers. Instead, their paper consisted of a series of letters exchanged between Nishi, Pooja and another person. They read excerpts from the letters that they exchanged among themselves, while leaving out the conversations that they had with the third person. Their conversations were on their life experiences at one level, while at another level they entailed the process of intimate contact. Professor P. K. Dutta's presentation was on public deployment of intimacy. As an example he elucidated the Rizwanur Rahman case which was a focus of research for the marriage project also. He highlighted two things: a) the alliance between the state and the community which acted as a machinery of prohibition against inter-community marriage and b) manner in which the social movement also counter normalised such marriages. Dutta analysed some of the nineteenth and twentieth century Bengali literary texts in order to understand the historical trajectory of the inter-community marriages. The consequences of abduction in the texts featured less as acts of transgression and more as acts of love within the communities. The Rizwanur-Priyanka case revealed the power of prohibition that was entailed within modern day inter-community marriages. Both the community and state acted as the agents of prohibition. There was a certain politicisation of inter-community love. The social movement borne out of the Rizwanur case aligned love with justice which did not happen in the previous cases. According to Professor Dutta it was disheartening to observe that the social movement did not address the aspect of mutuality involved in the relationship. While Rizwanur became the self-sufficient icon of inter-community love there was no discussion on the vulnerable position of Priyanka. Her actions were criticised by the state, community and by the actors of the social movement.

The issue of caste being so integral to marriage in India was explored from many perspectives like *Kulinism* in Bengal during the nineteenth century by Aishika Chakraborty. Carmel Christy engaged, in her paper, with the autobiography by Nalini Jameela, who was a sex worker, in the light of understanding how Jameela emerged as a strong woman activist who challenged the dominant notion of womanhood by constructing herself as a non-domestic woman. Further Christy explored the implications of Jameela's intervention in Kerala's feminist politics by analysing the responses that her autobiography attracted within the feminist circles. On a broader level, the paper explored the complexities of the public and the private which she believes is instrumental in understanding the gendered realities marked by caste.

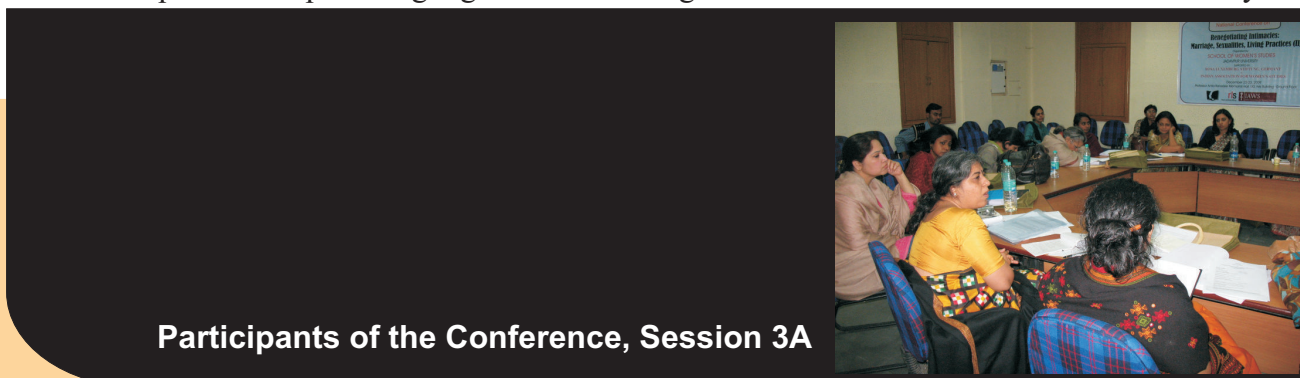


**Presentation by the project team. Chaired by Samita Sen (from right, Nandita Dhawan, Samita Sen, Diya Dutta and Madhurima Mukhopadhyay)**

Legal perspectives on marriage and family were presented in two papers. Dr. Srimati Basu's paper dealt with Section 498A– the section under IPC (Indian Penal Code) which is used to lodge complaints on domestic violence. One of the focal points of the paper was to explore how 498 A signifies choices for women. To substantiate her point Dr. Basu referred to court cases and narratives of both women and her family members which she had collected as part of her research in this area. She talked at length about the practical problems of filing a complaint under 498A. The biggest problem that women faced while filing a case under 498A is to provide adequate evidence of cruelty. This legal obstacle had resulted in a lower conviction rate in cases of domestic violence. In her paper Dr. Basu focused on the proceedings of three venues– family court, police cell and *shalishi sabha*



where cases on domestic violence were mitigated. A significant point that emerged from a critical analysis of all these proceedings is that claims of violence in most cases is used as a discursive strategy for fulfilling economic and kinship needs. It seldom signifies any choice for women. Citing some of the narratives as examples she pointed out the paradoxical nature of 498A. She mentioned that while on one hand this section did identify family violence as a criminal offence and allowed women to file a criminal case against her husband and in-laws on grounds of cruelty; on the other hand as several narratives highlighted such legally enterprising behaviour of the women is looked upon with great suspicion and often becomes a subject of ridicule. Rukmini Sen's paper questioned the absence of the definition of family in Indian laws. Laws look at 'family' as a monolithic homogeneous category. In Indian jurisprudence there are two kinds of laws relating to family: Personal laws and laws relating to violence. In the postcolonial legal system, none of the laws define the family, but claim to 'understand' it. Family is a space of permitted heterosexual union with the purpose of reproduction. Family is also considered as a welfare unit. It is a space of unpaid labour as well as a hostility. But in all these definitions, as highlighted by Sen, the definition of prostitution, married couple and couple living together are missing within the ambit of the institution of family.



Participants of the Conference, Session 3A

The conference also had papers on themes like medical jurisprudence and how elite Bengali conceptions of 'fallen women' combined with colonial conceptions of 'native' sexual deviance to define certain women as 'prostitutes', and how legal and medical authorities employed and transformed these classifications through investigations of women's bodies. Dr. Bula Bhadra's presentation was based on new reproductive technology (NRT). The presentation discussed the effects of medically assisted fertilisation and whether it is about rights or about the privileges of a certain class of women. Ideas like donation of ova and outsourcing of babies were also discussed. Bhadra presented her findings from interviews of sixty women in Kolkata aged between 26 to 38 years possessing minimum of a Bachelors degree. Another presentation by Aparajita and Suniti talked at length about an innovative project called *Inner Spaces Outer Faces Initiative* (ISOFI). The broader aim of this project was to explore how gender and sexuality components can be linked to their ongoing programmes on sexual and reproductive health (SRH). This project was conceived of in two phases as a joint initiative of CARE and ICRW.



From left: P. K. Dutta, Raka Ray and Srimati Basu

There were a few papers which viewed marriage, sexuality and intimacy from the literary perspective. In her presentation Geetika Bapna provided an interpretative reading of one popular Hindu and Islamic religious literature on 'how to become a good Husband or a good Wife', by drawing on Kierkegaardian triad of 'Aesthetic', 'Ethical' and 'Religious' (as three different modes of conjugal existence). Anju Bala's paper attempted to explore the matrix of lesbian relationships in three contemporary novels in English, *Ladies Coupe* by Anita Nair (2001), *A Married Woman* by Manju Kapur (2002) and *Lilacs Bloom in My Garden* by Meenu Mehrotra (2008). Looking at the novel *Ghare Baire* written by Rabindranath Thakur in 1916, Ritu Sen Chowdhury tried to trace the changing contours of conjugality in its interaction with the nation. She argued, while on one hand, the novel depicts how the individual, society and nation get associated with the question of conjugality. On the other hand, it traces the renegotiations in the hegemonic notion of conjugality. This continues parallel to the renegotiations that occur between the interior and the exterior- Bimala's coming into her own as an individual and a maturing of her understandings of love and conjugality. Prasita Mukherjee's presentation dealt with the concept of feminine utopia based on the traditions of a novel and tried to explore the alternative familial structures.

Anita Ghai's presentation on marriage and disability highlighted the gendered aspect of disability. She spoke about the right of disabled women to be considered equal to any other normal woman. She referred to desires of disabled women to be included in the normative practices of the mainstream. This evoked the same theme of inclusion and exclusion in the mainstream as highlighted in the papers on homosexuality in the Conference held in 2008.



**Participants of the Conference,  
Concluding Session**

In the concluding session, Professor Samita Sen and Ranjita Biswas brought out the main themes that were discussed during the course of the Conference. It emerged that marriage has always been a site of negotiation. Though marriage evolved as contract, ambiguities prevail in its adjudication which hampers its successful implementation. Legal arenas have also become markers of class difference. Intimacy and sexuality seen in contradistinction to marriage is more spontaneous, private, not constrained by laws, secret, exclusive, ambivalent and flirtatious. Marriage on the other hand is marked by monogamy, infidelity, jealousy, law, power and rights. Intimacy can therefore become an entry point, a location to think of a feminist politics to create a non-hegemonic, non-exploitative spectrum of relationship. The politics of inclusion and exclusion created a difference between 'us' and 'them' as it emerged from the paper on disability. This brought forward the crucial question of how should differences be dealt. Different lives, living practices, sexualities and marriages answer the question and shape the understanding of all as different but equal. The conference came to a close with promise of future possibilities of research and publication around the vibrant themes of discussion.

Image courtesy: School of Women's Studies, JU; Photographs by Momata Das

# Report on the Cultural Studies Workshop 2010

Ranjana Dasgupta is the Research Officer for the CSSSC-NRTT Programme at the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences Calcutta.



## Ranjana Dasgupta

Centre for Studies in Social Sciences Calcutta organised the Fifteenth Annual Cultural Studies Workshop from 30 January to 4 February 2010 at Santiniketan, West Bengal, in collaboration with Ford Foundation (India) and the South-South Exchange Programme for Research on the History of Development (SEPHIS). The broad theme for this year's workshop was 'The Sacred in Contemporary Culture'.

The theoretical perspective which mirrors the thematic concept is— Far from 'phenomena born of religious conceptions.' Being everywhere in decline, fulfilling the prediction of its retreat from the spheres of art, education, or politics, the realm of the sacred has been historically reconstituted within contemporary life in a number of unanticipated ways. Instances of such reconstitution include: The renewed enchantment with, rather than repression of, the magical, even within industry and science; an increasing political focus on the consecration or desecration of icons, heroes, or histories; a secularism of the state matched by the supplemental sacrality of modern institutional spaces and processes; the adaptation of new technologies to the service of the sacred; modern states and their use of political theology. Indeed, we might say that the sacred and the secular have forged a new dependence in contemporary cultures, calling for a fresh assessment of the status of the sacred in contemporary life.

The broad theme was divided into specific topics over the five-day workshop. The topics and significant questions related to that were,

1. The Sacredness of Science: What are the disenchantments and new enchantments that have proliferated alongside scientific discourses and cultures and with what consequences for the future of the secular?

2. Objects, Images, Icons: The emergence of cult values within an increasingly commodified society; new economies of sacrality that attach to a wide range of objects; the return of the sacred to the worlds of literature, art and museums.
3. Consecrations and Desecrations: The politics of reverence and offence, the impact on lives, histories, spaces, and objects and the capacity for mobilisation of communities and identities.
4. Institutions and Rituals: Has the sacred been 'disembedded' from the social, and confined to specific sites and processes? Has it been kept at bay by the institutions of the state, or assumed only a relatively shrunken role within the realms of the personal and the private?
5. Political Theology: Have modern states and political ideologies refashioned for their use concepts that are innately theological? Do ideas of sovereignty, human rights, democracy or justice make their claims largely on the basis of faith?

### Former director Partha Chatterjee speaking at the workshop



The daily proceeding of the workshop was divided into two parts. In the morning sessions, the resource persons made presentations on pre-selected readings followed by a discussion. The second session was for participant's presentations.

The set of readings discussed in the morning sessions and the speakers were:

#### Day One: Speakers: Manas Ray and Prathama Banerjee

Chair: Partha Chatterjee

- Charles Taylor, 'Introduction', *A Secular Age*, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts & London, 2007, pp.1-22.
- Partha Chatterjee, 'Secularism and Toleration', in *A Possible India: Essays in Political Criticism*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1997, pp.228-262.
- Carl Schmitt, 'Political Theology', *Political Theology*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 2005, pp.36-52.

#### Day Two: Speakers: Sibaji Bandyopadhyay and Samantak Das

Chair: Anirban Das

- Max Weber, 'Science as a Vocation', in *Max Weber's 'Science as A Vocation'*, ed. Peter Lassman and Irving Velody with Herminio Martins, Unwin Hyman, Boston & Sydney, 1989, pp.3-31.
- Bruno Latour, 'Crisis' and 'Constitution', in *We Have Never Been Modern*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1993, pp.1-48.
- Evelyn Fox Keller, 'From Secrets of Life to Secrets of Death', *Secrets of Life Secrets of*

*Death: Essays on Language, Gender and Science*, Routledge, New York & London, pp.39-55.

**Day Three:** Speakers: Pradip Kumar Dutta and Udaya Kumar and Chair: Anjan Ghosh

- Talal Asad, 'Thinking about Agency and Pain', in *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity*, Stanford University Press, California, 2003, pp.67-99.
- Joseph S. Alter, 'Gandhi's Body, Gandhi's Truth', in *Gandhi's Body: Sex, Diet and the Politics of Nationalism*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 2000, pp.3-27.
- Katherine Verdery, 'Dead Bodies Animate the Study of Politics', *The Political Lives of Dead Bodies: Reburial and Postcolonial Change*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1999, pp.23-53

**Day Four:** Speakers: G. Arunima and Rosinka Chaudhuri and Chair: Tapati Guha-Thakurta

- Marina Warner, 'The Monument (New York)' and 'The Front Page (London)', in *Monuments and Maidens: The Allegory of the Female Form*, Picador (published by Pan Books), pp.3-17, 38-60.
- Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Reading the Satanic Verses', in *Outside in the Teaching Machine*, Routledge, New York & London, 1993, pp.217-241.
- Tapati Guha-Thakurta, "'Our Gods, Their Museums': The Contrary careers of India's Art Objects", *Art History: Journal of the Association of Art Historians: Vol 3 – No.4*, Blackwell Publishing Ltd. Oxford & Boston 2007, pp.628-657.

**Day Five:** Speakers: Sanjay Palshikar and Partha Chatterjee and Chair: Anjan Ghosh

- Talal Asad, 'Reflections on Blasphemy and secular Criticism', in *Religion Beyond a Concept*, ed. Hent de Vries, Fordham University Press, New York, 2008, pp.580-609.
- Partha Chatterjee, 'Two Poets and Death: On Civil and Political Society in the Non-Christian World', in *Questions of Modernity*, ed. Timothy Mitchell, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis & London, 2000, pp.35-48.
- Judith Butler, 'Explanation and exoneration, or What We Can Hear' & 'Violence, Mourning, Politics', *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*, Verso, London & New York, 2004, pp.1-49.

Participants at the workshop



This year, the total number of participants were 23 out of which the number of International participants were 7 and National participants were 16. These participants were mostly doctoral or post doctoral students (below the age of 35) whose ongoing or just completed work focuses on one or more of the themes listed above.

Papers presented during the five days of the workshop were:

Day One : 30 January 2010, for the sub-theme **Secularism, the State and Political Theology**, four papers were presented:

**Jose Alberto Moreno Chavez**, Ph.D. Student in History at El Colegio De Mexico, presented a paper titled 'Catholic devotion and political culture in Mexico City (1880-1925).' The discussant of the paper was Bodhisattva Kar.

**Namrata R Ganneri** from SNDT College of Arts & SCB College of Commerce & Science for Women, Mumbai, presented a paper on 'Situating the Icons of the Hindu Right.' The discussant of the paper was Pradip Kumar Dutta.

**Archana Singh** from G. B. Pant Social Science Institute, Jhansi, Allahabad, presented a paper on 'Exploring the Roots of a Dissenting Culture.' The discussant of the paper was Anjan Ghosh.

**Vikas Pathak** who is working on the last phase of his Ph.D. thesis at the Centre for Historical Studies, JNU, New Delhi, presented a paper on 'The sacred as national: print-communities and the imagining of the nation in colonial Punjab.' The discussant of the paper was Udaya Kumar.

Day Two: 31 January 2010, for the sub-theme **Sacredness of Science**, five papers were presented:

**Saradindu Bhattacharya** who is currently pursuing Ph. D. at Dept of English, School of Humanities, University of Hyderabad, presented the paper on 'Digital Sacrality: Gurus, Celebrities and the New Cultures of Faith'. The discussant of the paper was Samantak Das.

**Sneha Raghavan** from the Department of Cultural Studies, The English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad, presented a paper on 'The Secular as the Sacred and the Sacred as the Secular: A Case Study of the Birla Groups' Philanthropic Endeavours.' The discussant of the paper was Sanjay Palshikar.

**Neeraja Sundaram** from the University of Hyderabad presented a paper on 'Blood Relations: The Sacral and the Vampiric in Popular Cultures.' The discussant of the paper was Rosinka Chaudhuri.

**Charisma K. Lepcha** from the North-Eastern Hill University, Shillong presented a paper on 'Dam Construction in "Holy Land": The Losing Battle of Indigenous Belief for Tribal Lepchas.' The discussant of the paper was Bodhisattva Kar.

**Kyaw Minn Htin** from the Centre de l'Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient (EFEO) de Yangon, Myanmar, presented a paper on 'Sayadaw U Ottama who refashioned his political ideology from the basic religious concepts of Burma.' The discussant of the paper was Prathama Banerjee.

Day Three: 1 February 2010, for the sub-theme **Body, Ritual and the Religious**, five papers were presented:

**Miné Venter** from Stellenbosch University, Western Cape, South Africa, presented a paper on 'Naked Fury— Examining Male Nudity in Angus Taylor's *Positive*.' The discussant of the paper was Tapati Guha-Thakurta.

**R Subha** from IIT Bombay presented a paper on "'God's Hospital': The "Traditional" and the 'Modern' Within Healing Spaces.' The discussant of the paper was Anirban Das.

**Sukanya Sarbadhikary** from the University of Cambridge presented a paper on 'Unsettled Geographies, Competing Memories: The Construction and Experience of a Sacred Landscape in the Nabadwip-Mayapur region of Bengal.' The discussant of the paper was Partha Chatterjee.

**Juan Javier Revera Andia** from the Instituto Nacional De Cultura, Lima presented a paper on 'Aspects of the Sacred, the Ritual and the National Society in Contemporary Peruvian Andean Indigenous Cultures.' The discussant of the paper was Anjan Ghosh.

**Ravinandan Singh** who is enrolled at JNU's CSSS for PhD and is teaching Sociology at Hindu College, Delhi University, presented the paper on 'The three *Visvanaths* of one Hindu Cosmos.' The discussant of the paper was Anirban Das.

Day Four: 3 February 2010, for the sub-theme **Objects, Texts, Icons**, five papers were presented by: **Debaditya Bhattacharya** from the Centre for English Studies (CES), Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), presented a paper on 'A Sacred Mourning: "After the Fall, in the name of Faith"...' The discussant of the paper was Manas Ray.

**Margot Safer** from the University of Stellenbosch, Cape Town, presented a paper on 'A Divine Comedy: From Denigration to Deification.' The discussant of the paper was Rosinka Chaudhuri.

**Moumita Sen** from Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta (CSSSC), presented a paper on '*Alchi*: Negotiating Spaces between the Margin and the Centre.' The discussant of the paper was G. Arunima.

**Syed Parvez Kabir** from the Visva Bharati University presented a paper on 'Between Magic and Logic: An enquiry into the Art and Industry of Unreason.' The discussant of the paper was Tapati Guha-Thakurta.

**Gargi Bhattacharya**, who is working as a part-time Assistant Professor in A.R.S.D. College, New Delhi, presented a paper on 'The Surge of the Sacred: Travelogue of a God on Wheels.' The discussant of the paper was Tapati Guha-Thakurta.

Day Five: 4 February 2010, for the sub-theme on **Consecration and Desecrations**, four papers were presented:

**Abdullah Al Mamun** who is Assistant Professor, Department of Mass Communication & Journalism, Rajshahi University, Bangladesh, presented a paper on 'Baul statue in front of the Zia International Airport, Bangladesh: controversy, contest & the question of "national culture"'. The discussant of the paper was G. Arunima.

**Waliaula Solomon** from the Moi University, Kenya, presented a paper on 'Topic: A Convergence of the Profane and the Religious in Contemporary Kenyan Ethnic Soccer Fandoms: the Case of "Ingwe" and "K'ogalo"'. The discussant of the paper was Partha Chatterjee.

**Phuong Chi Pham** from the Vietnam Institute of Literature (Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences) presented a paper on 'The Image of Buddha and the Tourism in Vietnam.' The discussant of the paper was Manas Ray.

**Koonal Duggal** from the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences Calcutta (CSSSC), presented a paper on 'Subverting the Sacred: An Enquiry on the Politics of Re-presentation of Dera Sacha Sauda.' The discussant of the paper was Prathama Banerjee.

Apart from the 23 participants, 14 resource persons attended the workshop. Among them, Dr. Pradip K Dutta, Dr. Udaya Kumar, Dr. Sanjay Srivastava, Dr. Prathama Banerjee, Dr. G. Arunima and Dr. Samantak Das joined the workshop as external resource persons and from the CSSSC's faculty and ex-faculty, Dr. Partha Chatterjee, Dr. Sibaji Bandyopadhyay, Dr. Tapati Guha-Thakurta, Dr. Anjan Ghosh, Dr. Manas Ray, Dr. Rosinka Chaudhuri, Dr. Anirban Das and Dr. Bodhisattva Kar were engaged as resource persons at the workshop. The workshop provided young researchers an opportunity to share their work with senior scholars in the field.

# Sacrifice and Perish

Junior Research Fellow, ICHR, working on the politics of development in Bihar. He observes Bihar but participates in West Bengal. Sometime back, agitating against the acquisition of farmland for industry, he has been charged with six cases, including obstruction of public servants, assault on cops and ministers. Currently out on bail, he awaits trial.

When not in the thick of political fray, he is an aesthete, lover of book and music, old things and this city of joy. In between all these activities, he manages to hold down the job of Editorial Assistant in *Global South*.



## Jishnu Dasgupta

Pretty Hindu girl Avantika (Kareena Kapoor) meets ruggedly and caddishly handsome Muslim boy Ehsaan (Saif Ali Khan). In the midst of sexually charged banter, over several cups of coffee and a sequence which would fall into the category of what porn websites call 'reluctance' in the college where they both teach, they fall in love. Boy convinces girl's father to overcome his religious prejudices and they are about to marry when a letter arrives from the great U. S. of A. inviting her to take back the teaching position she had left there. Boy convinces girl that in a reversal of gendered roles, it is she who should pursue her career and it is he who should sacrifice his. Married, they fly away.

Gestures of welcome from the cordial, if occasionally stiff, Muslim neighbours of the couple, Ehsaan's search for a job and his fight against religious and racial prejudices, Avantika's attempts to adjust, the peace and quiet of American suburbia— life acquires a degree of predictability interrupted only and violently by the paranoia of one of the said Muslim neighbours (Nauheed). Through this intervention and the latter's brutal murder it is revealed that the neighbours in fact constitute a terrorist sleeper cell. To Avantika's shock and dismay, Ehsaan turns out to be the star of the operation, second only to Bhaijaan (Om Puri), the mastermind. The cell, which is planning a strike bigger than 9/11, had used Avantika as a decoy to get Ehsaan the false identity necessary for the internationally noted terrorist to get into the States.

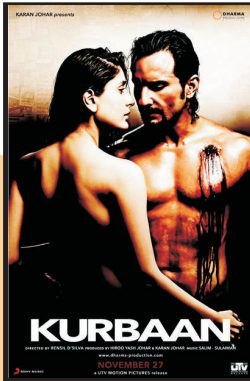
In a sub-plot, a budding romance between two journalists (Diya Mirza and Vivek Oberoi) is terminated when her plane is blown up by the cell amidst Avantika's attempts to warn her. Riyaz (Oberoi) discovers the voice message left by



Avantika, with her connivance, penetrates the cell to seek revenge and to protect the peace in which he is a fervent believer. The FBI meanwhile is taking the first steps towards closing in on the terrorists, following up on clues from the blowing up of the plane.

Myriad twists in the plot follow as the film moves towards its climax— the terrorists attempt to blow up the New York subway system. Riyaz's liaison with the authorities produces only tenuous results because of the surveillance he is put under by the terrorists as well as his own insistence on keeping his actions somewhat independent of the FBI's directions. The terrorist operation, however, does not succeed as Ehsaan balks on discovering that the wives of his fellow terrorists have been made unwitting suicide bombers including his own beloved, the pregnant Avantika.

Riyaz kills Bhaijaan and then hunts down the other terrorists with the FBI; Ehsaan kills himself after a gunfight and having saved *their* women; Avantika stands on the platform, in tears; a last romantic song plays as her face is replaced by the credits.



Movie Poster

The question I asked myself even in the theater was why did I come to watch this movie? The answer, which had seemed so valid a couple of hours before, now appeared downright silly. It was the reaction of Karan Johar to the 26/11 attacks on Mumbai in 2008. Then, this maker of romantic, mushy, mainstream Bollywood movies (which I never deigned to watch) had come up with the most sensible reaction in the cacophony of the worst jingoism in a decade. And when in the aftermath he resolved to write and produce his first 'serious' film, that too on the subject of terrorism, I resolved to watch. But the romantic director's foray in writing a thriller was hampered by the twists being utterly predictable and the seriousness being limited to a number of trite homilies on what produces a terrorist. The film came nowhere near the sensitivity displayed in *Maachis* or *Roja*, or even the much-panned *Dil Se*.

Saif's performance is limited by his character being uni-dimensional in both halves of the script, though the dimensions are diametrically opposite. Kareena's is reduced to a forever teary eyed cipher, who would remind an elder generation of Meena Kumari, without the finesse or class of the 'Tragedy Queen'. Even Om Puri, famous for his powerful portrayals in the neo-realistic films of the 1970s and 80s turned out a lifeless performance, marked only by its grumpiness. Oberoi's Riyaz is the only character who appears flesh and blood and displays more than one facet in his emotions, actions and motives.

Debutant director Rensil D'Silva retains the sleekness of his writing venture *Rang de Basanti* and little else. While Anurag Kashyap and Niranjan Iyengar do a comparatively decent job with the screenplay, some scenes could definitely have been shorter. Moreover loopholes remain in the plot such as Avantika's not calling 911, the absurd amount of freedom allowed to Riyaz by the FBI and terrorists blowing up a plane to advertise their presence when they were supposedly lying low in preparation for their grand strike. The sound track of the film though commercially successful did not bring anything new to the table. The lyrics, while otherwise in plain (Bollywood) Hindi, just had a few Urdu (read Islamic) sounding words thrown in to give it the required, though artificial feel.

But the most serious problem lies in the portrayal of Muslims. Despite the claims and

attempts at a sensitive portrayal, they fall into the same trap of stereotyping, failing to rise above the existing prejudices. Most, or even almost all, (male) Muslims are terrorists. Women, of course, are too pure to indulge in violent activities. Only educated, or rather (truly) Westernised, Muslims are good people, they are not terrorists. Thus, the film ultimately reinforces the representation of Muslims being good or bad according to their performance and otherwise of roles assigned to them by their *other*, without any consideration for the operating motives of the characters themselves.

### Approaching the Climax on a Train



Without mentioning one last thing this review would be incomplete. Much was said and written about the onscreen chemistry of real life lovers Saif and Kareena in the love making scenes. Much news print and blogging time was spent on their newly toned bodies, particularly Kareena's back. While this reviewer will not dispute the aesthetically pleasing quality of the visuals, as a lesbian friend asked, 'Nice to see, but would one want to touch such a back?'



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