

Globalization, Its Implications and Consequences for Africa*

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ABSTRACT This paper examines the concept of globalization, its history, instruments and problems for the African continent. While identifying it as one of the recent developments currently changing the physiognomy of global politics, it specifically focuses on its challenges, consequences and implications for Africa particularly, in the realm of equality of membership, requisite inputs into the policy process and, the encapsulating assertiveness of the global village. In the process, it was argued and revealed that, globalization is the final conquest of capital over the rest of the world and, that, its "antecedents" and "uneven thesis" are explainable within the one-arm banditry and ethos of capitalism. Furthermore, it was argued that this would continue to be so, irrespective of its aim at the transcendental homogenization of political and socio-economic theory across the globe and its purported benefits to mankind. The central thesis of our study is that the asymmetry of power and interests of the member states of the global village, as well as the lopsidedness in the rules of the game therein, cannot benefit Africa and her people. This is so and would continue to be so because it (i.e. globalization) is a new order of marginalization and recolonization in a "neo-neo-colonial fashion," of the African continent. We equally argued that its elevation into a position of "absolute truth" without any credible alternative is a disastrous entrapment for Africa from which the latter must free itself through a genuine and committed political, cultural, sociological and economic realignment and restructuring that is truly African in nature if it hopes to survive the challenges of the twenty-first century.

INTRODUCTION

Given the historical relationship between Africa and the West it is ironic that the latter is today preaching the virtues of freedom to Africans. Former colonisers and ex-slave-owners have made a virtue of championing political and economic liberalization. Yesterday's oppressors appear to be today's liberators, fighting for democracy, human rights and free market economies throughout the world (Obadina, 1998).

The concept of globalization is global and dominant in the world today. But, it was not handed down from heaven, it was not decreed by the Pope, it did not emerge spontaneously. It was created by the dominant social forces in the world today to serve their specific interests. Simultaneously these social forces gave themselves

a new ideological name the - "international community" - to go with the idea of globalization (Madunagu, 1999).

Globalization has largely been driven by the interests and needs of the developed world (Grieco and Holmes, 1999).

Globalization has turned the world into the big village... This in turn has led to intense electronic corporate commercial war to get the attention and nod of the customer globally... This war for survival can only get more intense in the new millennium. Are we prepare(d) to face the realities of this global phenomenon, which has the potential of wiping out industrial enterprise in Nigeria (and Africa)? What can we (or do we) do? (Oluabunwa, 1999).

It is needless to distractedly search for any premise other than the foregoing, to commence the analytical examination of the holocaust effects of globalization particularly as it concerns the African continent. It should be stated, however, that the extent of these effects as well as the coping ability/capacity of its victims are explainable within the context of human history, which, on its own has not been static, and which had continuously evolved with the society itself over the years. In the course of this evolution, various developments and changes had taken place. These changes or developments had, in most cases, affected the systemic existence of humankind peers regardless of the geo-political location within the universe.

One of such changes or developments that is currently affecting the physiology of human society today through its imposition of constraints on the policy-making autonomy or independence of member states vis-à-vis their capacities for the authoritative allocation of scarce and critical societal values or resources among other functions, is globalization. As a result of its combination of "destructive leviathan" and improved material wellbeing of humankind (Ohiorhenuan, 1998: 6), globalization has continued to attract increased scholarly and analytical attention across the globe. It is, thus, not fortuitous that globalization has been at the epicentre of most developmental and intellectual discourses.

This is not unconnected with the fact that world developments have been increasingly characterised not by their growth dynamics but by their links to the process of globalization. Hence, the overwhelming character of globalization has made it compelling for some scholars to use various aspects of the global economy as units of analysis (Woods, 1988; Tussie, 1994; Cerry, 1994; Krugman and Venables, 1995; Tebin and Estabrooks, 1995; Biersteker, 1998; De Vet, 1993; Kahler, 1993; Dunning, 1998; Obadina, 1998; Madungu, 1999; Colle, 2000; Oluabunwa, 1999; Otokhine, 2000).

THE CONCEPT OF GLOBALIZATION

Globalization refers to the process of the intensification of economic, political, social and cultural relations across international boundaries. It is principally aimed at the transcendental homogenization of political and socio-economic theory across the globe. It is equally aimed at "making global being present worldwide at the world stage or global arena". In other words, as Oluabunwa (1999: 20) once opined:

Globalization can be seen as an evolution which is systematically restructuring interactive phases among nations by breaking down barriers in the areas of culture, commerce, communication and several other fields of endeavour.

This is evident from its push of free-market economics, liberal democracy, good governance, gender equality and environmental sustainability among other holistic values for the people of the member states. It deals with the "increasing breakdown of trade barriers and the increasing integration of World market" (Fafowora, 1998: 5).

The process of globalization is impelled by the series of cumulative and conjunctural crises in the international division of labour and the global distribution of economic and political power; in global finance, in the functioning of national states and in the decline of Keynesian welfare state and the established social contact between labour and government. In fact, its hallmark of free-market capitalism has been aided among other factors by the sudden though, expected changes within the physiology of global political community in recent times.

It is within the goal of globalization that it could be correctly defined from the institutional perspective as the spread of capitalism (MacEwan, 1990). However, it is germane to adumbrate that the collapse of the Eastern block in the late 80s and early 90s led to the emergence

and ascendancy of a global economy that is primarily structured and governed by the interest of Western behemoth countries, thus, facilitating the integration of most economies into the global capitalist economy. With the demise of the Eastern Europe in the early 90s, capitalism as an economic system now dominates the globe more than it had been at any time in its history. Even, China, by far the largest non-capitalist economy, has undergone dramatic changes in its international economic policy orientation, and, is today the recipient of almost one-half of all foreign direct investments that go into developing nations - this is a country that essentially blocked all foreign investments until the 1980s (United Nations, 1995b). Beyond this simplistic analysis of globalization in terms of capital inflows and trade investment, it is important to state that it has been of disastrous consequences to the governments and people of the African continent.

Globalization, according to Ohiorhenuan (*ibid.*), is the broadening and deepening linkages of national economies into a worldwide market for goods and services especially capital. As Tandon (1998b: 2) once opined, globalization seeks to remove all national barriers to the free movement of international capital and, this process is accelerated and facilitated by the super-sonic transformation in information technology. It is principally aimed at the universal homogenization of ideas, cultures, values and even life styles (Ohiorhenuan, 1998: 6) as well as, at the deterritorialization and villagization of the world. Expanding this argument, Gordmier (1998), argued that it is principally concerned with the expansion of trade over the oceans and airspace, beyond traditional alliances which were restricted by old political spheres of influence. Thus, it presupposes the "making or remaking" of the world (Diagne and Ossebi, 1996) by creating "a basic change in the way in which major actors think and operate across the globe". (Biersteker, 1998). In other words, it connotes "the rapid expansion through giant multinational companies of capitalism and their 'blood sapping principles' of 'liberalization,' 'commercialization,' 'privatization' and 'undemocratic and property-based democratization' to several areas of the world including where it had hitherto been resisted or put in check" (Madunagu, 1999: 53).

Very critical to our understanding of globalization is the dire need to use it as a synonym for liberalization and greater openness. The implication of this is that both domestic and foreign

liberalization are said to imply globalization, since the former brings domestic markets more in conformity with forces operating in markets abroad, and, the removal of administrative barriers to international movement of goods, services, labour and capital increases economic interaction among nations. It is within this purview that we can argue that globalization is mainly a phenomenon of capital mobility. Its two prongs are; (i) Foreign direct investment and (ii) international portfolio flows. Thus, a global economy is one which is dominated by transnational firms and financial institutions, operating independently of national boundaries and domestic economic considerations. The implication of deterritorialization for African countries is that world goods, factors of production and financial assets would be almost perfect substitutes everywhere in the world. Hence, it could be difficult to identify a national economy and consider nation states as distinct economic identities with autonomous decision-making power in the pursuit of national objectives. This, indeed, explains why the IMF issued a query to Nigeria in respect of over 400 billion naira meant for capital expenditure in the 2001 budget, and, why the IMF and World Bank (two bodies that are driving forces of globalization) contributed enormously in the drafting of the Nigeria 2001 budget.

Another important feature of globalization is that, it enhances the volume of international trade and investment, which is a reflection of the global pattern of specialization in production (i.e. the international division of labour). Though, there is an increase in the volume of goods among nations, international trade continues to be largely concentrated in developed countries (i.e. Trade continues to exist between economies at the same level of economic development). For example, in 1992, 56% of world trade was among developed countries, virtually unchanged from its 1970 level. In the same year, 77% of developed countries imports originated from other developed countries, compared to 78% in 1970. Thus, trade between the developed and developing world as measured by the share of developing countries exports in total developed countries imports has been stable, varying around 30% since 1970, although the rise in oil prices in the 1970s brought a temporary increase. However, trade among developing countries has been a relatively constant share of total trade, although, there has been a rise in intra-Latin American trade (United Nations, 1993). Central to our discourse is that, globalization is also about international

division of labour which might be broadly characterised by the skill intensity of production, with developed countries increasingly specialising in high - skill intensive manufacturing and services and, developing countries in low - skill intensive manufacturing. This asymmetry has severe and devastating impacts on African economies since they are primarily to produce raw materials for industries in the developed countries who, eventually, produce goods and dump them in developing countries as a result of liberalization - a critical component of globalization.

There is no doubt whatsoever that globalization is one of the most challenging developments in the world history. As Tandon (1998A: 2) once opined, "globalization in its most generic and broad sense is part of the movement of history". In other words, globalization which is the "final conquest of capital over the rest of the World" is deep-seatedly rooted in history and quite explainable within the context of the one - arm banditry and exploitative antecedents of capitalism which, by its nature cannot exist without parasitic expansion.

Given the changing faces and phases of globalization and its immutable central and primary focus to exploit African resources, disintegrate its economies and incorporate it into the international capitalist economy, it is imperative to emphasise that, the different conceptions, notions and treatment of globalization by scholars are not incompatible with one another. The limitation of these conceptions, notions and treatments, however, is that, it does not describe the sudden yet significant shifts in the world economy, but, rather, simply the continuation of longer term trends. Rather, the new development which seems to connect these different strands is that an increased pace of capital mobility has begun to shift the prospects for economic development and growth to the global level - an indication of the expropriation of surplus and capital flight from the African economies.

ITS HISTORY AND INSTRUMENTS

Globalization is not a new feature of the world economy. The era before the First World War was one in which strong globalization tendencies produced a very uneven pattern of global economic development, exposing the limits of global economic integration. For example, the integration of the African economy into the capitalist economy is part of the globalising tendencies of capitalism. Thus, colonialism provided a

legal framework for the dependence of the African economy on the economy of western countries. Thus, the African economy became producers of raw materials for industries in advanced capitalist societies.

Historically, the process of globalization had started in a small way in the nineteenth century. This was when capital moved from Europe to open up new areas in America and Australia, mostly in the building of rail road systems and agriculture that would be central to the expansion of capitalism.

The subsequent maturation of joint-stock companies and developments in the areas of banking, industrial capital and technology, aided among other things, the scramble for and partitioning of Africa and, its then attendant rapacious exploitation of these parts of the World. Even though, the pre-eminence of globalization as championed by America was interrupted by the cold war era, with the effective end of the latter in 1990, the West no longer need to compromise as before, its ideology of globalized culture on the account of communism.

Consequent on this, the global economy continued to experience some fundamental changes in nearly all ramifications including "even the language of global discourse" (ibid). This trend is currently being pursued with vigour by the now acclaimed instruments, of globalization. These instruments – [(a) the reformed old Bretton woods institutions (IMF and World Bank), (b) World Trade organization and (c) the G8] - according to Banjo (2000: 19) are the "Wicked Machines of the Imperialists," which completely have their pedigrees in the ideological frameworks of the West and its monopolistic view of what the World should look like. This is particularly so because:

The rules and regulations of these three agencies of imperialist are fundamentally unfair to working and poor people around the world. The private corporation and other financial interest whose interests are devilish are able to dominate the "rules of the game" in the international economy with adverse results on the health and welfare of hundreds of millions of people. (ibid: 19)

Any characterization of globalization that excludes the roles of the International monetary fund and the World Bank will be too reductionist since the primary goal of globalization is the issue of global capital. In this direction, the IMF and the World Bank have played crucial roles in the enthronement of global capital. This has been

done through policies such as liberalization, privatization and deregulation. In respect of liberalization which is a process of removing artificial restrictions on production, exchange or use of goods, services and factors of production, there has been a liberalization of international trade and factor movements which are necessary conditions for firms to globalise. Indeed, firms, National Companies play crucial roles since the logic of private enterprise is the drive for profits, the movement of firms and capital across borders in pursuit of profits is inherent in the expansion of firms. Thus, economic activity could not be global without the capacity of business to operate simultaneously in more than one country, but the unique capacity for organizational flexibility and integration that characterises many transnational corporations today, serves as a driving force for globalization.

As for privatization, it has deepened the integration of African countries into the global systems of production and finance by encouraging capital inflows and bringing foreign ownership of formerly public-owned enterprises. It is imperative to observe that, this international dispersion of ownership has been asymmetric: the privatization policy in the African countries has attracted capital from the developed countries, but it has disbursed ownership mainly to domestic residents in the developed countries.

The protagonists of globalization with the collaboration of their "puppets' cat's paws" and "butt lickers" in various developing countries, have, through these instruments, continued to consistently, through cosmetic and mouth-watering entreaties, lure developing countries (particularly in African continent) into the "Villagized World" without much guarantee of equality and fairness in the asymmetrical game-play involved. They have been doing this by laying irresistible emphases on the advantages of science and technology particularly in the areas of "internet-connectivity", "new information communication technologies" "customization" "internet-based cybermall", and, "modernized agriculture" and, its propensity for "transparency" and reduction of the problems of hunger and possible stoppage of Africa's food crisis. (See Grieco and Holmes, 1999; Jensen, 1999 and Colle, 2000).

The wholesale acceptance of globalization as a saviour of the developing countries particularly those in Africa, has been likened to that of a *moving train* which Africa and Africans must move along with, regardless of whether the latter

has the same destination in mind, because, it has no choice. This analogy is ridiculous looking at the debilitating effects of globalization itself. The analogy shows that the developing countries have no choice than to move along. But, this is not true. Rather than looking at globalization in a realistic manner this line of thinking is a mere plastering of wounds, and, a victim of euro-centric teleologism, equation of ideal with reality, equation of westernization with civilization and pinnacle of development. To the contrary, Africa and Africans have a choice. One of the choices is creation of a block on the "moving path of the train". In other words, the African continent and, indeed other developing countries can create Regional Economic and Political block equal in magnitude and potency with the European Union (EU), to effectively challenge, and influence the manner of movement of the globalization train to their advantage as opposed to the present unidirectional or one - way movement which the G77 and D8 due to lack of proper harmonization of goals and techniques have not been able to do. To argue otherwise is to lead Africa and Africans into extinction. Africans are no robots or inanimate objects or commodities that can be priced and bargained at will-without thinking or any input like the situations that surrounded the Berlin Conference of 1884 to 1885 and its subsequent genocidal partitioning of Africa and Africans by the colonialists.

Indeed, the globalization of technology promotes the globalization of production and finance, by spurring the dissemination of information and lowering the cost of linking markets internationally. The globalization of technology has created global consumers. In fact, Africa has been turned into a dumping ground where people consume products that do not have meanings to their existence. Moreover, as the technology for the reproduction of cultural products (for example, literature, movies, music) has become increasingly accessible, such products are rapidly distributed globally. This, indeed, has led to the obliteration of African culture leading to a eurocentric view of the realities they perceive. This explains why some Africans don't understand their history, but they can write history in favour of Europe.

It is innocuous to argue at this point, that the current villagization of the world, as globalization, is now often called, has greatly (most especially negatively) affected the developing countries (particularly those in Africa) in nearly all facets of life. The examination of the nature and scope

of these effects, their implications and consequences for Africa forms the core of the discussion below.

ITS PROBLEMS AND CONSEQUENCES FOR THE STATES IN AFRICA

To begin with, eventhough, globalization as Ohiorhenuan (1998, op. cit.), Mowlana (1998), and Oyejide (1998) Grieco and Holmes (1999) respectively opined, is a positive or powerful force for the improved material wellbeing of humankind, and that, it would aid developing countries to "create better economic environments," to "leap-frog" into the information age; improve their access to technology; speed development and enhance global harmony, its effects (mostly negative) on the political, economic, social and cultural nerves of the weaker member states cannot be ignored without severe consequences. In other words, the attractiveness or the seeming near-consensus on the agenda of globalization notwithstanding, the unrelenting encouragement of its "uneven thesis" does not give room for comfort as, it is costly to the developing nations. This is particularly so in that, globalization affects developmental thinking and actions of the developing polities; relegates ethical equity and social concerns behind market consideration and reduce the autonomy of the state. According to Ohiorhenuan (op. cit.), it challenges the mediative role of the state vis-a-vis external pressures. It threatens the discretion of the state everywhere. Not only this, according to Tandon 1998A (op. cit.: 2), globalization encourages "decreasing National control and increasing control over the (internal) economy (of the state) by outside players. In fact, the gospel of globalization through its economic liberalism "has been elevated to the position of absolute truth, a sort of pencee unique (or single theory) against which there is no credible alternative" (AAPS, 1995: 3). Indeed, globalization is an awesome phenomenon to African countries.

Concretely put, the planetary phenomenon of globalization is nothing but a new order of marginalization of the African continent. Its mondialization of communication, mass production, market exchanges and redistribution, rather than engendering new ideas and developmental orientation in Africa, subverts its autonomy and powers of self determination. It is rather by design than by accident that poverty has become a major institution in Africa despite the stupendous resources. Indeed, the developing coun-

tries/world burden of external debt has reached two trillion dollars (World Bank, 1994). In the process, it has enlivened the venomous potency of mass poverty and, its accompanying multidimensional depravity of the citizenry of all the requisite essence of meaningful living. It has disintegrated or disarticulated the industrial sector of most, if not all polities in Africa. This has been particularly evident in the areas of cost of production which has become uncomfortably high in most of the developing countries (e.g. Nigeria); lack of government's incentives to encourage local production; subversion of local products through high importation, currency devaluation; and depletion of foreign reserves. This clearly raises the problems of marginalization which, according to Ake (1996: 114), is, in reality, the dynamics of under development - the development of under development by the agents of development.

Nation-states in Africa today, rarely define the rules and regulations of their economy, production, credits and exchanges of goods and services due to the rampaging menace of globalization. They are hardly now capable of volitionally managing their political, economic and socio-cultural development. It has imposed heavy constraints on the internal management dynamics of most if not all the polities in Africa (e.g. Nigeria) where government now finds it difficulty in most cases to meet the genuine demands of the governed on issue of national urgency (e.g. the June 1st, 2000, 50% hike in the prices of petroleum and related products and its attendant crippling national strike by the Nigerian workers). The reality in Nigeria today, as it is for most African nations, is that globalization has made it immensely difficult for governments to provide social insurance - one of their central functions and one that has helped many developed nations to maintain social cohesion and domestic political support. Things/trends like this had been largely dictated by the asymmetry of powers in globalization occasioned by inequality in the status of the members of the "villagized world" and, their inability to resist imposed policy options. Infact, this asymmetry which is undergirded by a system of production where capital rules has been clearly amplified by Madunagu (1999) when he claimed that:

the result of globalization in Africa, is basically a competition between the palatial centres (Developed World) and the slums (Africa) of the village where a preponderant majority of the people daily sink deeper

into poverty and misery.

Consequently, its (globalization) ideology of "free-market liberalism and property-based democracy remains a continuous licence for cultural imperialism and, the institutionalization of both political and economic domination and exploitation of the weaker partners (i.e. the developing economies) through their internal agents (Tandon, 1998A: 2).

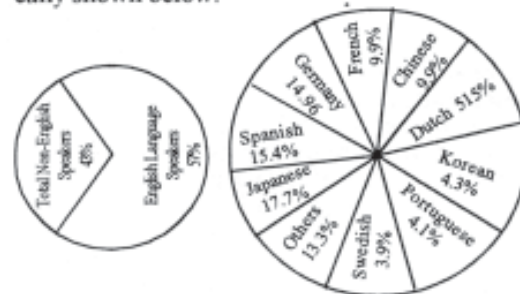
This imperialistic cultural dimension of globalization, particularly in the area of "internet connectivity" which has often been used as a bait for luring Africa and other developing polities into the villagized world, has recently been put into perspective thus:

The world is gradually moving in a unidirectional manner and, the tendency towards uniformity has never been so appealing as it is now.... Consequently, there is a serious concern that nations like Nigeria whose contributions to the internet pool is low may lose their identity (Otokhine, 2000: 2).

According to this perspective, if this trend continues:

A sort of cultural imperialism which will seek to enslave the African mind, leaving in its wake a cultureless or culturally disoriented people (may become a permanent feature of Africa and or people (ibid).

This fear has been greatly highlighted by the effects which Internet use already has on the language of most polities of the world according to the survey of the global reach diagrammatically shown below:



Source: Global Reach

Looking at the foregoing, it is apparent that, its (i.e. globalization) process is more symmetrical to the "origin and development of the neo-colonial states (in Africa)" which were "determined by the nature and structures of the colonising countries" (Akindele, 1990; Adebó and Akindele, 1990) than to a concretely estab-

lished philosophy or determination to get Africa out of lingering crises. Thus, globalization is an entrapment for Africa. Apart from its evocation of powerlessness already analysed, it creates a process through which the "poor countries (in Africa) are dominated and exploited by the rich countries" (Wohlcke, 1993: 56) and, a vicious circle of vulnerability of African governments' to outside parasitic economic manoeuvring as does the lack of capacity for independence of socio-political, cultural and psychological thinking relative to concrete actions (see Barrett and Carter, 2000). Unless as earlier stated, its one-arm banditry which its cosmetology seemed to have eclipsed, is understood, concretely discerned; and, checkmated, it would lead Africa to "increased penury" of developmental policy orientation. This can be better understood in the context of the fact that, the "heavy burden of foreign debt (and the inequality of African countries in the global village) has greatly eroded their capacity to run their own affairs and respond to the demands of the people" (SAPEM, 1996: 2). This unwholesome development has created a legitimacy crisis for most African governments and turned the African continent into an Empire of Chaos.

Generally, globalization has become a "threat to the poor rather than an opportunity for global action to eradicate poverty" (Obadina, 1998: 32). Arguing further, Obadina contends that the "concept of absolute freedom that underlies the rationale for globalization is the same notion" used to justify slavery and colonization. It is equally anchored on the "belief that the strong, however defined, should be free to exercise their strength without moral or legal limitations that protect the weak". Thus, it is distinct from positive freedom which states that:

People should be free as long as they do not deny the rights and freedom of others. People should not be at liberty to deny others freedom and basic rights. There must be limits on freedom otherwise the liberty of the powerful becomes the oppression of the weak (Obadina, 1999: 32).

Given the foregoing, Obadina (ibid), argued that the free-market undertone of globalization is anchored in "greed and ethos of winner takes all" and "beggar their neighbour" philosophy irrespective of its seeming moral terms of freedom and, this, in itself, has increased the debt burden of most countries in Africa. He summed his position on this thus:

Western relations with (the) undeveloped

countries are not predicated on a desire to eradicate mass poverty but on the penchant to impose the free-market system founded on the notion of absolute freedom (ibid).

The foregoing is even more absurd given the fact that, these same western nations that are clamoring for respect for human rights and fundamental freedom are at the same time pushing for globalization and economic policies that encourage the abuse of these rights including the denial of the right to economic equality. The predicaments of the Ogoni people in Nigeria is a case in point. Indeed, the dominance of the forces of globalization in the Niger Delta accounts for the incidence of mass pauperization in the midst of affluence.

There is no doubt that globalization has "created a vast chasm between the North and the South" (Tandon, 1998). This is particularly identifiable from the UNDP's Human Development Report of 1996 which among other things contains the fact that:

the gap in per capital income between the industrial and developing worlds tripled from \$5,700 in 1960 to \$15,400 in 1993 (UNDP, 1996:2).

This shows that Africa has a plethora of problems particularly in the areas of industrial and economic growth which her continuous "unequal-partnership status" in a villagized world would further worsen.

As Mule (2000:8) once stated:

the most obvious (of these problems) are the low incomes on the continent with the GDP per capital of only US\$315 and with declining service sector contribution rates from around 20% GDP to 15% of GDP. These are accompanied by declining government revenues. The low average per capital income levels are further exacerbated by very high income inequalities comparable to, or even worse than those of Latin America. There are high incidence of social exclusion.... Africa is also marginalized globally, with its contribution to world trade amounting to less than two percent ... Africa is also highly aid - dependent with aid accounting for nine percent of GNP on average for all countries.... These are also problems of governance ... on the political and Economic management fronts.

Without any gainsaying, Africa is the hardest hit continent by the rapaciousness of globalization in the sucking out of her resources. The African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) put before the American Senate by President Bill Clinton in 1998 which was passed into law in

May, 2000, and, the multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI) of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Developments (OECD) are part of the instruments put in place by the West to further deplete whatever is left of Africa's resources. These are devices to "roll-back whatever gains the third world counties were able to make at the economic level during the cold war years" (Tandon, 1998a: 5). In fact, both the AGOA and MAI are traps aimed at foisting-without much conscious resistance by the victims of the so called "global constitution" of a "global economy" on Africa and other developing economies. This constitution, argued Obadina (1998 op. cit.: 32), allows the powerful international corporations unfettered freedom to operate anywhere within the globe without any limitation by the policies of host nations irrespective of the consequences of their operation to the interests of the host nations.

It should be particularly noted however, that, the advocates (western nations) of globalization are hypocritical in their approach looking at the fact that:

the Western Nations pressing the poor nations to open their doors to the free-market are advocating policies they did not follow. Government of virtually all developed nations gave their agricultural and industrial producers some level of protection at crucial stages of their economic development. But today's Western leaders conveniently forget economic history (Ibid: 33).

The immediate foregoing is further corroborated by the fact that:

the same globalization process that champions the eradication of the great divide between the East and West is negating the dissolution of the North-South divide (CASS in Guardian, 1999).

It could be reasonably argued that, this explains why the officials of the instruments- (the reformed Bretton woods institutions- World Bank and IMF; WTO and the G8) - of globalization cannot see or have chosen not to see any "connection between globalization and Africa's poverty" (Tandon, 1998A: 5). In most cases, they have even chosen to forget that some of the policies of African Government they have condemned were based on the documents handwritten by them. This ideological blind spot aided by the "uneven thesis of globalization" is very consequential to Africans and Africa's development because;

the consequence of the ideological blindspot and the refusal (by the instruments of globalization) to accept the evidence of history is that whilst capital-led globalization is at the root of Africa's crisis, it is also miraculously suggested as its solution (ibid).

This has promoted the argument that, globalization has damaged Africa's natural environment and, on balance of costs and benefits, it has been a disaster for Africa both in human and material resources (ibid) The reasons for this are not far-fetched looking at the UNDP's Human Development Report of 1996 which contains among other revelations the fact that:

twenty countries in Africa (today) have per capital income lower than 20 years ago. Two-thirds of the least Developed Countries (LDCs) are in Africa. A food-surplus continent twenty years ago, Africa is now food-deficit (UNDP-HDR, 1996: 2).

The striking points that emerge from the foregoing is that globalization through its "heavy constraints" is changing the way in which major institutional actors think and operate across nations and within nations. Globalization is changing the determinism of the state: its actions and inactions; what firms and people do; where they do it, how they see themselves (their identity) and what they want (their preferences). Moreover, its accompanying financial transactions' increasing volume and their decreasing costs as well as reduction in public sector expenditure have put strong competitive pressures on the governments worldwide to reduce their role in the determination of who gets what? when? where? and how? particularly as it affects the delivery of public goods within the political system. This is particularly disturbing in Africa which, according to Thorbecke (1997, 4) "is the only developing region where poverty is increasing"; looking at the fact that:

Africa government (now) seem to have lost control of the policy making process, and are under pressure to accept dictation from creditor nations and financial institution (African) governments now tend to discuss development issues less with their own nationals, and more with donors and creditors, about debt repayment, debt relief and rescheduling, and paradoxically about more development assistance (which rather than develop them further their underdevelopment and dependent (emphasis mine) (Nwaka, 2000: 31).

WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

Considering the advantages and disadvantages of globalization for Africa and, in the light of the analysis that has been done in the context of this paper, our argument is that much as globalization may be inevitable, its consequences for Africa are devastating. It is therefore, our contention that, there is the need for an appropriate response to emerge from Africa with a view to understanding the dynamics and evolve measures that would reduce the devastating effect of globalization. Thus, we pose the question: what is to be done? Does Africa and Africans require a response informed by its and their own historical development? Our belief is that, for Africa to get out of this entrapment, it needs to delink its dependency on the western powers and, that, the state needs to be recomposed.

Given the foregoing, what are the alternatives left for the states in Africa in view of the rampaging menace of globalization and, the seeming helplessness (due to debt burden) of the states and the citizenry? In other words, what are the ways out? (i.e. What is to be Done?).

Even though, these questions on the surface appear unanswerable, there is need for Africa to emancipate herself from the seeming state of helplessness. This is particularly necessary because, as Charlick (2000:1) opined:

today, the position of the world bank in the late 1980s, that development could be improved through the betterment of "governance" regardless of the type of macropolitical system operating in Africa, has been substantially discredited.

Clues have been given as to what Africa and her people need to do to "counter the centrifugal forces of globalization" and emancipate themselves from its manacling claws and antecedent institutional rationalization.

One possible way out according to Tandon (1998c), relying on Amin's (1987, 1990) earlier works, is the subordination of external relations to the logic of internal development. Through this, African revolutionary and activist classes (could be) actively engaged in building alternative (new) structures of power for organising production based on new values of humanity and care for nature. The need for this, among other factors, could probably be identified as one of the catalysts for the theme: "Globalization, Democracy and Development in Africa" - of African Association of Political Science, Twelfth Biennial Congress, which took place in Darkar,

Senegal, in 1999.

Generally, "developing countries should retain the idea of an activist state in reacting to the effects of globalization" (Ohiorhenuan, 1998: 14). And, the citizens must not resign themselves to fate vis-a vis the manacling claws of globalization and, they must and should realise that it is always better to be a king in a "jungle" than being a deprived and malnourished messenger in a "city". They must cease to be mere "on-lookers" - who, according to Frantz Fanon (1961) are either cowards or traitors-on issues affecting their economic, political and socio-cultural wellbeing. Instead, they must free themselves from the apron-spring of domination of the developed world by categorically and practically resisting the inequality of the villagized world. Thus, according to Ake (1996: 122-123) "the people of Africa will have to empower themselves to repossess their own development". This, could, in addition to other mechanisms, be done by rebuilding their national images, by fighting corruption and, by realistically insisting on their own preferences, terms of membership in the village and through a real committed sociological, cultural, economic and political realignment and restructuring that are truly African in nature, intent and purposes. Without these, it would be difficult, if not totally impossible, for Africa and Africans to talk about political and economic integration, improvement and, above all, emancipative development in the twenty-first century.

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