

Review

Why economic growth theories became a fiction of development in postcolonial Africa: Critiquing foreign aid policy as discourse

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This paper argued that, for the past fifty years, economic growth theories implemented as aid policy did not materialize into elevated GDPs, high per capita incomes and social progress for Africans as had been promised, but rather translated into underdevelopment through new discourses of dependency, power and ideology. Drawing insights from selected works of creative and film art, it maintains that the humanitarianism behind the theories was transformed into a new syndrome of dependency, a western donor power culture, that predisposed the west to ‘take’ instead of ‘giving’. The aid agenda became fungible as the moral rights of African peoples weakened. The African bureaucracy became a corruptible rather than a developmental apparatus. And all of these critical discourses of the growth theories are creating conditions for a new pan-African ideology of development.

Key words: Economic growth theories, Marcel Mauss’s gifts, foreign aid policy, underdevelopment, dependency, pan-Africanism.

This paper contributes to the growing interdisciplinary field of economic development and aid policy as discourses (Lewis et al., 2008; Lee, 2010; Mosley et al., 1995; Grant and Nijman, 1997; Zheng and Tok, 2007; Sika, 2003), by investigating the reasons why economic growth theories underpinning the foreign aid policy failed to induce development and how this failure is reconstructing a new post-development narrative in Africa. Using insights from Farah (1993) “The Gift”, Bole’s (2000) ‘The Survivors’, Sembene’s (1973) “Xala”, Ngugi’s (2006, 2009) “Wizard of the Crow and Something Torn and New: An African Renaissance”, as well as other writings on foreign aid, the paper is premised on the hypothesis that economic growth theories led to a developmental fiction in Africa because the humanitarianism underpinning foreign aid policy was a “sign”¹ that could easily alienate into new discursive forms of politics of power, bureaucraticism and ideology in the context of Africa. It argues that the failure from these theories created political narratives that were intertwined with

new pan-African perspectives. It concludes by suggesting that the outcome from the debacle between economic growth theories and pan-Africanism can be very complex because it would depend on a number of factors, strategic options and systemic alternatives to current dominant thoughts on foreign aid that African countries have to adopt in order to ‘nurse’ the continent back to its economic and developmental health.

The economic growth theories, which were implemented as foreign aid policies by western donor countries, were a strategic form of development built on capital flows, and a continuing large-scale transfer of technologies from western states, particularly the US government, to African countries. The ‘two-gap theory’ was based on the idea that foreign aid was required to fill certain shortfalls in foreign exchange and in savings in areas of output, production, and technology. The ‘savings gap’ theory assumed that Africa was not yet set in a position to raise sufficient domestic savings to stimulate development (Lluch, 1986). The problem of ‘foreign exchange gap’ was informed by a certain attitude of ‘export pessimism’, that is, the idea that poor African countries cannot generate exports by themselves (Lal 2002).

¹ I am employing the term ‘sign’ as it is used by Ferdinand de Saussure, 1983, in his *Course in General Linguistics*, trans. Roy Harris (La Salle, Ill.: Open Court) and Roland Barthes, 1972, *Mythologies*, trans. Annette Lavers (New York: Hill and Wang).

The 'finale' from these theories was that these short-falls depressed the growth rates of poor African countries (Lal, 1972). Rostow's (1960) stages theory of aid did not see the economy as based on questions of output, production and technology that are applicable to all countries regardless of their local conditions. According to the stages theory, the process of economic development enforced through aid passed through five major uneven phases, namely, traditional society, pre-conditions for take-off, take-off, drive to 'maturity' and the age of high mass consumption.

The aid policy that these growth theories inspired did not take Africa out of poverty into an age of 'maturity' and high mass consumption, but rather entrenched the continent into greater depths of underdevelopment (Andrews, 2009; Ayittey, 1994; Easterly et al., 2003; Hansen and Finn, 2000; Maren, 1997; World Bank, 1998; World Bank, 2001), Moyo and Ferguson (2009) and Moyo (2010) cast blame on aid as source of the social stagnation of the African continent: 'Millions in Africa are poorer because of aid; misery and poverty have not ended but increased' (Moyo, 2010).

Moyo defines aid as gifts (including emergencies) and loans at preferential rates of interest transferred from rich countries to African poor countries. The aid policy was motivated by the depressed post-World War II situation. The situation was marked by decolonization struggles, the prospect of independence for most African countries, the end of most European empires and a breakdown of the international finance market.

From this situation, an international state of affairs was created that necessitated 'humanitarian' interventions in Africa, which these economic theories buttressed in their various forms. There was a need, for example, for official concessional flows, that is, loans with soft terms on interest and repayment.

This humanitarian approach to aid flows was further justified by the fact that a similar situation existed in the western welfare state. The welfare system in the west was favourable to the idea of transferring wealth from the rich to poor people and from wealthy to impoverished societies in western countries. So, this welfare principle, enforced through the Marshall Plan (Schain, 2001), for example, was adopted and applied to North-South relations in order to also transfer wealth from rich western countries to the poor masses in African countries and promote economic development. Humanitarian aid also took the form of capital investment (such as machines, factories, roads, etc), 'soft' investment like education, HIV/AIDS prevention, birth control programmes, and loan forgiveness.

However, after more than half a century of application of the growth theories through continuous aid, the situation for the African masses worsened off instead of improving. Moyo (2010) confirms that, despite more than US\$1 trillion of aid given to African governments by western states over the past 50 years, Africa did not

extricate itself from underdevelopment. Moyo traces Western aid to Africa from the 1960s through the current decade and paints a picture of varying, often conflicting, focuses for foreign aid. She pointed out that aid to Africa in the 1960s concentrated on infrastructure projects that private lenders ignored. In the 1970s, the focus shifted to poverty eradication and away from infrastructure. In the 1980s, there was a tightening of monetary policy, especially a sharp rise in interest rates, which left many African governments with an untenable debt service problem. In the 1990s, western aid providers concentrated on governance, censuring economic problems of the continent on its lack of leadership that resulted in donor fatigue by the turn of the century (OECD, 2005). During the last ten years, Moyo characterized foreign aid as being directed by celebrities (Bono, Bob Geldoff, etc) who called for more aid and large-scale debt forgiveness. Moyo suggests that these shifts into different levels of emphasis on aid presaged uncontrollable trouble and this was ruinous for the continent. Other observers like Michael (1997), a Peace Corps volunteer, testified under oath - in a congressional hearing for the then-House Subcommittee on Africa - that war lords in Somalia benefited from aid by using it to support their own individual war efforts.

From 1945 to the present day, the developmental effect of the aid policy as driven by economic growth theories and by humanitarian motives, became increasingly 'asymmetrical' (Riddell, 2007). The policy application of the theories failed to assuage large scale poverty and to generate conditions for overall development in the vast majority of African countries.² Certainly, there were some limited cases of success. For example, they succeeded to wipe out river blindness in West African countries, thereby protecting about eighteen million children from contracting the infection (Easterly, 2004). Recent successes across Africa showed that in very specific areas, aid can be productive. These were in areas like antiretroviral treatment by The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, bed nets to help protect families from malaria-carrying mosquitoes, reducing deaths in Ethiopia, Rwanda and Kenya, and education for African children through the SMART Aid programme (Joseph and Gillies, 2008).

Nevertheless, statistical studies of the overall effects of theories on growth and poverty alleviation showed unfavourable results at the levels of investment productivity, social welfare, the environment, etc (Boone, 1994; Easterly 2001; Gilbert et al., 1999). The economic and humanitarian objectives that had justified the policy of foreign aid went through new states of complication

² William Easterly (2006) described the failure of aid to the developing world in these terms: 'This is the tragedy in which the West already spent \$2.3 trillion on foreign aid over the last 5 decades and still had not managed to get 12-cent medicines to children to prevent half of all malaria deaths. The West spent \$2.3 trillion and still had not managed to get \$4 bed nets to poor families. The West spent \$2.3 trillion and still had not managed to get \$3 to each new mother to prevent 5 million child deaths.'

and dissolution in the course of the decades. The word 'aid' itself increasingly became a 'dirty' word in international discourse. The 'foreign exchange gap', 'savings gap' and stages justifications for aid lost their intellectual grounds and their arguments were increasingly discredited (Lluch, 1986). This paper proposes to investigate how Africa came into this disastrous situation that has plunged it into the abyss of underdevelopment. It also uses insights from creative art to point out the new effects from implementation of these growth theories. It argues that, although the initial intentions were good, the foreign aid policy failed to yield fruitful results in Africa for two main reasons.

First, in practice, it was not created to help Africa to develop despite such a suggestion in its humanitarian rhetoric. It was designed to assist but implemented in such ways as to construct Africa's 'dependency' on the west. Second, as a result of the 'asymmetrical' development, it produced the aid policy of the growth theories unleashed a pan-African discourse that is now challenging the long term prospects of the policy's theories. In the second part, it investigates the discursive processes that issued from these unacceptable situations of underdevelopment by examining the complex postcolonial environments of the theories underpinning the policy.

IDEOLOGY OF GIFT AS DEPENDENCY SYNDROME

In this section, I argue that although the theories were aimed at promoting the development of African countries, there was much more hidden in the environment of 'aid packaging' that created 'dependency' relations and that was counter-developmental. Instead of promoting development, the economic theories of aid fostered a new syndrome of 'dependency'. In order to explain this phenomenon, Nurrudin (1993) wrote a relevant *oeuvre* titled 'The Gift' based on the theme of foreign aid, in which the author appropriates anthropological findings from Marcel Mauss's (1990) similarly titled work 'The Gift' to broaden out the ideological and moral implications of gift giving in Africa today.

In his classical work, 'The Gift', Marcel Mauss explains this phenomenon by drawing on polynesian ethnography, Indian history and modern practices of industrialized, secular societies to argue that 'gifts' are not just 'gifts' in the sense that they are never really 'free'. Rather, mankind's history furnishes us with examples confirming that gifts generate reciprocal exchanges. The question that motivated his investigation was as follows: 'What power resides in the object given that causes its recipient to pay it back?' (Mauss, 1990: 3). His findings show that 'gifts' are invested with 'spiritual mechanisms', which engage the honour of both 'giver' and 'receiver' (referred to as 'total prestation or total fact' [Durkheim's 'fait social total']). Reciprocal exchanges go beyond separation of the 'spiritual' and the 'material' in such a way that,

following Mauss, the giver does not only give an object but also gives part of 'himself'. 'The object' given is permanently coupled with 'the giver'. Mauss (1990:31) stresses on this point by stating that: '...objects are never completely separated from the men who exchange them'. Because of this link between 'giver' and 'gift', the act of giving creates a social bond with an 'obligation' on the part of the recipient to reciprocate. If the recipient fails to reciprocate, he loses his status and honour, and he is punished at the spiritual level: By losing his spiritual source of authority and wealth.

In contrast to this system of 'gift' exchange, Mauss refers to the important concept of 'alienability' in the commodity economy system where there is a strong distinction between the object and the person through the idea of private property. In this system, the object is sold in such a way that ownership of rights is 'fully' transferred to the new owner. The object becomes 'alienated' from its original possessor. In the system of the 'gift' economy, however, the object given is 'inalienated' from the giver; it is 'loaned' out rather than sold and ceded. Because the giver's identity is invariably bound up with the object given, the gift is endowed with a power which compels the recipient to reciprocate. Because gifts are 'inalienable', they have to be returned; the act of giving creates a gift-debt that has to be re-paid. Gift exchange leads to a mutual interdependence between giver and receiver. Following Mauss's insight, the 'free' gift that is not 'returned' would be a contradiction because it cannot create social ties. Mauss's argument is that solidarity is achieved through the social bonds created by gift exchange.

In 'Gifts', Farah leads his readers beyond the humanitarianism of material aid in financial, technological, agricultural, etc, terms (the gift) to explore the power identity of western and US donors (the givers). Farah shows that gifts made to Africa transformed the continent into dependencies virtually in the pockets of the western 'givers'. What initially seemed like gifts in the basic sense of 'assistance' turned out to be a strategy of dependency, an 'impasse' in the self-assertiveness and responsibilities of Africans. This 'impasse' is reflected in Farah's 'The Gift', which shows that gift-giving induced 'asymmetrical' developments that reflected the subjective vision of donor countries. The 'humanitarianism' behind aid (that is, gifts) then became an ambiguous narrative by which donor countries incorporated African countries into their varied spheres of ideological interest in order to reconstruct new identities of Africans as impoverished recipients that can only survive by becoming dependents.

Nurrudin Farah skillfully breaks down the dichotomy between giver and receiver: for example, the gift of American aid to Somalia is compared to the gift of a woman's body to a man, and the gift of an orphaned child found in the street to a family. The 'finale' of the theme that emerges from Farah's work is that there is really no such thing as a 'gift' that is 'pure'. 'Every gift has

something attached to it,' says Farah, who points out the hypocrisy of aid by European states to African nations, which are today strangled by debt owed to the very same so-called 'givers'. Gifts are presented as symbol of a power system between giver and receiver, with the former having the ability to dictate the process

For example, in this ambiguous context, aid given by western countries and multilateral institutions shifted from the context of 'real needs' of the masses in Africa to the context of 'interests' of 'donors'. The idea of 'donor' also became ambivalent today as it shifted from 'giver' to signify a covert 'taker' at the same time. The meaning of aid itself alienated from 'gift' in the 'humanitarian' sense of 'generosity' to the notion of 'instrument of exploitation'. From this discursive perspective, the aid policy was 'reverting' to an overall strategy of western donors and institutions to maintain their 'status quo' and expand their influence in Africa. Following then, from this 'dialectical process' from 'giver' to 'taker', the alienating movements that engendered the dependency syndrome was accompanied by a spiritual power that transformed Africa into a narrative of dependency and underdevelopment.

One way in which Farah presents the picture of Africa's dependency on aid is in terms of its 'dehumanising' and 'alienating' effects on Africa's agricultural labour. The author maintains that aid had the effect of eroding the dignity and pride of the African farmer. The embryo of the textual story in 'Gifts' emerged from the experience he derived from his sojourn in Gambia during the 1970s when a US vessel transporting 10,000 tonnes of long-grain rice as aid came to the port in Banjul, and the US government suggested that the president should use it to buy votes in the forthcoming election. But because of its alienating power, the 'gift' did more than bribe the electorate; it unleashed a self-disavowing attitude: The Gambians lost an interest in their own locally-grown native rice, and began to demand what they now saw as more quality rice from abroad. In this way, aid transformed self-sufficiency in food into provisional dependency, which harmed the local economy by taking away their self-confidence and self-reliance, and by making Gambia to become wholly 'dependent' on external assistance. This was a general situation that induced underdevelopment in the continent.

THE 'CAPTURING' WESTERN DONOR

When Sindiwe Magona wrote the verse titled 'Foreign Aid', it was an occasion to focus on the sign of aid as power from the 'giver'. The author writes:

Foreign aid
Foreign aid
Comes to my country
Takes a U-turn
Goes back whence it came

Foreign aid
Big man president
Grins and grovels
Sells our coffee for a song
To get World Bank money
Foreign aid
Buys our country nothing
Gives our children less
This Dollar Democracy
Sure is expensive.

The verse confirms that western donor culture is a 'personified' power that gives the impression that it was giving, whereas, in reality, it had more to gain ('Takes a U-turn') by giving to Africa than Africans had to benefit from aid. For example, aid gave western people job opportunities; equipment was brought in from western countries with aid money, thus providing a dependable market for western products. In this way, African nation states became vulnerable to the 'capture' power of western donors by becoming dependent upon aid as their basic life-wire. But this life-wire was a disaffecting rather than an inalienable narrative. When African states diverted aid to only fulfill the function of consumption while ignoring efforts to reform their economies, boost productivity and increase taxable revenue, they were acting in accordance with the alienating power of aid.

Second, donor countries tied the aid they gave to the interests of certain domestic groups in the west and to international power politics (OECD, 2006, 2008). These political considerations tended to foster the continuation of aid, even when it had failed to realize its stated objectives of promoting development and reducing poverty. The lobbying movements by these domestic interest groups in the west were motivated by the fact that they stood to gain from aid programmes, what international relations scholars call 'low politics.' Frequently, donor states eschewed cash aid and instead offered 'vouchers' to African states, with which they could purchase products made by firms located in donor countries. For example, the Director-General of UN Food and Agriculture Organization revealed that, 'Most food aid is donated on condition that it be purchased and processed in, and shipped from, donor countries, even when adequate supplies are available in the region where it is needed' (Diouf, 2006). Such 'tied' aid was expensive and slow; it cost about one-third more than necessary, and often took six months or longer to reach its destination (Ibid). Consequently, donors had little productive results with aid. The driving force of long-term economic growth was no longer the construction of more dams, factories and schools, as enshrined in the humanitarian understanding of aid, but the adoption of new ideas about how to organize social forces, gain political capital and influence production processes (Agence, 2007).

Following from this moment of dependency, ships transporting food aid were required to be flagged with

U.S. or other symbols, and, as a result, food aid harmed farmers; for example, when in 1993, UN food in Mogadishu, Somalia went chiefly to warlords, farmers could not sell their farm crops (De Waal, 1993: 28). U.S. aid was motivated more by 'state interest' than by the declared altruism of the post-War period and this encouraged corruption. The IMF funneled aid only to countries enforcing U.S.-friendly foreign policies (Thacker, 1999; Momani, 2004) such as Egypt that supported its policy in the Middle East. In this way, the neutral economic criteria spelt out in its charter gave way to political criteria in lending decisions (Andersen et al., 2006). The IMF and World Bank became instruments of U.S. neo/imperialism in Africa. Foreign aid was politically profitable; hence, despite its economic failures, it continued to exist as there was no incentive for African politicians (now under its power) to implement reforms on a system from which they benefited. Meanwhile, the cost of complying with conditions imposed by donors, such as structural adjustment programmes, worsened the debt crisis of the 1980s, and this, in turn, meant greater dependency on foreign aid, which continued to cripple Africa's bureaucratic structures and societies depending on western nations. The elites felt less need to induce the kinds of economic growth that could generate tax revenue and promote development (Remmer, 2004).

Both multilateral structural adjustment and development assistance offered through the IMF and the World Bank escaped from the humanitarian goal for which they were designed and could not meet strictly economic objectives, but only succeeded to enforce new forms of political 'raison d'être'. Private foreign direct investment (FDI) in African countries were designed to compel the ruling elites to structure their political institutions so as to facilitate governmental commitments to private property rights, and to contract enforcement of competitive markets. In this way, aid became a creative way of destroying local economies through government corruption, which in turn, created new class conflicts. There was a new feeling that aid to Africa did not make a good use of US/European public or private money.

WEAK MORAL RIGHT AND FUNGIBILITY OF AID AGENDA

The humanitarian reasons for giving out aid were defensible in terms of transference of aid money to poor African 'people'. But because these reasons were vulnerable to the 'alienation of gifts' that Mauss and Farah discuss in their texts, 'The Gift', aid quickly became 'synonymous' with transfer of funds to corrupt African governments (Little and Clifford, 1965). A further complication from here was that even the poor masses of Africa could not really claim a moral 'right' to welfare transfers from rich western societies. The situation was different with national recipients of domestic welfare

payments because westerners depended on the existence of a 'national society' with some commonly accepted moral standard in western countries. But there was no such or similar 'international society' within which a right to aid could be established (Lal, 1978, 1983). Consequently, aid money became fungible, in the sense that aid from western states intended to finance development projects could theoretically 'trickle-down' to benefit the masses just as well as it could be 'deviated' to the accounts of ruling elites in African governments. Under the absence of any moral conditions, the offering of aid to the masses depended upon the moral orientation of the elites whose attitudes to development could easily be changed. The elites now decided to devote their own national resources but to finance projects of no valuable rates of return such as the purchase of weaponry to rebuild their military security or realize prestigious projects like construction of 'palaces' that had little to do with development of the masses. This problem of 'fungibility' of aid led to the growth of 'programmed' borrowing, which was imposed by donors and increased from the 1980s along with the intensification of structural adjustment and poverty eradication loans. Programmed borrowing was based on a mutually agreed overall economic agenda by the recipient African government. The loans that were given for structural adjustment programmes, for example, were given in return for specific commitments that had to be made in policies like avoiding price controls, promotion of free trade and reduction of taxes (Gilbert et al., 1999:619). But such policy conditionalities proved to be ineffective because aid money provided was not used for the specific policy prescribed and it had no effect on growth. What mattered was the 'environment' of policy, but the money provided as aid had little direct impact on this environment

As pointed out, one of the powers of the 'gift' syndrome was that, once aid was given, no moral 'right' to its resources directly connected western societies and African masses. African governments that pledged to use aid money to realize specific developmental projects to benefit the masses always reneged on guarantees they themselves gave from the time when aid money was effectively disbursed to them. The case of President Moi of Kenya in the 1980s is well documented (Mwenga, 2008). In addition, aid organizations did not stop giving aid to such leaders in Africa even when they had broken their promises and failed to comply accordingly. The reason for this outcome was that aid organizations were part of an international industry in 'poverty alleviation' that benefited a huge section of western professionals referred to as 'Lords of Poverty' (Hancock, 1989). These 'Lords of Poverty' made their fortunes from loans they disbursed to poor countries. They lobbied their state governments and persuaded civil societies in Europe and the US that these loans would ease off high poverty levels and improve the conditions of life for ordinary people. But Michael (1997) painted a picture of

selfishness ruining aid programs, namely, U.S. policymakers using aid to win support to grain-trading companies looking to unload excess grain and dishonest leaders who sold aid resources for personal profit instead of making them available to the intended recipients, the poor masses. From this light, it was in the selfish and 'amoral' but reciprocated interest of both the 'Lords of Poverty' and the intractable African governments to ignore unfulfilled pre-conditions for developmental and policy changes before credits were given out. The result of all these 'amoral' narratives of aid in the alienating environment of the African bureaucracy in alliance with lobby groups abroad was that foreign aid was '...redistribute[d] from the reasonably well-off in the West to most income groups in the Third World 'except' the very poorest' (Mosley, 1987: 23). The anticipated and promised trickle-down effect of aid could not take place because the ruling elite classes used their offices to block redistribution of whatever aid money was destined to assist poor communities in the continent.

Following from this insight of fungibility of aid, there was a shift in the geographical 'locale' of the problems that aid sought to alleviate. Whereas from the 1940s, the location of determination and resolution of problems was in the west, from 2000, that paternal role started to wane and to shift to African countries, particularly after the Copenhagen Consensus Conference of 2004. The new millennial thought emerging on aid was that African countries were supposed to solve their own problems by adopting effective and sensible policies. Aid was now used as a persuasive way of dictating policies on African countries without appearing to impose them. The argument now was that if the countries did not adopt such policies, aid would have to be withdrawn altogether because any alternative strategy would likely result in ruling elites stealing aid in order to strengthen their hold over the countries, or otherwise squander aid.

The new thought was also that HIV/AIDS was a problem that could not be solved by foreign aid because the spread of the disease was easily prevented by abstinence, faithfulness and the use of condoms, which were cheap and affordable. The emerging feeling was that these were strategies that any African nation could enforce by informing its population concerning the risk factors for and the debilitating consequences of the disease. The new reasoning was also that treatment of the disease once contracted was very costly and aid was a poor method of fighting it because in the event of any cure for the disease, its incidence would rise with the lowering of the expected cost of catching the disease.

The underlying thought was now that HIV/AIDS, which was easily avoidable by an inexpensive change of behavior, could be used as an ideological weapon to control the social mode of life in Africa, a strategy, which Michel Foucault calls 'biopower', for example, by checking promiscuous sexuality. However, this discursive thinking can be countered by the reasoning that such a

method of shifting responsibility to Africans themselves for disease prevention is not feasible but can be counter-productive for obvious reasons. First, knowledge of the modes of disease transmission is important but it does not automatically lead to adoption of 'safe' behaviours. This outcome would require robust educational programmes to fight sexuality-inducing myths and codes and develop new skills, motivations, and attitudes in youths. Second, there are certain intractable social and economic problems created by liberal capitalism, which compel social groups like prostitutes and students, to indulge in risky sexuality. Removing aid may create more difficult economic conditions that would also reduce the incentive to avoid contracting the disease in the first place.

CORRUPTIBILITY OF AFRICAN BUREAUCRACY

Here it is argued that economic theories of foreign aid breach on the fact that people themselves respond to incentives in ways that are 'unpredictable'. The transfer of funds to African governments had no effects on poor African 'people' because, as Ngugi Wa Thiongo's 'Wizard of the Crow shows', they were ruled by 'unpredictable' leaders in the likes of Bokassa of the Central African Republic, Sani Abacha of Nigeria, and what has been referred to as kleptocratic 'tropical gangsters' (Klitgard, 1990). The aid money was simply stolen and used for private rather than public purposes. According to William Easterly, despite over \$2 billion in foreign aid given to Tanzania's government for roads, the roads did not improve. What increased was the bureaucracy, with the Tanzanian government producing twenty-four hundred reports a year for the one thousand donor missions that visited each year (Easterly, 2004).

This bureaucratic phenomenon is represented by Ngugi Wa Thiongo's 'Wizard of the Crow' in which aid fattens up private pockets, like those of the dictatorial ruler of the fictional Free Republic of Aburiria, the greedy Tajirika; and the dictator's ministers, Sikioku and Machiokali. Ngugi's 'Wizard of the Crow' shows that the foreign aid model practiced today has undermined good governance because aid has propped up friendly dictators for geopolitical purposes. Aid was provided to despots merely because they were considered to be on the right side of the Cold War even though it was surely known that they were stealing the funds. With aid being in limited supply, the ruling elites became an 'impotent' force of development, mired in corruption. This thematic of 'impotence' is taken up and symbolically treated by Sembene Ousmane in his oeuvre 'Xala'. Sembene's satire of the modern African 'bourgeoisie' touches on the subject of 'black-facing' of policies by former colonial masters in aid-dependent governments after independence was granted. The protagonist of the text is a self-satisfied, but westernized Senegalese businessman who is suddenly struck down with the 'Xala', which is a very

old Senegalese curse, rendering him impotent. His search for a 'cure' for his impotence is tragically vain and becomes a 'metaphor' for the impossibility of African elites charged with the task of development to achieve economic liberation through their dependence on western policies of technological and bureaucratic assistance.

The corruption of the elites was not only at a personal level; it took other forms. Infrastructural projects were often ill-conceived and then abandoned; poorly considered loans were made and then interest rates were arbitrarily raised, thereby escalating unsustainable debt load. Decisions were made about the direction of aid spending without consultation with the masses to be impacted. Moyo and Ferguson (2009) made the relevant point that it is foreign aid that accelerated corruption in Africa. They maintained that with aid, corruption fostered corruption, nations descended into a vicious cycle of aid, propping up corrupt governments that could easily access freely usable cash. However, while there is much truth in this statement, beyond this fact, is the question of the 'unpredictability' of man, which writers like Ngugi wa Thiongo'o and Bole Butake address very elaborately in their discourses. Bole Butake's 'oeuvre' titled 'The Survivors' shows that many African leaders, represented by Officer, have plundered not only aid money, but also revenue from natural resources, intended for the poor masses represented by characters like Mboysi, the Old Man and others. The circumstances portrayed in Butake's 'oeuvre' on aid, namely, the freedom of the leader to act with impunity, the ignorance of the masses, their vulnerability, their survivability based on sexual services (p.45), etc, show that it would be difficult for outsiders to prevent the pillage by African governments of their own country's resources. Although it is possible for donors to end aid programmes that led to looting, the fact that donors have not been able to do so, for reasons of 'low politics' invoked earlier, makes them co-schemers in this process of pillage and underdevelopment.

THE QUEST FOR A NEW PAN-AFRICAN IDEOLOGY OF DEVELOPMENT

Here the author argue that the failure of economic growth theorists to deliver on their promises of development through the policy of aid unleashed a dialectical process marked by the quest for a new kind of cultural and political ideology that went beyond capitalism and communism and drew but from Africa's ancestral patrimonial history. The humanitarian goal of aid, in practice, slipped off into the concealed agenda of abetting African countries into the capitalist ideology. But Africans soon realized that behind aid was a new attempt to imperialize the continent ideologically and they started to play what looked like a 'hide-and-seek' game. At this point in time, aid was having a limited impact to foster western ideological interests. The process itself was

divergent: in one instant, the aid policy began to encourage, for example, the formation of 'non-aligned' coalitions of African and other states seeking 'bribes' in order not to adhere to the communist bloc (Bauer, 1976). In this instant, which was chiefly political, the impact of aid underwent a metamorphoses by shifting from humanitarian goals to become '...an instrument of political leverage' (Mosley, 1987: 232) thereby promoting rivalry for political allies during the Cold War period. However, the end of the Cold War undermined this political direction.

In the second instant, the dialectic from growth theories on aid gave free rein to an intellectual movement whose argument, captured in African creative works of art, was mainly cultural and was based on the assumption that Eurocentric (capitalism and communism) ideologies backed up by the social sciences cannot take Africa out of poverty and underdevelopment. For example, the writings of African poets asked Africans 'to accept the validity of a non-western perspective and way of making sense of life' (Alston, 2003). In this direction, African poets offered a way forward for Africans to move beyond the entrapping boundaries of neo/liberal capitalist theories on aid and growth. They provided an expanded insight into an Afro-centric, communitarian resistance to the predations of capitalism and communism that see the world only through the lens of science, rationalism, utilitarianism and objectivity. As Olafioye's (1984) 'Politics in African Poetry' points out, African poetry stresses pan/nationalistic issues away from capitalist questions and western cultural discourses that emphasize universal modernism as the only path for Africa to follow in order to develop. Despite an inner splitting up of the pan-African movement, concerned critical poets like Ngara (1990), Owomoyela (1991), Ojaide (1986, 1995) and Soyinka (1976) speak out against such 'global' issues as neoliberal market in the name of aid and development.

In the 1980s, many writers like Ugah, Osundare and Ngugi wa Thiongo'o identified themselves as socialists working against what they saw as the exploitative interests of western capitalism. When Ngugi (2009) published his work titled 'Something Torn and New: An African Renaissance', he maintained that 'modernity can be considered a product of colonialism...[hence the need for]... the decolonization of modernity.' In their texts, the underprivileged masses undermined by the effects of growth theories and aid policies, are rehabilitated. The new economic program presented by the writers substitute the foreign aid policy with a socialist recuperation of the oral tradition. In their narratives, the concerns are not with capital, markets, bureaucracies, influences, etc, but rather with the place of orality ethnicity, kinship, 'glocalization' and indigenous knowledges. They discuss the use that can be made of the ancestral culture in promoting pan-African resistance against globalization. Their poetry draws attention to the exploitation of the African natural environment and local communities and

how these can be regenerated without the agency of the state. These radicalist pan-African writings prioritize the alternative of indigenous visions and values as the strategy to be used against the imported model of aid policy in the face of continued debt and worsening socio-economic conditions of the African masses created by the IMF and World Bank.

In 'Something Torn and New', Ngugi's foremost concern is the critical importance of language and spirituality to culture. Ngugi explores Africa's historical, economic, ideological and cultural 'fragmentation' by the successive policies of slavery, colonial rule and globalization. He maintains that throughout these tragic moments of history, an irrepressible force was Europhonism, that is, the replacement of native names, languages, and identities with European ones. The result was the dismemberment of African memory. He represents the cultural and spiritual agenda of the pan-Africanist movement as one that goes beyond the mere question of GDP, per capita income, aid and economic growth to include a return to 'writing' in indigenous African languages as a way of restoring ancestral memories that are alienated or lost in foreign European 'languages' and cultures. Ngugi's version of African 'Renaissance' is a movement of indigenous languages and spiritual revival, which is very optimistic about the extensive use of African languages as a way of energizing the old culture of solidarity (the indigenous version of aid policy) within and between African states. For Ngugi, the processes of pan-Africanism, restoration of indigenous languages, cultural spirituality and political 'translation' are prerequisites for an African developmental 'Renaissance'.

Ngugi's idea of 'decolonizing modernity' is a new form of politics of resistance based on the assumption that African cultures are still alive and can effect the 'translation' through 'language' from modernism to indigenism, that is, from 'growth theories' of aid to African conceptions of post-development. From this Ngugian perspective, the 'asymmetry' in development started when the encounter of Africa and capitalist modernity thrust the continent into a dependency relationship. This relationship did not only interrupt Africa's development leading to its underdevelopment, which Abdourahman (2006) portrays in 'Aux Etats-Unis d'Afrique'; but it also inaugurated a new status of the continent as an active 'donor' to the west: Ngugi argues that "the: '... continent's relationship to the world has thus far been that of a donor to the West. Africa has given her human beings, her resources, and even her spiritual products through Africans writing in European languages. We should strive to do it the other way round" (Ngugi, 2009: 128). He discountenances the colonial, 'humanitarian' grounds of the aid policy and argues that the classical concept of 'donor' should be reviewed because, instead of being the recipient of western aid, Africa has become the real donor to the west. In this way, following Mauss's theory, the 'gift' effect has been that the 'recipient' has become

the 'giver' and the 'giver' the 'recipient'.

This Ngugian position radicalized the idea of a colonialist myth of aid to Africa by moving beyond economic asymmetry to incorporate the robbery of Africa's cultural legacy through linguistic genocide (Ngugi, 2009: 18). European colonialism defaced Africa's identity and destroyed her spirituality, which intellectuals like Blyden, Booker T. Washington, and W. E. B. DuBois have tried to rediscover. Ngugi speaks of the need for a rebirth by re-activating a utopia of the 'post-renaissance', decolonized memory, so as to name the modern world by reconnecting to the African 'memory' (Ngugi, 2009:130), to engage in a historical movement again, away from its paralyzing present to a remobilizing of energies. The African 'Renaissance' means reclaiming the past, a commitment to re-member the vision of Pan-Africanism (Ngugi, 2009: 88). Ngugi maintains that, in order to be effective, the 'renaissance' of Africa must deal with the predatory practices of capitalism which uses institutions like the Global Bank (his reference to the World Bank), the Global Ministry of Finance (reference to The International Monetary Fund), NGOs and missionary charities.

While Moyo argues for a new policy of economic liberalism through privatization and normalization of the economies of poor countries. Moyo's solution is a return to the dream of those who envisage "a free and stable world where our money can move across borders without barriers erected by the misguided nationalism of the outmoded nation-state" (Ngugi, 2006: 580).

In *The Wizard of the Crow*, the protests of the nationalist fringes against the mirage of aid dramatize the mythology of begging that Dambisa Moyo denounces in *Dead Aid: "Your Loans Are the Cause of Begging. We Beggars Beg the End of Begging"* (Ngugi, 2006: 74). Africa's redemption is to be achieved by adopting the gospel of the market economy that Naomi Klein deconstructs with such perspicacity and passion in *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*. And it is here that Ngugi and Moyo seem to diverge.

While Moyo's approach stresses the need for enforcement of a policy of liberal capitalism, Ngugi suggests that the issue is in eliminating the history of a fatalistic encounter with the west. Therefore, the prosperous future for Africa resides in a historical perspective that does not repress the 'memory' of colonial violence and material/psychological dispossession through slavery, colonialism, internationalism and globalization (Ngugi, 2009: 61). Ngugi's narrative 'oeuvre' is a Panafricanist response to the aid paradox, which attempts to refurbish Africa's progressive past not merely through neoclassical economics but especially via its cultural, spiritual and linguistic heritage. Ngugi argues that intellectual critics in Africa, like Moyo, are a paradoxical disappointment for Africa's prospects of development because they condemn the language of market capitalism; and yet still borrow freely from the same language of 'shame' and

fatalism, the language of 'dead aid' and the myth of neoliberal free marketing to suggest the way forward for the continent (Ngugi, 2009: 62-63). For Ngugi, the solution for Africa is not economic growth and foreign aid, but her cultural, linguistic and spiritual 'renaissance'. African 'renaissance' can end national unconsciousness, the spirit of dependency, exploitation of the bourgeoisie, images of refugee camps, starving children, state collapse paraded in the west as evidence of Africa as a pathological case.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this paper has shown that economic growth theories that were implemented as foreign aid policy were merely 'signs' with the potential to translate into critical discourses. Walt Rostow's theory of stages, for example, was not a theory in the real sense of the word; rather, it was only a prophetic taxonomy and, therefore, had no critically developmental usefulness. The stages it prescribed or predicted could not be precisely identified as time intervals 'per se'. From an empirical viewpoint, for instance, the preconditions for take-off could not be distinguished from take-off proper. Most importantly, sustained growth could not always follow the 'stage' identified as take-off in the continent. As a result, economic growth theories transformed into narratives of asymmetrical development. In order to promote development in Africa, through the aid policy, various strategies have been suggested such as private transfers through either traditional interfamily channels or private charities (nongovernmental organizations, or NGOs) are more efficient in targeting these transfers to the poor, as well as in delivering health care and education (Lal and Myint, 1996).

The centralized bureaucracies of western aid agencies are particularly inept in targeting these transfers to the truly needy because they lack local knowledge. Moreover, there is evidence that these inefficient public transfers tend to crowd out more efficient private transfers (Lal and Myint, 1996). Not surprisingly, therefore, despite their claim that their mission is to alleviate Third World poverty, official aid agencies are increasingly subcontracting this role to the NGOs. Whether this official embrace of the NGOs is in the NGOs' long-term interest is arguable (Lal, 1996).

In order to end this pathology of aid 'dependency' in Africa, Ngugi Wa Thiongo'o proposes a strategy of increased national and regional 'self-reliance' through a pan African strategy of recuperating the past. Dambisa Moyo proposes solutions like creation of new bond markets, micro-financing, revised property laws, and commercial investment from the Chinese. Numerous other solutions have been proposed such as that the west should reduce tariff barriers to African exports. The economic resources saved from reducing foreign aid could be used to compensate western industries hurt by

import competition from poor African countries and thus these measure can help to reduce political resistance to such a tariff reform. However, Ngugi's postcolonial narrative, which reflects a growing and popular feeling for unity in African today, (e.g. the Africa Union, Kwame Nkrumah's project of the United States of Africa, etc), urges that these measures belong to the same free market 'language' that crippled the continent. This paper has shown that all Schools of economism, like growth theories, are vulnerable to the realms of the political and the ideological, namely, the post-aid discourses of gift dependency, power and Ngugi's pan-nationalistic ideology shared by most ordinary Africans. This has argued that with the regrettable limitations of economic aid to Africa clearly demonstrated here, the chances are now open for its peoples to turn resolutely toward their history of re-appropriation. They may draw inspiration from their past to deal with their complex and uncertain future.

This point has been stated by other less radical Africa intellectuals like Ousmane Sembène. For him, any future prospect for Africa's development must start with the African state regaining rather than relinquishing its power in order to call the shots in its dealings with donors. Throughout his film career, Sembène (1992), a socially committed activist, argued in his film, 'Guelwaar' ('Guelwaar: An African Legend for the 21st Century', that change for the better in Africa can only truly occur if it is initiated by Africans themselves from within. The film faults foreign aid as an impediment to true African economic and political independence. Sembène's film speaks to a singular vision of what Africa might become if it is led off the hook of aid. Sembène compared the aid policy to an act of feeding a person everyday with sweets or honey to a point where he loses control of his responsibilities: 'If you want to kill a good and noble person, give him all he needs, whenever he needs it.' Aid killed the sense of duty that African nationalist leaders had prior to independence. It deterred effort; it destroyed the desire to find out about the situation of people in real need, and how to organize to take care of them

However, this pan-nationalistic perspective would be confronted with numerous challenges. Pan-Africanism started with the Haitian Revolution of 1804, was reinvigorated with the African National Congress of 1912. But, it can only blossom out into a new 'material' form when its geographical expanse is large enough and its spiritual motivation is intensely profound to be able to deal efficiently with the exploitative 'bourgeoisie', Cold War intrigues, globalization, the brain drain, the trafficking of African women and children, the culture of begging and so forth.

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