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Development as modernity, modernity as development

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Introduction

Albeit the divergences on the debate about development in Africa, one fact remains indubitable, that the continent remains underdeveloped after five decades of development efforts. From whatever vintage point one enters the debate, be it from the strictly economic perspective that narrowly focuses on economic variables particularly income growth, leading to the confusion of growth with development or Morris's (1979) 'physical quality of life index' or better still the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) developed Human Development Index (HDI), broadened to encompass socio-economic indicators, the data points to the same conclusion. Gross National Product (GNP) per capita income levels in virtually all African countries remain below the acceptable threshold while other socio-economic indices, viz. infant mortality, adult literacy, access to clean portable water, life expectancy at birth etc., also paint a similar if not more disconcerting picture.[1]

At the beginning of the twenty first century therefore the task of examining anew the past five decades and half of development efforts and development thinking in Africa becomes inescapable. We shall do well however to recognise that the year 1950, does not historically mark the commencement of the continent's engagement with the question of development in as much as it remains a watershed moment in the long tortuous career that development has had in Africa. To be sure the historiography of development in Africa both as a concept and process predates 1950. Indeed colonialism was *ab initio* rationalised on the basis of it being a civilising mission that is spreading development to that part of the world that had remained outside of history - Africa.

What then is the significance of the year 1950? To begin with, it is the year in which development economics emerged as a distinct field of study concerned mainly with the structure and behaviour of poor economies (Ohiorhenuan; 2003: 4). With development economics placing a premium on explaining the state of being 'underdeveloped' that is the limited extent and\or growth of productive forces (structure), political science and sociology claimed as their province the question of missing capitalist social relations (behaviour), with modernisation theory being their mutual meeting ground. Taken together, development economics and modernisation theory leaning socio-political

[1] According to the World Bank Report (2000) the region's income per capita averaged $510, a paltry figure when compared to the $ 5000 acceptable per capita income threshold. Excluding South Africa, the figure plunges further to $315, calculated at market exchange rates. On the other hand a reading of the Human Development Indicators, contained in the same report, paints a more disconcerting picture; infant mortality (per 1000 live births) stood at 89. 9%, adult illiteracy was as high as 43%; only 47 % of the continent's population has access to safe water while life expectancy at birth stood at 57 years a figure that does not take into consideration the full impact of the HIV\AIDS epidemic that is projected to reverse life expectancy by 20 years. Note that the figures are for 1997 meaning the situation might have deteriorated as the economic situation has deteriorated further as result of the contractionary policies that global hegemons have been imposing on African countries. While alternative explanations point to low levels of capital formation, high indebtedness, lack of industrial development, external and economic vulnerability of the continent, however the verdict remains the same.

analysis or unilinear social science, they constitute what I refer to in this paper as bourgeois economic theory and analysis.

Yet again 1950, marks the onset of a new form of imperialist domination, i.e. neo-colonialism. We are well aware of the fact that this form of imperial domination was foreshadowed by the colonial moment, whose collapse in the 1950s is credited to the popular struggles waged under the leadership of bourgeois nationalist movements. In order to make the continent safe for continued pillaging well after the demise of colonialism western imperialist forces devised new forms of domination. Neo-colonialism is the term under which come all these new measures of control and domination instituted by the departing western imperialists. It was thus within the context of the tensions arising from the desire on the one hand by the national liberation movements to free the continent from the interstices of colonial imperialism and the much felt need on the part of the imperialist forces to maintain a hold over African economies, an act that would ensure the continued availability of the latter's markets and natural resources for western exploitation, that neo-colonialism was consummated in the 1950's. Thus, 1950 could be said to mark the birth of neo-colonialism or the transition from what Amin, quoting Rey, calls the 'colonial' to the 'neo-colonial mode of production' (1980: 197).

It was also in the 1950's that Marxism in it various guises, i.e. as a liberation ideology, an alternative development model, and a mode of analysis, made its grand entry into the African political and intellectual landscape. At that point we understood it to be an alternative to what I have above termed as bourgeois economic theory and analysis. Admittedly there were and remain fundamental differences between the two. While the former sees underdevelopment as being externally and historically produced the latter privileges internal factors, tradition particularly. We are well acquainted with the debate between the two schools of thought, thus I need not restate it here. Without discounting the differences between the two, it does seem to me that there is something that runs through both. This commonality is betrayed in the way both these schools of thought define development as modernity. Summarily they both subscribe to the notion that for Africa to develop it of necessity must modernise (a point I return to shortly).

Lest we miss the point, the simultaneity of the above processes; the emergence of bourgeois economic theory and analysis, neo-colonialism and Marxism was more than a mere passable coincidence. With Marxian Europe having lost out in the scramble for colonial outposts it entered the fray in the 1950's to institute its own variant of modernity while bourgeois economic theory and analysis served as an intellectual apology for neo-colonialism. Although Marxism and bourgeois economic theory and analysis should be appropriately considered as contending theories of modernity we should not loose sight of the fact that they are both progenies of a larger European Enlightenment project whose overriding objective was and remains that of modernising\enlightening Africa. Simply put they both acquiesce to the Enlightenment begotten idea of development as modernity or modernity as development. In the history of western thought both Marxism and bourgeois economic theory and analysis fall within the same lineage – of Enlightenment thought. To unravel this historical relationship between the two and the implications thereof for African development thinking we need to return to their common point of origin. As such it is necessary to steer our enquiry lenses further back in time beyond 1950 to the era of early modernity when the West through early modern European thought first encountered what it christened as the pre-modern non-western world – Africa being at the centre of this pre-modern world.

Tracing the history of Africa's encounter with Europe to the period of early modernity, as I propose to do, is in my estimates key to understanding the development impasse in Africa, that is to say why the seemingly intractable problem of development in Africa continues to defy even the supposedly well reasoned alternative models. At the risk of asserting more than we prove my hunch is that, mainly because these models whether Marxian or bourgeoisie are premised on the assumption that for the continent to develop it has of necessity to work towards representing itself as a carbon copy of the modern west in the process negate its own reality, they cannot aid us in the task of fashioning a contextually informed African development paradigm. In an illuminating study of modernity, Timothy Mitchell (2000) is apt in his characterisation of the effects such thinking portends. According to him a representation can never become an original because by nature it always makes a double claim; 'first it denies its own essence and defines itself by what it is not, lacking, immateriality and substance that separates it from the real thing'. On the other hand, 'in asserting its own lack, a representation claims that the world it replicates,…enacts, or endows with meaning and structure must be, by contrast original,… in a word real' (2000: 18). Following Mitchell (2000) this study avers that Africa cannot possibly develop by modernising or becoming like the modern west, as both bourgeois economic theory and analysis and Marxism counsel, just as a copy cannot hope to become the original.

For a considerable period of time scholars of development in Africa have argued that for the continent to develop it first has to break free from the yoke of neo-colonialism and discountenance bourgeois economic theory and analysis (only a few have made bold to say we should also revisit our relationship with Marxism). Correct as their arguments are they however leave unanswered an important question; what should be the meaning of development in Africa? This question undoubtedly not new has become more urgent because of the prevalent tendency in African development discourse to assume that defeating neo-colonialism or neo-liberalism will usher in an era of development without spelling out its meaning. Such theorising implicitly accepts the Enlightenment begotten idea of development as modernity that resonates in Marxian thought and bourgeois scholarship. Both these schools prognosticate that the problem of development in the continent is simply the lack of modernity. Moving from the premise that there are universal laws of social development in which one social system succeeds the other, Marxists are wont to argue that it is mainly because the content is still caught up in pre-capitalist\pre-modern stage of social production and\or existence that it is underdeveloped.

Emboldened by their discovery of what they present as universal laws of social development Marxists then conclude that for Africa to develop it has to hasten its march through the now known universal stages of development. By this they mean moving from the pre-capitalist mode of production and its attendant social system towards the capitalist mode of production or capitalist social relations in the same way as did Europe in the eighteenth century. To this process bourgeoisie economic theory and analysis gives the name modernisation while Marxists talk of the same in terms of a teleological conception of history or unilinear sequence of societal change.

It is this line of thought, which conceives of development as a unilinear process or modernity that I wish to problematise in this study for, in my estimates, it holds the key to unlocking the seemingly intractable African development impasse. More than its consequences for African development process, which have been subject of insightful analyses, it is its consequences for development thinking in Africa that I wish to emphasise. As will become obvious later in the study, far longer than necessary our development discourse and thinking generally has been crippled by what Foucault calls the intellectual 'blackmail of the Enlightenment', of being for or against modernity? (1994: 312).

That said, I should state here that one of the challenges I set for myself in this study is constructing a genealogy of the idea of development as modernity, beginning from the early modern period through the era of capitalist modernity up to the present era of late modernity and the consequences thereof for African development thinking and process. Through such an historical introspection we hopefully shall be able to situate the dominant globalisation backed neo-liberal development discourse in Africa within its larger intellectual context, that of Enlightenment. In a sense we should understand the current neo-liberal development discourse as nothing but Enlightenment project writ large. If in the era of early modernity slavery and the Orientalist discourse were means by which the now ominous Enlightenment goal – to modernise Africa- was advanced, in the era of capitalist modernity colonialism was its motive force. It is against this backdrop that this study argues that perhaps the task of thinking through the current development impasse in Africa, which I refer to as the *impasse of modernity*, though a multifaceted one, it is mainly that of deconstructing the idea of development as modernity first broached by Philosophers of the Enlightenment in the early modern period. In the era of capitalist modernity this idea finds its most explicit academic expression in bourgeois economic theory and analysis and Marxism. Closer to our times, in the era of hyper-modernity, it resonates in the neo-liberal development paradigm with global capitalism being its praxis.

The paper is divided into four sections. The first section provides an outline of the theory of modernity\Enlightenment. In the second section an attempt is made to trace the genealogy of the idea of development as modernity and how the African development process gets entangled with it. Here I shall map its evolution through three time periods, i.e., early modernity, capitalist modernity and late modernity. In each of these three time periods we investigate by what motive forces the idea is propelled forward. Zeroing in on the current era of late or hyper-modernity an attempt is made to dismiss the idea that there is something new in globalisation backed neo-liberal development paradigm. On the contrary we argue that it cannot be understood outside of the larger project of modernity\Enlightenment. In the third section we attend to the complex but pertinent question; how can we at the beginning of the twenty first century transcend the impasse of modernity? The fourth and final section presents conclusions.

An Outline of the Theory of Enlightenment\Modernity

Often we describe ourselves as enlightened modern subjects, products of modernity, better still as people who live in the modern age. Often not recognised though is the fact that this invariably imposes upon us the task of explicating this same process, which are products of. On the other hand we understand Enlightenment to be an exclusively European project that began in the 15th century reaching its peak three centuries later in the 18th century. How then were we in Africa formed of this project unfolding in that distant land? The second statement makes it incumbent upon us to define our relationship with this exclusively European project. Later in the study we shall have an opportunity to address these questions. Before proceeding let us clarify the relationship between the two concepts, Enlightenment and modernity. First conceived and championed by early European thinkers, (the philosophes) Enlightenment both as a process and an idea dates back to the 15th century reaching its stage of firmament in the 18th century when it was given a decisive formulation by classical social thinkers, who then gave to it the name modernity. In a word modernity is an 18th century theory of the Enlightenment. In the study I shall use the two interchangeably. That said we can now begin to ponder over the question – what is enlightenment?

Addressing the question what is Enlightenment in an essay of the same title, Rudiger Bittner (1996) highlights the complexity of the term if not that of explicating it. He notes in the opening lines of the same essay that; '"Enlightenment" in the first instance, is something people do. What results from these doings is called enlightenment as well. And an historical epoch for which these doings are said to be characteristic also bears this name' (1996: 345). However rather than see in Bittner's words a problematisation of the concept, I think we should appreciate his effort in pointing us towards three distinct ways in which enlightenment can be understood; enlightenment as a time period or an epoch, enlightenment as a pedagogical process, idea or attitude that shapes man's critical engagement with the present and lastly Enlightenment as a set of features characteristic of this epoch. I am not certain that by this we have as yet sufficiently defined the concept though we are however now better able to do so keeping in mind that it can be defined in any of the three different ways.

Philosophers of the Enlightenment be it, Kant (1961), Hegel (1952, 1980), or Nietzsche (1980, 1969) tell us that Enlightenment was the age of reason. Emblematic of this age was the departure from the idea that all laws governing nature and social existence could only be derived from theological\traditional doctrines. Prior to this age or in Medieval Europe we should recall that life was lived and organised in accordance with the dictates of what was known as the *Great Chain of Bieng.* According to this Great Chain of Being the cosmos was merely an (earthly) expression of a supernaturally contrived order. This order manifested itself in a hierarchical structure of the cosmos obeying the laws set in the world beyond.

Therefore to understand anything and everything in the cosmos, i.e. laws governing nature, social order and human existence, all that was necessary was to refer to sacred books or theological doctrines. Only in these could laws governing nature and the social world be found. Human reason and scientific knowledge could not in this era help to explain the dynamics of nature neither could it be summoned to justify existing forms of authority. Perhaps it is superfluous to even make the above statement considering the fact that nothing existing at the time approximated what we today properly understand as scientific knowledge. The little that could be known about the universe came by the way religious interpretations of theological doctrines provided by the church. As the sole custodian of theological knowledge the church not only interpreted religious doctrines but also enacted laws it deemed commensurate with the logic of these doctrines.

Equally characteristic of this era was a form of political authority – theocracy. In a word power was rationalised transcendentally. Indeed Political Theory teaches us that this was the age of absolute or Divine Rulers. Their rule was predicated on the assumption that they were alongside the church God's representatives on earth. By virtue of their status as God's representatives on earth they had the power to make laws and preside over their empires without recourse to the will of the people. The latter were expected to obey and\or defer to them without demur. Those who dared to challenge the authority of the king or contravened his laws were publicly tortured until they died upon then their bodies were dismembered not so much to punish them but to publicly display the power of the king. Consequently medieval Europeans considered themselves *objects* first of nature and secondly of theocratic rule because they possessed neither the tools necessary to explain their social existence\conditions, changes in nature that affected them nor the right to contest the prevalent theocratic form of rule. Theirs was to obey – first the laws of nature as well as the authority of the king.

However beginning from the 15th century the hegemony of both the church and theological dogmas began to wane. In a word the 15th century Enlightenment project marks a radical break with that deplorable past of the traditional\religious order of things. This break was mainly championed by the a group of early western thinkers referred to as the philosophes who began subjecting this received theological knowledge of the universe and theologically sanctioned forms of authority to critical scrutiny. Believing in the power of reason they held that everything in the universe could be scientifically explained. For them theological explanations of the preceding era no longer sufficed as explanations for the orderliness of nature neither could they legitimate the absolute power of the king(s). They called to reason in order to discover what they termed the empirical truth of things. Beyond seeking to discover the scientific laws governing nature they laboured to develop a new order of knowledge premised upon the universality of reason and the universal character of scientific explanation. This process resulted in an Encyclopaedia of Knowledge in which not only scientific laws of nature were recorded but rules governing the entire enterprise of knowledge production.

So we may define Enlightenment as a pedagogical movement, led by the philosophes, to build a new scientifically ordered discourse of nature, authority, social existence and of virtually everything in the universe. As it were it symbolises the victory of knowledge in its struggle with faith. In furtherance of their objectives the philosophes made bold to ask what were hitherto forbidden or sacrilegious questions, i.e. who controls the world, what underlying principles worked for the orderliness of nature, what is the shape of the earth, etc? For them only through science premised on the universality of reason could such questions be sufficiently explicated not religions dogma. Involved in this movement towards a reason based attitude to the present were savants from different intellectual traditions. The shackles of religion broken the whole of 15th century Europe erupted into what we today know as the Renaissance. Men of letters, the arts, and scientists adorned a new spirit characteristic of the age – the spirit enquiry. Leonardo de Vinci, Galileo, Shakespeare and many others personify the temperament and spirit of the age – the age of Reason.

From that moment henceforth everything in the universe that had once seemed mysterious became easily explained through the power of human reason and scientific knowledge. Entailed in this power of reason and universally valid scientific knowledge was the possibility of engineering nature as well as the social world in order to make the future more prosperous. Hence the close association of Enlightenment with the idea of progress.

Jean-Francois Lyotard (1996) an avowed critique of modernity in his famous essay titled 'The Post-modern Condition', underscores the centrality of knowledge in the entire Enlightenment project. In the same essay he elucidates how scientific knowledge in a bid to legitimate itself inadvertently leads to the birth of the modern subject. He identifies what he calls two 'narratives of the legitimation of knowledge'. One he says is more political and the other more philosophical. The famous dictum, 'science for its own sake', captures the essence of the latter narrative of legitimation – that science obeys its own rules, its progresses is governed by its own norms or renews itself guided by its own logic (1996: 484). It is to the more political narrative of legitimation that I wish to turn my attention for it is more fascinating in its explication of the processes that lead to the birth of the modern subject. According to this narrative, 'knowledge finds its validity not within itself, not in a subject that develops by actualising its learning possibilities, but in a practical subject – humanity'(1996: 487). Isn't by this Lyotard merely re-orienting us with the now familiar debate in the epistemic community? Perhaps yes but there is more to be gained in his analysis, I think.

Firstly, through Lyotard's analysis we now understand that amongst other things the modern subject develops by actualising its learning capabilities. Secondly and more significant is the fact that unlike most analyses that merely point to the death of the spectacle as heralding the birth of the modern subject, Lyotard's analysis delves deeper to show how knowledge in the process of legitimating itself clears the way for a subject centred form of political authority. This it does by appropriating as its own the responsibility of isolating what is just and good for humanity. Lyotard continues to show that in order to safeguard all that is good and just the more political narrative of legitimation posits freedom and subject centred form of authority as key, thereby serving as an impetus for people to demand a new form of authority that will treat them as subjects (1996: 487- 489).

I have here entered a somewhat abbreviated discussion of Lyotard's theorisation of how the modern subject is born in the Enlightenment era because, in my estimates, it is much more illuminating than the more often cited explanation of the same phenomenon provided by Foucault (1977). In his book titled, *Discipline and Punish,* Foucault points to the death of the spectacle and all that it stood for as signifying the birth of the modern subject. Two reasons make his explanation inadequate. To begin with Foucault does not furnish us with the reasons or factors that explain why the spectacle met its unceremonious end in the 15th century.

Secondly as several others have made the point while the 15th century marks the death of the spectacle in Europe, the same continued to subsist in several other parts of the world, i.e. in the southern states of America it continued in a form of lynching just as it did continue in the colonial world several centuries after. Enough of the quibbling for now over different theorisations on the birth of the modern rational subject. Suffice to note that at the summit of the long index of signifiers marking the coming of the modern age is the notion of a modern sovereign, autonomous rational subject. It is considered sovereign because from it derives the legitimacy of political authority, autonomous because it ceases to be an object of both authority and theological knowledge and rational because it lives not according to the injunction of tradition\culture but lives guided by reason.

However despite its limitations Foucault's explanations remains helpful in explaining how death of the spectacle marked the coming of the new modern era. As is said its death evacuated space for a new form of rule not founded on the authority and personality of the divine ruler or monarchy.[2] Thus freed from the strictures of theologically constituted authority, tradition and\or culture the modern rational subject embraces a new order of knowledge backed by universal reason as his\her compass with which to navigate social existence. S\He leaves behind in the pre-modern era a sense of being and life lived in accordance with the injunctions of religion\culture.

From this moment on Enlightenment thought proceeds by the way of binary opposites; *modern - pre-modern*, *rational – irrational*, *Occident – Orient*. More than being idle categories, these binaries are locked in an asymmetrical power relationship. The lead concepts are imbued with analytical value, such that only through them can the latter be understood. Furthermore the former refer to societies that have reached the last stop in the progression of humanity and history while the latter are in transition defined by what they lack or what they are not. The lead categories are actually a euphemism for the West. It was the Enlightenment that freed its inhabitants from the irrationalities of culture, pre-modernity, from the spectacle, endowed them with reason and\or rationality and a new order of knowledge. All these led to the transition of western societies from being pre-modern to modernity, its inhabitants from being objects to subjects.

This idea of Enlightenment as a historical-evolutionary process or movement from the pre-modern to the modern form of social organisation later found its most explicit academic statement in the works of that classical German sociologist, Ferdinant Tonnies (1957). Explaining the same process he deploys the now familiar binary concepts, *Gemeinschaft* denoting (traditional) community and *Gesellschaft* meaning society. His theory, further elaborated upon by students modernisation in the late 50's, posit that societies evolve from tradition (pre-modernity) to modernity, that is *Gemeinschaft* to

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[2] For an elaborate discussion on the spectacle, its dearth and consequences see Foucault (1977) Discipline and Punish (Great Britain; Penguin Books)

Gesellschaft, through a rationalising process that involves a move away from relationships organised along family or kin lines to those based on rationality and social differentiation. In a short but captivating commentary El Kenz (2005) problematises the same binary opposites while explicating the politics of knowledge production in and about Africa. He refers to the modern society of rational subjects as the 'humanitas'. Because according to him the modern subject possesses a new kind of modern episteme it ceases to be its object 'for beyond any external appearance, it calls and asserts itself as the subject' or fountain from which springs all knowledge (2005: 13).

The counter-point of this western modern autonomous rational subject or the humanitas is what El Kenz, once more calls the 'anthropos', which Said (1978) has so perceptively described as the Orient in his path-breaking book of the same title, *Orientalism* (El Kenz, 2005: 13). For the orient only lives and does not examine life, is enthralled by its pre-modern culture, grotesque of religion, it remains an object (devoid of any agency and autonomy of thought) of western knowledge as well as traditional authority. Best studied through the prism of that colonial science - anthropology (and travel writings we may add) it is different from the 'humanitas' for the latter having actualised its learning capabilities turns itself into a subject of its own knowledge.

What the foregoing discussion makes obvious is that rather than understand Enlightenment as an event it is more appropriate to see it as a process or progression of the principle of human rationality\reason. Indeed in its evolution Enlightenment has gone though various moments, modernity being one. Many in our times aver that it has finally reached its anti-climax and declare its end thus christening ours as the post-modern era (Lyotard, 1984), while others prefer to conceptualise ours as the era of a post-industrial society (Bell, 1976).[3] Although at variance with each other all of the above schools concede that we cannot fully comprehend the Enlightenment without appreciating the epochal developments occurring in 18th century Europe, which mark an important moment in the broader history of the Enlightenment. That moment is the moment of modernity (for a captivating analysis of the same moment of modernity, its meaning and consequences see Polanyi, 1944).

The 18th century is indeed a significant moment in the history of the Enlightenment for a number of reasons. Firstly, it was in this era that emerged in Europe a new form of society hallmarked amongst other things by; the delimitation of societies into nation-states, inanimate forms of production or industrialisation, social individuation, urbanisation, money economy, bureaucratisation, social and structural differentiation, role specialisation, a new mass culture, new notions of right and wrong, justice, modern aesthetic values, monopolisation of the instruments of force by the state *a la* Weber, commoditisation of labour and social relations, all said to be markers of modernity. In a word the modern moment meant the coming of a capitalist or industrial society.

Secondly, it was equally in this era that classical social theorists, i.e. Marx (1841), Weber (1968, 1978) and Durkheim (1964), in their efforts to make sense of the events

[3] We may add here that there is yet another school of thought that contests the idea of a singular universal modernity. Over the past two decades adherents of this school have successfully pleaded the case for multiple or plural modernities. See amongst others; Chatterjee (1997), Kaviraj (2005), and various chapters in Mitchell (2000)

occurring in Europe at the time gave modernity a decisive theoretical formulation. Alongside political and social transformation of European society developed a body of knowledge, what we now simply refer to as the discourse of modernity or modern social theory. In line with the goals of the Enlightenment, modern social theorists instrumentalising reason sought to develop, on the basis of the events occurring in Europe at the time, universally valid theories of social development, history, and progress. The fact that these theories were mainly analyses of the history and progress of European societies from the 15th to 18th century, notwithstanding, they were and still are peddled as universally valid or universal narratives of history and development.

Thirdly, it was in the 18th century, thanks to the efforts of classical modern social theorists, that development was inflected with a new meaning. Though they differed on the tools and\or units of analysis to be deployed in analysing the processes unravelling in Europe classical social theorists were agreed that only one meaning of development exist - development as modernity – Europe being the centre of that development. Consequently from the 18th century onwards the idea of development becomes synonymous with modernity or the processes occurring in Europe at the time. All these processes are in a word summed up in one development - the coming of a capitalist or industrial society. In light of the above we can conclusively state that 18th century Europe and its attendant modernist discourse begat us the idea of development as modernity, modernity denoting a capitalist mode of production and capitalist social relations.

Lastly, the significance of the moment of modernity rests with the establishment in this era of the notion of a universal historical time and a world with a single centre, Europe. Modernist discourse dates the history of all human societies into three time periods; Ancient, Medieval and modern era, all abstracted from the history of Europe. For those used to thinking in Marxian terms these can be simply represented as three different modes of production, the slave\Asiatic, feudal and capitalist, congruous with each of the three time periods above. I need not remind you that Marx abstracted these from the history of Europe. Partly for this reason but also because historical materialism thinks of historical developments as being objectively determined by material\structural conditions, it holds that there is only one universal history meaning that in their development all societies sequentially evolve through these three stages of history, time periods or modes of production.[4]

Before proceeding we should for a moment pause to inquire whether existed in the 18th century a singular homogenous entity called Europe or European

[4] Samir Amin (1980) is perhaps one of the few African Marxist scholars who have dared to challenge and dismiss the modernist notion of a universal historical time and the objectively determined or teleological sense of history entailed in Historical Materialism. First he notes the fact that this notion of a universal time is derived or abstracted form the history of Europe and secondly that to generalise on the basis of this or claim this to be universally valid sense of history is racist. For him any attempt to, 'force the reality of other societies into this predefined mold is to turn one's on the scientific spirit. The failure to use the whole of human history from which to derive universal concepts leads to talk of "the irreducibility of civilisations" talk which is irrational and finally, racist' (1980: 3). Elsewhere in the same text he explicitly states quite correctly that; '…there is no world periodization for past eras. History texts that equate the European, Arab, and Chinese middle Ages are in Error' (18)

culture\civilisation? In a proper sense no. This notion of a homogenous Europe was a product of the modern moment and its modernist discourse. From the moment of modernity onwards, emerges a tendency to within western social theory to paint a falsely homogenous picture of European modern civilisation and history (Kaviraj, 2005). In this picture the multi-cultural or plural Europe of Slavic, Germanic, Celtic, Gallic, etc, cultures melts into a singular European modern civilisation\identity set apart from the rest of non-western societies and cultures, with the latter being equally presented as a homogenous entity defined by a common spectre of barbarism, backwardness, uncouth-ness, savagery, child-like mentality, lack of rationality, initiative and autonomous thinking. Consequently this pre-modern 'other', of the West - the orient – is the same wherever it is found, be it in Palestine, India, Nigeria, Egypt or Mali.[5]

Among several other attempts at explicating how modernist discourse constructs this singular universal European civilisation as well as the universal historical time, I find Mitchell's analysis compelling. According to him;

> "[T]he modern age presents a particular view of geography, in which the world has a single center, Europe,…that imagines itself a continent-in reference to which all other regions are to be located; and an understanding of history in which there is only one unfolding time, the history of the West, in reference to which all other histories must establish and receive their meaning" (2000: 5)

If regard is had to the above it should then become possible to understand why since the advent of modernity, modern cartography draws the world map with Europe at the centre in relation to which all other continents are located even though it is but the size

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[5] Kant's (1960) conclusion that virtually all non-western societies possess neither a sense of beauty nor of the sublime is worth considering not for its racists undertones but more significantly for its representativity of the general mapping of the orient in enlightenment thought. His chilling conclusions are worth reproducing at length. After surveying and extolling the superior notions of beauty and the sublime held by various Western societies, i.e. the English, Germans, French, Spanish, and the Dutch, he concludes that, 'For the rest, (meaning the orient\anthropos) they display few signs of a finer feeling. The Indians have a dominating taste of the grotesque… Their religion consists of grotesqueries. Idols of monstrous form, the priceless tooth of the mighty monkey Hanuman, the unnatural atonement of the fakirs and so forth are in their taste. . What trifling grotesqueries do the verbose and studied compliments of the Chinese contain! Even their paintings are grotesque and portray strange and unnatural figures such as are encountered nowhere in the world'. About Africans he says, 'The Negroes of Africa have by nature no feeling that rises above the trifling. Mr Hume challenges anyone to cite a single example in which a Negro has shown talents, and asserts that among the hundreds of thousands of blacks who are transported elsewhere from their countries, although many of them have even been set free, still not a single one was ever found who presented anything great in art or science or any other praise worthy quality, even though among the whites some continually rise aloft from the lowest rabble, and through superior gifts earn respect in the world. So fundamental is the difference between these two races of man, and it appears to be as great in regard to mental capacities as in color. The religion of fetishes so widespread among them is perhaps a sort of idolatry that sinks as deeply into the trifling as appears to be possible to human nature. … The blacks are very vain but in the Negro's way, and so talkative that they must be driven apart from each other with thrashings'. Elsewhere in the same text he led to conclude on the basis of an answer given by an African to a question that in it there might be something deserving of attention and that is the fact that , '*the fellow was quite black from head to foot, a clear proof that what he said was stupid*' (1960: 110-113).

of one African country – Congo DR. In another respect Mitchell's analysis helps respond to the question posed earlier; how we in Africa were formed of this process of modernity or Enlightenment occurring in that distant land?.

Modernist discourse not only places Europe at the centre of the world but erases Africa from the mainstream and banishes it to the backyard of history and epistemology. Where the continent features it does so at the behest of Europe – indeed we are told that our history begins at the point of contact with Europe. Primarily because of this discourse Africa looses its autonomy and essence where nothing about it can be known except when juxtaposed with the West as its malformed copy. Thus stripped of its history, essence and autonomy the continent becomes the 'other' of the West defined by what it lacks or what it is not. Doesn't today modern social theory negatively define Africa as ahistorical, under-developed, pre-capitalist, unindustrialised, pre-modern, etc? As noted above these epithets far from being idle descriptions of what Africa lacks, i.e. history, development, capitalism, etc, serve as signposts of the future, that future being capitalism, industrialisation, development, in a word modernity. The lesson that modernity imparts in this regard is that in order to understand ourselves and our future we should first look to Europe, meaning that Africa cannot be studied as an independent category on its own and in its own terms in isolation from Europe from which it derives its meaning and essence. Today development economics that discipline concerned with underdeveloped societies employs the same method. It contrasts Africa (read as underdeveloped societies) with the West and the deficit between the two automatically becomes its (Africa) development agenda.

Said (1978) has analysed the dialectical relationship between modernist discourse and imperialism. Through his study we come to understand how extension of asymmetrical power relations inherent in the binary categories that modernist discourse creates, beyond the realm of ideas becomes possible and\or inevitable. By depicting non-western societies as pre-modern, barbaric and uncivilised, modernist discourse\Orientalism serves as a moral justification for the domination, subjugation and decimation of non-western societies in the name of modernising them. On the other hand the Enlightenment goal of availing pre-modern societies of the universal civilisation of modernity could not have been realisable without imperialism Thus in reading Said (1978) it becomes obvious that the two, Enlightenment and imperialism, are mutually constitutive of the other and aspects of the same project. Enlightenment begets imperialism and vice versa. Without imperialism Enlightenment goals would remain unaccomplished just as imperialism would be inconceivable, were it not for the larger Enlightenment project. The puzzle may be gradually getting solved here for we are once more able to understand how we in Africa were and continue to be formed through the twin processes of Orientalist discourse that constructs us as pre-modern and imperialism that seeks to modernise us.

To conclude this section let us briefly examine how the idea of modernity was by the three leading 19th century European social theorists, Marx, Weber, and Durkheim given a decisive theoretical formulation. We should recall that prior to the 18th century, Enlightenment was mainly an intellectual movement championed by the philosophes. However from the 18th century onwards its focus shifts to the social, political and economic realms. Common to three classical social theorists under consideration is the realisation that modernity is not a single, homogenous process, but a combination of several, which though interwoven can be isolated analytically and studied separately. In their bid to make sense of the social, political and economic developments unfolding in Europe at the time they each emphasise different aspects, employ distinct tools of analysis, but remain united in the fact that these different developments were a culmination of the progression of the principle of human reason.

Marx a great defender of the notion of a singular historical time propounded the now famous theory of dialectical and historical materialism partly as a response to Hegel's metaphysical dialectics. In his *Philosophy of Right*, Hegel (1952) avers that thought and mind are the real not the material world. For him all that is known exists in the realm of ideas. Hegel was an idealist par excellence. Marx' disagreement with Hegel's dialectics, led him to pen down in 1843 the *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right* in which he seeks to demonstrate that contrary to Hegel's postulation, human thoughts are derived from the material world. He then put forth a materialist theory of history according to which material conditions objectively determine human thoughts, the process of change and historical development. His views led to his theory of historical materialism that proffers a teleological sense of history where all societies tend historically towards a single structural form in which social relations are commoditised. While the above helps us appreciate the evolution of Marx's ideas on history his theory of modernity lies beyond the critique of Hegel's metaphysical dialectics.

Marx summarised 18th century European developments as the coming of a capitalist mode of production and capitalist social relations where not only labour is commoditised but social relations generally. In sum modernity is for him reducible to capitalism. The other attendant changes wreaked along by the emergence of the capitalist forces of production are mere superstructural changes or inevitabilities of the determinant capitalist forces of production. These i.e. bureaucratisation, rationalisation, etc, according to him cannot on their own account for the moment of modernity. Marx's viewpoint of modernity as capitalism or coming of a class society was later criticised by Weber (1968, 1978) who characterises modern societies as rational-bureaucratic societies and Durkheim (1964) who unlike Marx saw the emerging industrial order not so much as a central element of modernity but societal differentiation.

Weber delimits modern social organisations into what is now a clearly violated term, 'nation-states', characterised amongst other things by; a new work ethic, rationalisation of political, social and economic structures, bureaucratisation, and state monopolisation of the instruments of force. Perhaps eager to establish his Enlightenment credentials Weber argues that modern society is a place where the transcendental world of gods is supplanted by science and rational calculation of social actions. However Weber (1968) argues rather curiously in the *Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* that Calvinism explains why rational capitalism remains stifled in non-Protestant societies, implying that religion is a necessary condition for the flowering of a rational-capitalist society. He is however quick to point out that unlike other religions Protestantism though a spiritual order is run on the norms of rationality. Weber's privileging of religious ethics in the development of the rational-capitalist society widens further the divide between his theory of modernity and that of Marx. In sum for Weber rationality is the essentially feature of modernity, bureaucracy being one expression of this principle of rationality.

Durkheim yet another opinionated student of modernity was a functionalist who like other two lived to witness the coming of modernity, i.e. industrialisation, commodification, atomisation, etc. He conceptualises modernity as differentiation such that for him the more there is differentiation there more there is modernity. However as a functionalist his main concern was the possible disintegration of society as a result of increasing differentiation and individuation. In his book, *Division of Labour in Society* (1964) he labours to discover by what mechanism modern society remains cohesive and integrated in the face of increasing atomisation. The answer for him lies in what he calls organic solidarity. He contrasts this with mechanical solidarity prevalent in pre-modern societies where the division of labour is minimal. According to him while comes increased differentiation and role specialisation with modernity, society becomes more integrated because as each individual becomes autonomous the more dependent he\she becomes on others for the satiation of his numerous wants. To this interdependent relationship characteristic of modern societies he gives the name organic solidarity. Contemporary structural functionalists like Parsons (1970), Warner (1941) equally concerned with the problem of integration and equilibrium in society were greatly inspired by Durkheim.

Albeit the divergences in the way in which these classical social theorists explain modernity they all remain convinced of its fundamental characteristics. From the discussion we can identify the following as the key defining features of modernity; commoditisation of labour, capitalist social relations, industrial capitalism, bureaucratic rationality, social stratification, state monopolisation of the instruments of force, differentiation, social individuation and role specialisation.

Interestingly the Enlightenment project does not end with Europe discovering modernity. By virtue of having discovered modernity it incurs the 'moral' responsibility of spreading the same to the rest of the pre-modern world. Marx's conviction that all societies will of necessity emulate the western development trajectory, that is evolve towards the modern capitalist mode of production just as did the west for instance leads him to celebrate colonialism as a modernising force thereby erasing from collective European consciousness any moral blight.[6] Having attempted to provide an outline of

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[6] Evidence for Marx's conviction that the western development trajectory of modernity is the only conceivable way of societal progress that today feeds the determinate, abstract and reified sense of history subscribed to by structural Marxist can be gleaned from several of his writings including 'The Future Results of British Rule in India'. Urged on by this conviction, which puts him well within the framework of Enlightenment thought, he was to celebrate colonialism as veritable tool through which pre-capitalist (read as pre-modern) societies were inevitably delivered into modernity or the modern capitalist mode of production. Let us listen to him, speaking not just for himself but for the entire generation of contemporary theorists of modernity, "England has to fulfil a double mission in India: one destructive, the other regenerating-the annihilation of old Asiatic society, and the laying of the *material foundations of Western society in Asia*. Arabs, Turks, Tartans, Moguls, the barbarian conquerors being, by an eternal law of history, conquered themselves by the superior civilisation of their subjects. The British were the first conquerors superior, and therefore, inaccessible to Hindu civilisation. They destroyed it by breaking up the native communities, by uprooting the native

the theory modernity let us return to our twin tasks; of tracing the genealogy of the idea of development as modernity and how Africa's development conundrum gets articulated within this idea. As we proceed the point I wish to underscore is that the root causes for Africa's underdevelopment are locatable within with the larger project of modernity. To discipline our argument we shall in addressing the two questions disaggregate Africa's encounter with modernity into three time periods, each distinguishable from the other by the kind of relations it engenders between the continent and modern Europe. As we proceed to unravel these relations it shall be possible to isolate the reasons why the converse of western modernity is African underdevelopment. The three time periods of which each is accompanied by a corollary discourse are; the era of early modernity or 'mercantile capitalism' (15^{th} – 18^{th} century), modernity proper or 'capitalist modernity' (18^{th} – mid-20^{th} century) and the third being the era of late or hyper modernity (late 20^{th} century), - constructs in quotes belong to Timothy Mitchell (2000). Two caveats are called for at this point. Firstly these time periods can and should not be read as being mutually exclusive. Within each are to be found elements, processes and structures that define the other time periods. Secondly while the first two time periods are dealt with perfunctorily, I shall place more emphasis on the current era of hyper-modernity for obvious reasons.

Mapping the Genealogy of Modernity

Imperial Modernity\Early Modernity (15^{th} – 17^{th} Century)

The principal occupation in this era was the construction of a discourse depicting Africa as a legitimate object of western plunder and domination or imperial domination. As noted earlier we should, I suggest, following Said (1978) understand the relationship between imperialism and its attendant Enlightenment discourse as a dialectical one. While imperialism was a logical consequence of the Enlightenment discourse the latter was not realisable without imperialism. This is made obvious by the fact that while imperial mercantilism was mainly an economic project hardly was it rationalised in purely economic terms. Indeed any attempt to justify mercantile capitalism and its ancillary projects, slave trade, extraction\expropriation of mineral resources, in economic terms faced numerous impediments to which economic theories were

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industry, and by levelling all that was great and elevated in the *native society*. The historic pages of their rule in India report hardly anything beyond that destruction. The work of regeneration hardly transpires through a heap of ruins. Nevertheless it has begun". As he elaborates on the processes and virtues of this project of regeneration we shall do well to note that this project is nothing more than fashioning a society out of pre-modern India similar to that of the modern west; "The political unity of India, more consolidated, and extending farther than it ever did under the Great Moguls, was the first condition of its regeneration. That unity, imposed by the British sword, will now be strengthened and perpetuated by the electric telegraph. The native army, organised and trained by the British drill-sergeant, was the sin qua non of Indian self-emancipation… The free press introduced for the first time into Asiatic society,…is a new and powerful agent of reconstruction…From the Indian natives, reluctantly and sparingly educated at Calcutta, under English superintendents, a fresh class is springing up, endowed with the requirements for government and *imbued with European science*" (Marx, 1852 in McLellan, 2000:363). On Marx's modernist view of colonialism see Avineri, 1968.

incapable of responding. Rules of reason, norms of human morality, deference, justice and fairness for example would not permit of early modern Europe decimating the continent in the manner it was to in order to satiate its want for labour and mineral resources. Responding to this challenge was a task that fell within the purview of Enlightenment thought or Orientalist discourse.

Essentially, Africa first had to be emptied of any claim to being a continent of *homo sapiens* worthy of respect and deference in a manner that modern Europe was. Only then could the twin processes of African enslavement and economic pillaging proceed unimpeded. Subsequent to this endeavour by Enlightenment philosophers, Africa, now lacking in everything possibly human – except labour power – could by a Europe absolved of any guilt be decimated, exploited and underdeveloped. In a neat distribution of roles that occurs Enlightenment thought provides a moral justification for the domination of the continent while early economic theory explains the need for external sources of labour and constant capital.

In their bid to make the continent safe for western plunder early philosophers of the Enlightenment developed a discourse comprising of two knowledge systems, one applicable to Europe and the other specific to and applicable exclusively to Africa (read as the non-west). The elements of this discourse, we now call Orientalist discourse, can be summarised thus; if universal laws of reason, morality and modern sensibilities foreclosed the plausibility of modern Europe enslaving and plundering itself (as it had done in the pre-modern era), barbarism, child-like mentality (was it not Hegel who said Africa is a ‘gold-land compressed within itself-the land of childhood’?), lack of rationality or pre-modernity justified the exploitation and dehumanisation of Africa.

Emboldened by this new discourse, freed from all inhibitions mercantile Europe proceeded with a ‘clear conscience’ to engage in that incredulity called slave trade, to expropriate surplus value and mineral resources from Africa for its development. Under the intellectual cover provided by this new discourse obscenities of different forms (i.e. slave rape) became permissible over and above the expropriation of African human and mineral resources. Otherwise how else may we explain the capture and display in Western museums as a cultural artifice of that African woman, Sarah Bartman? No other answer exist other than the European contempt for Africans construed as objects of western desires, knowledge, thanks to the Orientalist discourse. Said (1978) tells us this Orient fit for western domination was purely a product of western imagination predicated on western desires and interests. To this he writes;

> “…the imaginative examination of things Oriental was based more or less exclusively upon a sovereign Western consciousness out of whose unchallenged centrality an Oriental world emerged, first according to general ideas about who or what was an Oriental, then according to a detailed logic governed not simply by empirical reality but by a battery of desires, repressions, investments and projections” (1978: 8)

In a sober mood, made possible by the passage of time, I suggest that we should redirect our scorn, but not absolve them of any guilt, away from those who engaged in the actual acts of African enslavement and plunder to their intellectual guardians for it is they who first penned down the discourse through which the former were to conduct their encounter and interactions with the ‘savage’ African. It is therefore not surprising that for the most explicit and unapologetic defence of slavery and Africa's economic plunder we should look towards that leading philosopher of the Enlightenment, Hegel (1980) who's ideas are representative of the larger Orientalist discourse. In his rationalisation or defence of slavery and mercantile imperialism Hegel (1980) argues that those inclined to portray slavery as a despicable, inhumane act, by extending to Africa the modern norms of human reason and consciousness, err. This because according to him when dealing with the African such should be discarded for the African had not yet in his thinking developed a consciousness that justified treating him as a full human being worthy of deference.[7] As we see in the remarks below Hegel fell short of proclaiming Africans sub-human;

> "[T]he peculiarly African character is difficult to comprehend, for the very reason that in reference to it, we must quite give up the principle which naturally accompanies all our ideas-the category of universality…The Negro, as already observed, exhibit the natural man in his completely wild and untamed state. *We must lay aside all thought of reverence and morality, all that we call feeling, if we would rightly comprehend him; there is nothing harmonious with humanity to be found in this type of character*" (1980: 196).

Wallowing in savagery, a reality Hegel's Africans themselves acknowledge, these Africans were in dire need for salvaging. Enlightenment was their only possible escape form savagery. Other than through slavery the task of delivering the same Africans from the precipice could not be achieved, Hegel seems to argue. Slavery in this context should be viewed not as a dehumanising or demeaning act but rather as a benevolent act in furtherance of that noble historic Enlightenment goal to enlighten or modernise Africa. Thus contrary to the widely held view of it being an immoral if not inhuman act, it should be construed as an inevitability of history for had it not occurred Africa would have remained outside of modernity!!. Taking Hegel's argument as starting point it is possible to conclude that mercantile capitalism was but Enlightenment writ large. Its goals were coextensive with those of the large enlightenment project - to civilise Africa. We perhaps need not speak for him as he is explicit enough in stating the point. To this he says and we quote from him at length;

> "Negroes are enslaved by Europeans and sold to America. Bad as this may be, their lot in their own land is even worse, since there a slavery as quite as absolute exists… Among Negroes moral sentiments are quite weak, or more strictly speaking, non-existent. Parents

[7] In case you may be wondering which Africa and Africans was Hegel referring to or better still on what grounds was he to conclude that Africans are lacking in everything near human and civil, here are his carefully considered premises for his viewpoint; 'Africans have moreover no knowledge of the immortality of the soul, although spectres are supposed to appear. The undervaluing of humanity among them reaches an incredible degree of intensity. Tyranny is regarded as not wrong, and cannibalism is looked upon as quite customary and proper. Among us instinct deters from it,… But with the Negro this is not the case, and the devouring of human flesh is altogether constant with the general principles of the African race; to the sensual Negro, human flesh is but an object of sense – mere flesh. At the death of a king hundreds are killed and eaten; prisoners are butchered and their flesh sold in the markets; the victor is accustomed to eat the heart of his slain foe. When magical rites are performed, it frequently happens that the sorcerer kills the first that comes in his way and divides his body among the bystanders' (Hegel, 1983: 197-198). Who would dare dispute Hegel's view that this imaginary Africa was in need of rescue from its own vices even if through slavery? I do not wish to except that such a need does not in the first place arise since this was an imaginary Africa existing only in Hegel's enlightenment mind.

> sell their children, and conversely children their parents, as either has the opportunity. Through the pervading influence of slavery all those bonds of moral regard which we cherish towards each other disappear, and it does not occur to the Negro mind to expect from others what we are enabled to claim…This condition is capable of no development of culture;…and *viewed in the light of such facts we may conclude slavery to have been the occasion of the increase of human feeling among the Negroes …slavery is itself a phase of advance from the merely isolated sensual existence, a phase of education, a mode of becoming a participant in a higher morality and the culture connected with it*" (Hegel, 1980: 198-199).

If the conviction with which Hegel argues his point enables us read the early European mind, it does also lead us to appreciating the defining temperament of early modern Europe – that of impunity. I am persuaded to think that it is this same temperament or culture of impunity that sustains western imperialism to this present age. It remains firmly embedded in the western psyche and consciousness manifesting itself in the manner in which the West continues to see nothing wrong in how it treats Africa as an object of its domination and economic exploitation.

From all what we have said it is obvious that rather than early economic theory it was Enlightenment thought that paved the way for mercantile capitalism. Without the former the latter would have found in norms of human reason and morality insurmountable obstacles. We should therefore in our various attempts to investigate the root causes of Africa's underdevelopment malaise not miss the fundamental role played by early enlightenment thought. It is only in such context that we can properly appreciate the economic effects of mercantile capitalism (or the early theory of capital accumulation on a world scale) - its major sin being that it marks the beginning in the distortion of African economies. With Enlightenment thought having freed mercantile Europe of possible guilt, the latter in search of the much needed sources of constant capital transformed Africa into a coveted reserve of mineral and human resources. To restate part of my argument differently; the two contemporary processes of colonialism and neo-colonialism though helpful in explaining the external\ demand side orientation or export dependent nature of African economies the original script for such a transformation properly belongs to early modern European thought and its theory of capital accumulation on a world scale.

In other words the seeds for external vulnerability of African economies were sawn in this era of early modernity. In a manner typical of the two pronged Orientalist discourse, mercantile capitalist thought produced a similarly bifurcated theory of economic development. While for Europe it prescribed auto-centred development, for Africa it proposed the opposite. Further it held that for European development external trade relations should be made subject to internal economic processes and needs. In line with this perverted logic the internal structure of African economies was made responsive to the external European demands. Once more here lies the original script for the demand side oriented African economies.

At the risk of repetition let us re-iterate the argument I seek to make in this study that for the root causes of African underdevelopment we should return to the period of early modernity when Africa first encountered western modernity. The western expropriation of surplus value from Africa which neo-colonialism is but a contemporary expression of is a project whose history is traceable to the era of early modernity particularly the early theory of capital accumulation on a world scale. It is to the era of early modernity that we must return if we wish to understand the logic upon which stands the current neo-colonial relations between Africa and the West. Neo-colonialism on its own will not lead us to the establishing charter if you wish for these exploitative North-South relations. It remains safely stored in the archival files of early European history within the pages of early European thought.

We have made the point that according to modernist discourse all pre-modern societies are bound to evolve towards modernity aided by the west, meaning that Africa's development could only be at West's behest. Spurred into action by the self-serving prophesy that theirs was first a universal civilisation and secondly that it was their God-given right to spread it to the pre-modern societies, like a religious takes it to be his\her God given duty to proselytise all those who have not heard the word of God, the modern West began its God given and benevolent mission to avail these societies of the modern way of life. Mercantilism being, as we have shown, the first practical step towards fulfilling this historic mission was succeeded by colonialism.

Curiously, throughout these two historical moments reason, albeit its proclaimed universal appeal, was not the instrument through which modernity was availed to the supposed pre-modern beneficiaries. On the contrary brute and naked force was. Slave trade, mercantile capitalist trade and colonialism therefore are proper prisms through which we should read the first worldly manifestations of the West's God given task of modernising Africa. Closer to our times, in the era of hyper-modernity, the same project has assumed a completely different tenor. In furtherance of the same Enlightenment goal to modernise Africa, bourgeois economic theory and analysis deploys reason. Consequently while bourgeois economic theory and analysis shares with colonialism (and mercantile imperialism) the same objective; to modernise\develop Africa, they differ in their *modus operandi*. The former employs reason while the latter instrumentalises violence. Separating the two is the era of capitalist modernity whose logic we must first disentangle before proceeding to consider the current era of hyper-modernity.

Capitalist Modernity\Modernity Proper (18th –mid-20th century)

Political thought teaches us that the whole gamut of change effecting processes that began to unfold in fifteen century Europe reaching their peak in the eighteenth century now subsumed under the term modernity were actually not a discovery of a universal civilisation but marked the transition of western societies from the feudal to the capitalist mode of production (Amin, 1980, Polanyi, 1944). Thus stripped of its philosophical pretensions and universalistic claims, modernity is nothing more than Europe's transition from the feudal to the capitalist mode of production and its attendant social relations. While this remains indisputable there is much to be gained by in enlarging our scope beyond the economic precepts of modernity (as I have tried to show above).

Consequently what modern Europe essentially availed the rest of the world particularly those areas that came under its colonial domination is a capitalist mode of production and its attendant superstructural changes, except to add that it was a distorted form of capitalism – dependent capitalism. Properly understood a mode of production consists of a particular combination of relations and forces of production (Amin, 1980: 11). Hence our conceptualisation of the empirical features of modernity, referred to earlier, as attendant super-structural changes or relations of production made inevitable by the development of the new capitalist forces of production.[8] Kaviraj (2005) is therefore apt in his claim that a functional relationship exists between industrial capitalism and these super-structural changes. Quite correctly, he argues that; '[T]he rise of a capitalist economy based on economic rationality is not accidentally related to the growth of bureaucratisation in state practices; they are deeply linked because bureaucratic rationality is simply the application of the same general principle of *economic rationality* in the sphere of the state's relation with its population' (2005: 8 italics mine).

Hegel, our preferred enlightenment co-traveller, is perhaps the first to have noted in his *Philosophy of Right,* the existence of a contingent relationship between modernity particularly the universal modern subject and the capitalist mode of production. His argument simply stated is that 'belonging to a class links a person to a universal' thus it can be argued that without class society there can be no universal autonomous rational subjects. While we may not agree with Hegel's overly stated and rash generalisation that all social formations must first metamorphose into mature class societies - after all early modern Europe did not in any way betray the class character typical of mature industrial capitalism - before they can be considered modern his larger thesis that the birth of the universal modern subject is functionally related to the emergence of a bourgeoisie public sphere is difficult to dispute. Accordingly he is, within the context of Enlightenment discourse, to a large degree correct in his contention that, '[W]hen we say that a man is a 'somebody', we mean that he should belong to some specific social class, since to be a somebody means to have a substantive being. *A man with no class is a mere private person and his universality is not actualised*' (1952: 207)

Taking the forgoing as a point of departure, I shall for the ease of analysis limit myself to two distinct moments that mark Africa's encounter with Europe in the era of

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[8] My point about these being attendant superstructural changes attributable to the development of the capitalist forces of production is not oblivious to the contentious debate within Marxism as to whether these superstructural changes were mere reflex functions of bourgeoisie capitalism or were actually forced upon the system by popular class struggles. In his seminal work titled The Making of the English Working Class, E. P. Thompson (1968) strongly argues for instance that democratic institutions were inevitably forced upon a reluctant bourgeoisie by the working class. For a similar debate conducted among social theorists within the framework provided by T. H. Marshall's theory of civic and social citizenship see Barbalet (1988) Citizenship. The crux of this debate among social theorists is whether within the context of the welfare state social citizenship serves an integrative function through the negation of divisive inequality in which case it is a veritable tool for maintaining the bourgeoisie capitalist system. Put differently this viewpoint considers social citizenship to have a pacifying effect over the marginalised and exploited. Pitted against this view is a school of thought inclined to argue that civil and social rights are never given but struggled for essentially because by their very nature they are capable of serving as a revolutionary tool at the hands of the exploited and marginalised classes. The struggle and attainment of civic and social rights therefore rather than stultify it advances working class struggles. What all these viewpoints however underscore is the fact that these struggles and contestation were made necessary and valid by the wider social development of modernity within the West.

capitalist modernity; the colonial moment and the emergence late in its life of development economics (read as bourgeois economic theory and analysis). Though the two belong to the same era they differ in significant ways. Primarily because as earlier noted, while colonialism instrumentalises violence, bourgeois economic theory and analysis deploys reason. The legacy of the colonial moment, which I wish to emphasise, lies in the way in which it synchronised the economic, intellectual, social and political aspects of the Enlightenment project. Perhaps more than any other moment it was colonialism that articulated all the elements of the Enlightenment project with equal verve. As can be gleaned from the preceding section in the era of imperialist modernity the thin line between the Orientalist discourse and the early theory of capital accumulation on the world scale remained visible.

However the colonial moment marks a shift in the nature of relations between the two. From that moment onwards the Enlightenment fashioned Orientalist discourse becomes integrated with the theory and praxis of capital accumulation on a world scale. Simply put in the colonial moment the politics of enlightenment become indistinguishable from the economics of the same project, just as it is impossible to isolate within this moment the intellectual from the social aspect of modernity. Similarly the theory of modernity becomes indistinguishable from the praxis of state and economic organisation under colonialism. In effect colonialism was at once an economic, political, social and intellectual project all summed as the civilising mission. No longer could a line be drawn between its now neatly aligned constitutive elements.

Radical political economists have expended enough ink documenting the economic logic of colonialism. Due largely to their efforts colonialism is now widely perceived as having been necessitated by Europe’s economic needs. One need not be a Marxist to appreciate the veracity of this claim. Common sense confirms that Africa’s economic deprivation and subjugation is the functional reverse of Europe’s prosperity and economic development. The cutting edge contribution of the materialist analysis of colonialism is to have shown how surplus value extracted from the continent fed into the development of the West. What I am not certain about however is whether analysing the colonial encounter as having been determined to the last instance by economic factors does not miss other subtle but equally important elements of the colonial encounter. Following that Algerian revolutionary intellectual, Albert Memmi (1965), I am persuaded to think that the colonial relationship comprised of several other important elements. As Memmi points out,

> ‘[T]o observe the life of the colonizer and the colonised is to discover rapidly that the daily humiliation of the colonised, his objective subjugation are not merely economic. Even the poorest colonizer thought himself to be-and actually was-superior to the colonized. This too was part of the colonial privilege. The Marxist discovery of the importance of the economy in all oppressive relationships is not to the point. This relationship had other characteristics…” (Memmi, 1965: xii)

One of such other characteristics of the colonial encounter was the authentication of the Enlightenment begotten idea of Europe’s and the European’s superiority over pre-modern Africa and the African respectively. Psychoanalysts have vividly shown how within this context the European ‘super-ego’ was constructed enabling poor colonisers -

former criminals, school drop-outs, paupers, and brigands - to view Africans as objects for their self-assurance and satisfaction of their libidinal desires. Through the works of psychoanalysts we have also come to understand how the desire to guarantee the European's supposedly superior self-consciousness and personality served as an equally potent motivation for the colonial project. An important contribution made by psychoanalysts is to have steered out lenses towards colonialism as an inter-subjective space within which the coloniser and colonised were mutually constituted of the other. If I seem not to give enough consideration to the non-economic factors behind colonialism, it is because they have been adequately analysed in the works of many leading African post-structuralists (see for example Memmi, 1965).

As I proceed to consider the second moment in the era of capitalist modernity - the emergence late in this era of development economics – my goal is to lay bare ideological affinities between the Enlightenment project and the subject of development economics. Development economics is basically a modernist project seeking to transform pre-modern societies, Africa particularly, through pedagogy. In this regard, I argue, that pioneer development economists did not thread a virgin path. Rather what they did was to refurbish the old modernist discourse that conceptualised African development as realisable only through a mimetic method. Simply put development economics or bourgeois economic theory and analysis, is a continuation of the enlightenment project. For the benefit of those sceptical of our claim let us delve deeper into the matrices of bourgeois economic theory and analysis in order to unearth its Enlightenment affinities.

We are now well aware that modernist discourse categorises societies into binary opposites locked in an asymmetrical relationship; i.e. modern - pre-modern, capitalist-pre-capitalist, historical - a historical, etc. While the lead categories represent the last stop in the historical progression of humanity the latter represent a transition, 'in the making' or yet to be stage. Such thinking is premised on the perverted modernist logic that initial conditions and divergent socio-historical contexts notwithstanding the latter categories, that is the, a historical and the anthropos, are bound to evolve towards their future destiny epitomised by modern western societies of the humanitas.

To firmly establish continuities between the modernist discourse and development economics a re-reading of the history of the latter and its theoretical pre-occupations may be helpful. In a simple but revealing analysis, Ohiorhenuan (2003) reviews the historical evolution of the subject - development economics. In his discussion he sums the early concerns of this discipline, which according o him began in 1950, thus;

> "[I]n defining 'development', it was convenient for economists to adopt the familiar neoclassical methodology of comparative statics. A checklist of characteristics derived from the metropolitan capitalist economy was produced. This was compared with certain characteristics of the agrarian economies *of the underdeveloped countries*, and the difference was taken as the 'development agenda' (2003: 5 italics mine).

To begin with, in defining underdevelopment as the deficit between the features of developed western and underdeveloped African societies, bourgeois economic theory and analysis was far from being original as it was to all intents invoking the logic of modernist discourse. Implied in this reasoning is that the modern West represents an epitome of development, therefore bourgeois development economic theory finds no cogent reason to define development. Suffice to know that only by mimicking the West shall Africa develop. In this equation questions such as the desirability\feasibility of the western development trajectory and its applicability to the African context fall by the wayside.

As if to affirm its ideological affinity with Enlightenment discourse development economics reproduces the same binary opposites imbued with the same oppositional effects, i.e. modern – pre-modern, west – non-west, capitalist – pre-capitalist, developed – underdeveloped, as theoretical handles with which to disaggregate the development question in Africa. The different appellations notwithstanding the meaning and implications remain the same; development is a unilinear process, a movement from the transitional pre-modern to the ultimate modern state. Just as did Enlightenment thought, bourgeoisie development theory and analysis inflects into these categories an asymmetrical lead-residual relationship. In this wise being underdeveloped or underdevelopment cannot be understood or studied in isolation from the lead concepts, developed and development. Underdeveloped is thus a vacuous concept without any meaning except that being underdeveloped is being not like the west.

How the theory of modernity gets articulated within bourgeois economic theory and analysis is further made obvious by the way in which the latter prescribes modernisation as an antidote for Africa's underdevelopment. Eisenstadt (1966) defines modernisation as, 'the process of change towards those types of social, economic and political systems that had developed in Western Europe and North America from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century' (1966: 1). Doesn't development economics today tell us that the problem of development in Africa is simply the lack of modernity? Accordingly in a bid to develop Africa must modernise where to modernise means replicating the western historical and development trajectory. Echoing philosophers of the Enlightenment, who had earlier argued that African development could only be at the West's behest, early pioneers of development economics, i.e. W.W. Rostow; 1960, Nurkse; 1953, Lewis; 1954, vehemently argue that without Western intervention development\modernity in Africa will remain elusive.

Convinced that on its own, pre-modern Africa is incapable of modernising, bourgeois economic theorists bestow upon the West the task of tutoring the continent on the modern way of economic and social organisation. Failure to provide such 'sympathetic' help means for many who subscribe to this thinking leaving to the continent to languish in pre-modernity. In a brilliant study, Arturo Escobar (1995) shows us how through representation Development Economics construct an image of Africa as an economically backward and helpless or pre-modern continent in need of salvaging.[9]

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[9] In its 1951 publication on 'Measures for the Economic Development of Underdeveloped Countries', the United Nations Department of Social and Economic Affairs concluded that the main stumbling bloc to African development is pre-modernity. In its opinion Africa lacked (and perhaps still does) the resolve and means to defeat the tyranny of pre-modernity which is the main cause for the continent's underdevelopment. The report's Enlightenment credentials are vivid enough in the following statement; 'There is a sense in which rapid economic progress is impossible without painful adjustment. Ancient philosophies have to be scrapped; old social institutions have to disintegrate; bonds of caste, creed and race have to burst; and large numbers of persons who cannot keep up with

Indeed it is not uncommon to hear and read Western leaders and scholars alike saying ‘we must help Africa to develop’. That many no longer read hubris or ethnocentricity in their statements is evidence of how this representation of Africa as an economically helpless continent waiting to be transformed by the West and its pedagogy has gained a near hegemonic influence. Here awakens the ghost of enlightenment thought that sees pre-modern Africa as the object not only of western tutelage but also of specialised western knowledge, its disciplinary boundaries now extended beyond anthropology and travel writings to include bourgeois economic theory and analysis.

With equal conviction, development economists, argue that any deviation from the standard Western development model will be ill advised and *ab initio* bound to fail. Perhaps the ‘there is no alternative (TINA)’ syndrome has a history longer than we tend to think. The premise in modernist discourse as is in bourgeois economic theory and analysis is that irrespective of the initial conditions or plurality of pasts all societies will evolve towards western modernity following the universal development path. Thus bourgeois development economics can be said to underscore the universality of the western historical time and development trajectory earlier proclaimed by classical social theorists. Stated differently the assumption is that the same processes (perhaps struggles and contestations) that led to the emergence of capitalism in the west will again play themselves out in Africa leading to the same developments. In another context Mamdani (1996) has described this as history by analogy. Isn’t this poverty of thought taken to the Olympic level? No, it is not – it is a self-serving view that in echoing the Enlightenment refrain that Africa has no known history now says Africa has no future without or outside the West.

Closer to our times in the era of hyper-modernity this reasoning finds its most explicit academic expression in the neo-liberal development paradigm imposed on African countries by the Bretton Woods institutions and their academic converts. Promoted under different guises the current neo-liberal paradigm seeks to advance further the task of modernising Africa. It moves from the same enlightenment premises firstly that development is synonymous with modernity and secondly that Africa’s development can only be at the West’s behest. It is to this era of late modernity that we now turn. Once more the objective is to tease processes by which the Enlightenment begotten idea of development is propelled forward and what implications these have for African development. In the same breath I shall make an attempt to debunk the fallacious claim entered by defenders of global capitalism that globalisation and its neo-liberal development discourse is new and therefore progressive (see for example Bhagwati, 2004). To belie their claim I shall critically examine the epistemological basis of the policies promoted under it.

2.3 Era of Global Capitalism \Late or Hyper Modernity (late 20th century-present)

Debray’s counsel that, ‘[H]istory advances in disguise, it appears on stage wearing the mask of the preceding scene and we tend to loose the meaning of the play’, is perhaps

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progress have to have their expectations of a comfortable life frustrated. Very few communities are willing to pay the full price of economic progress’ (cited in Escobar, 1995: 3).

truer of the era of hyper-modernity than any other (cited in Shivji; 1976: 29). This manifests in the manner in which global capitalism is now analysed first as if it were a new unavoidable development that Africa will only ignore at its own peril. Secondly it is now presented quite expectedly in bourgeois economic thought as a new kind of economic system that avails equally to all societies who part-take in it immense opportunities for development. All such interest begotten analyses are afflicted with selective amnesia; they purposefully ignore commonalities between global capitalism\neo-liberal development discourse and the theory of modernity.

While more discerning scholars (i.e. Amin; 1980) have demonstrated the historicity of global capitalism by proving it to be but a moment in the long historical evolution of capitalism since the fifteen century, those who fail to do so, thus loosing the 'meaning of the play', have tended to reach a somewhat far fetched conclusion that the novelty of global capitalism is that if approached properly it could be progressive and non-polarising.[10] Contrary to this view I argue that globalisation (and its attendant neo-liberal discourse) is not novel but a continuation by other means of the civilising mission. Its ideological motives remain congruous with those of modernity or enlightenment. Suffice to add that in this era of late modernity pedagogy assumes the centre stage.

Worth recognising as novelties of capitalism in the current era of late modernity are its immensely enhanced capabilities to amongst other things; super-impose the capitalist principle of exchange value in areas that have for long remained immune to it (the new regime of intellectual property rights is a case in point), extract surplus value from non-western societies at a rate and speed as has never been seen before, transfer the contradictions of mature capitalism (i.e. the outsourcing of the tertiary sectors of the

[10] In way celebrating global capitalism Allasane Quttara declared in 1997 that the economic improvements, evidenced according to him by the nominal per capita growth rates recorded between 1995 -97, witnessed by many African countries were due largely to the strict adherents by these to the policy prescriptions and advice of the institutions of global capitalism. According to him, '[A] key underlying contribution has come from progress made in macroeconomic stabilisation and the introduction of sweeping structural reforms' (cited in Sundaram, 2005: 4). Following other western bourgeoisie economist Iyoha (2003) argues that '[T]he success stories of the 20th century have clear policy lessons for developing regions such as Africa in the 21st century. The policy advice to such developing countries is that they are more likely to be successful in attaining rapid and sustained development in the 21st century if their development strategies emphasise *the standard Washington Consensus prescriptions*; outwards-oriented trade policies, market-friendly economic and financial policies, promotion of private-sector led development…, establishment of a conducive and friendly environment for foreign capital inflows, implementation of stable macroeconomic policies' (2003: 276-277 italics mine). Stiglitz's (2002) opens what otherwise is a prescient critique of globalisation with a paradoxical assertion that, 'globalisation…can be a force for good and it has the potential to enrich everyone in the world, particularly the poor' (2002: ix). Less surprising but nonetheless important to note is the self appointed spokesperson of the continent, President Mbeki's bold statement against market fundamentalism preached by ambassadors of globalisation. He argues boldly that, 'we must be in the forefront in challenging the notion of the market as the modern god, a supernatural phenomenon to whose dictates everything human must bow in a spirit of powerlessness' (2002: xvii). In the same breath he embraces uncritically the same logic of the market when he counsels that, 'fundamental to everything we must say about these matters must be the consideration that we have to attract into the African economy the significant volumes of capital without which the development we speak of will not happen' (2002: xviii).

economy) from the west to peripheral capitalist formations, spread western values through institutions of mass culture and to supplant the state as the custodian of national markets with the international development architecture. It is in recognition of these newly acquired capabilities that I have elected for the lack of a better word to refer to the current era of global capitalism as that of hyper-modernity.

Taking the foregoing as a point of departure, I shall as stated earlier dispute the claim entered by defenders of globalisation that the economic policies wreaked along by the process (of globalisation) are new and development enhancing. For globalisation to be, it must first rid itself of the enlightenment baggage, because it cannot simultaneous claim to be development enhancing and remain in its meaning and logic in sync with the theory of modernity. So what are the intellectual foundations of the supposedly new economic policies that global capitalism imposes on Africa? They are to be found in the quaint and adequately critiqued neo-classical economic development theories\models developed by the early pioneers of the discipline, i.e. the Harrod-Domar\financing gap model, ICOR model[11], the Ricardian and the Heckscher-Ohlin international trade theories (for an elaborate exposition of these models see Easterly, 2002, Ray; 1998, Garba, 2003).

From the onset this lays bare the poverty inherent in the claim that global capitalism particularly the policies promoted under its cover are new. Rather they follow logically from mainstream economic development theories fashioned late in the preceding era of capitalist modernity. Against this backdrop we therefore should perceive global capitalism and its associated neo-liberalism as nothing more than present day re-incarnates of the 1950, consummated development theory. Just like its progenitor the current development discourse conducted under the guise of globalisation seeks through pedagogy to transform or modernise pre-modern societies In essence the current development discourse has refurbished the old modernity advancing bourgeois economic theory and analysis. It now promotes the same under a different name – globalisation, but the ingredients remain the same. Thus those who argue that globalisation is potentially progressive invariably subscribe to the fallacy that a copy can become an original or that catching up is possible. [12]

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11 The Incremental Capital to Output Ratio (ICOR) model is a composite encompassing three different models; Harrod-Domar model, Sir Author Lewis's surplus labour model and Rustow's financing gap theory enunciated in his popular book 'The Stages of Economic Growth' published in 1960. Running through these models is the following logic; the excess of required investment over actual savings constitutes the financing gap to be filled either through foreign aid or investment. On the basis of this logic they conclude that 'investment to GDP will increase over the initial year by the amount that aid to GDP increases over the initial year. Then this investment will increase growth in the next period' (Easterly, 2002; 42). In this wise it becomes possible to trigger the economy into sustainable growth by injecting the required volume of capital that comes in a form of aid.

12 While in the name of globalisation African economies are increasingly becoming subject to the dictates of the international economic architecture that integrates them further into the global economic system by compelling them to open up their economies to international trade and investment, their share of the volume of world trade on the contrary suggests that they are being pushed further to the margin. Note that prior the crystallisation of the current global economic regime Africa's share of world trade stood at three percent (3%) in the 1950's while they now- since the 1990's- account for less than two percent (2%) of world trade a figure that drops down to 1.2 percent excluding South Africa. In another respect Stiglitz makes a similar observation with regard to the

For the ease of analysis I shall, in making the argument that the boundaries of globalisation coincide with those of modernity focus on three main policy measures through which institutions of globalisation instrumentalising reason seeks to draw the continent deeper into western modernity; foreign direct investment (meant to trigger growth and cover the financing gap), macro-economic reforms and trade liberalisation.

The three are in the literature recognised as pillars of the Washington Consensus (Stiglitz, 2002, Sundaram, 2005, Marais, 2001). Their ascendance to the summit of the Washington Consensus is also symptomatic of a paradigmatic shift within bourgeois economic development theory and analysis occurring in the early 80's. This was the return after a brief displacement of neo-classical market fundamentalism to the centre stage of the discipline – development economics. Championed by several market fundamentalists particularly those located within the institutions of hyper-modernity this shift finds it's most articulate statement in the 1980, World Bank publication, *Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan Africa: An Agenda for Action.*

On Foreign Direct Investment

> Foreign investment is not one of the three main pillars of the Washington Consensus, but it is a key part of the new globalisation (Stiglitz; 2002: 67)

> One need not be an economics *fundi* to understand the (il-)logic behind the primacy given to FDI as a trigger to sustainable growth. The celebrated role that FDI is thought to play in triggering growth is founded on quaint economic development theories, whose scientific validity has been seriously questioned. That it continues to subsist in the blueprints that IFI's impose on underdeveloped countries to the flagrant disregard of scholarly evidence against its efficacy goes to prove the malice that drive institutions of hyper-modernity.

To find evidence for its continued use we need not look any further than the year 2000 World Bank report on Africa. In a pretentiously titled report, 'Can Africa Claim the 21st Century?' the World Bank states that '…reaching the International Development Goal of halving the incidence of severe poverty by 2015 [Africa] will require annual growth of 7% or more…' (2000:12). Featuring as primary among several hindrances painfully threatening the possibility of reducing severe poverty by half in Africa by the year 2015, is the low level of capital investment, which is in turn occasioned by the low average savings rate[13]. In this wise the available savings within

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Uruguay Round of negotiations. He reports that, 'the net effect was to lower the prices some of the poorest countries in the world received relative to what they paid for their imports' meaning the price of their imports remained the same as before or actually increased (2002: 7).

[13] Reputed to have the lowest savings rate is the United States of America which saves between 13-18% of its GDP income, however the World Bank (2000) for rather inexplicable reasons concludes that '[A]veraging about 13% of GDP in the 1990's, the savings rate of the typical African country has been the lowest in the world'. More baffling is the failure of such an enlightened institution to recognise a matter of simple logic that the ability to save is contingent upon the level of one's income in relation to the cost of the living basket. It therefore stands to reason that in poor African countries where the majority of citizens earn less than what is required for subsistence level of consumption and having more than a family dependent on one income, a 13 % average of savings is more than salutary.

African economies averaging 13% of GDP income are considered too meagre for triggering investment growth. The report then counsels;

> '…foreign savings are essential to permit both higher investment for growth and higher consumption to reduce poverty. Even under favourable conditions for private inflows …the typical African country faces a resource gap of more than 12% of GDP relative to the investment needs of a growth rate likely to achieve the poverty reduction goal for 2015' (2000: 44).

Implied in the above assertion is that the continent will unavoidably have to depend on the West for only it can provide Africa with the required FDI amounting to 12% of its GDP necessary to fill the resource or financing gap – the latter being excess of required investment over actual saving.

On no other policy issue do commonalities between globalisation and bourgeois economic theory and analysis get accentuated as in the case of FDI. Though in its current form the FDI model has gone through various stages of firmament, it has retained its original features. First developed by Evsey Domar (1946) in an article titled 'Capital Expansion, Rate of Growth, and Employment', it was to latter became known as the Harrod-Domar model, to reflect contributions made to it by the British economist, Roy Harrod (1939). Spurred by different concerns several other economists expanded on the logic of this model. The high level of rural underemployment in poor countries, for example, led Lewis (1954), to expand the model by pointing towards labour as a production factor in addition to capital, a contribution that was to result in his now acclaimed 'surplus labour' theory[14]. Deterred by the success of the Soviet model, W.W. Rostow (1960) published a book suggestively titled, *'The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non Communist Manifesto'* in which he sought to demonstrate that communism was not, 'the only form of effective state organisation that can launch', underdeveloped economies to 'a take off to sustained growth' (1960: 37)[15]. Frightened by the possibility of continuous aid flows leading to excess indebtedness, Hollis Chenery and Alan Strout (1966), who christened theirs the 'Two-Gap' model, added a caveat that the amount of foreign aid availed should be proportional to the recipient country's effectiveness in increasing the rate of domestic saving.[16] Beyond this point I shall as we elaborate on the logic of this model use Harrod-Domar model and financing gap interchangeably and only make specific references to its distinct strands where necessary.

Simply put the Harrod-Domar model holds that income growth is the function of abstention from current consumption. By saving households avail firms of the necessary

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If regard is had to the above facts it becomes hard to imagine how Africa can be expected to save more than it does.

14 Lewis's Surplus labour model basically posits that underdeveloped economies are typically characterised by underemployment in the agricultural sector. Accordingly such economies can grow by shifting labour away from this sector to the industrial sector in the cities.

15 The ideological motivations behind Rostow's Stages of Growth are clearly betrayed by the book's subtitle, A Non-Communist Manifesto. Perhaps this helps in part to explain its limitations.

16 In the Hollis Chenery and Alan Strout (1966) model the investment-savings represent but one gap, the other being the trade gap, which as Easterly (2002) explains is, 'ex post equal to the investment gap, but ex ante might be a constraint in a shortage prone economy with fixed prices' (2002: 295), hence the referent, two-gap model. However the second, trade gap is off little interest to us here and receives no further attention.

capital to acquire new capital stock and replace depreciated machinery. New capital stock - the quantity of capital being the total stock of machines – added through investment increases the productivity of the economy, which leads to economic growth. Economic growth is positive only when investment exceeds the amount necessary to replace depreciated capital 'thereby allowing the next cycle to recur on a larger scale' (Ray; 1998: 54). In other words the model holds that GDP growth will be proportional to the share of investment spending in GDP terms. In this scheme of things a causal relationship is thought to exist between investment and growth, such that GDP growth this year will necessarily be proportional to last year's investment GDP ratio.

A simple statement of the model can take the following form; since growth is proportional to investment, it is possible to estimate that proportion for country A, and arrive at the required amount of investment necessary for country A, to grow at a given target growth rate x. Supposing that to grow at 1 percentage point country A, requires 4 percentage points of investment, to triple its growth from 1 percentage point to a growth target of 4 percentage points country A, will have to upwardly adjust its investment rate from 4 % of GDP to 16 % of GDP. It therefore stands to reason that if country A's population is growing at 2% per year, the 4% GDP growth will lead to country A growing its per capita income at 2%.[17]

Suppose that country A is poor such that it can only afford to save 4% of its GDP. With only 4% of GDP savings available for investment, country A can therefore not hope to attain a growth rate of more than 1%, taking into cognisance that this year's GDP growth is proportional to last year's investment GDP ratio. Country A will therefore have a financing gap of 12% of GDP, between the required investment and the current level of national savings. Foreign inflows, be it in the form of foreign aid, private and public loans or foreign direct investment, provide the only alternative to filling this financing gap and thus trigger the economy to grow at the desired rate.

Several decades after, the much promised and eagerly awaited growth remains elusive. Prior to the empirical manifestations of the model's dysfunctional effects it had already suffered a serious academic blow as Domar, who in 1957, complaining of an 'ever guilty conscience', admitted that the model was unrealistic and made no sense for long-run growth. He pointed out that his focus was on a short business cycle and not to derive 'an empirically meaningful rate of growth' (1957: 7-8).

Reluctant to admit the intellectual collapse of their model other economist began to defend it arguing rather unconvincingly that, '[A]lthough physical capital accumulation may be considered a necessary condition of development, it has not proved sufficient' (Meier; 1995: 153).[18] Despite its obvious failure to trigger growth in aid receiving

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[17] Though this example is informed by Lewis's estimates (1954), it also finds expression in several other Development Economics textbooks.

[18] Todaro (2000) advances an equally unconvincing argument that 'the basic reason why the investment led take-off didn't work was not because more saving and investment isn't a necessary condition – it is – but rather because it is not a sufficient condition' (quoted in Easterly; 2002: 35). The point made here does not arise because for those who know the basic rules of causality will be aware that for A to have a causal relationship with B, A should be both a necessary and sufficient condition for B's occurrence. Isn't that what the financing gap model said of investment this year leading to growth the following year?

countries the model is afflicted by several scientific flaws. To begin with for the model to hold there has to be a positive statistical relationship between aid and investment. More specifically foreign aid should pass into investment at least one for one, meaning that if 1 % of GDP in aid is injected into country A, country A should show an increase of at least 1 % of GDP in investment. Surveying the data we found that while on the one hand African countries received between 1970 and 1997, large foreign aid transfers from grants and concessional flows amounting to 205% of GDP cumulatively, on the other their investment rates remained at about 18% of GDP (data drawn the World Bank Report; 2000). Clearly the model fails to pass the test of investment increasing at least one for one with aid.[19]

The second assumption inherent in the financing gap model is that investment necessarily leads to GDP growth. IFI's country missions use a slightly amended version of this projection in calculating the impact of investment on growth. In place of the one year period suggested in Rostow's (1960) book they use five year averages (the first being the investment year). In this wise investment it is presupposed will begin to affect growth over a four year period. When tested against the data the investment-growth linkage flounders. Figure 1.1, suggest that Africa's growth rate does not correspond to the rate of investment for the period covered. Even when tested on the basis of its slightly watered down proposition, where, investment is a necessary but not sufficient condition, the model fails once more to inspire confidence.

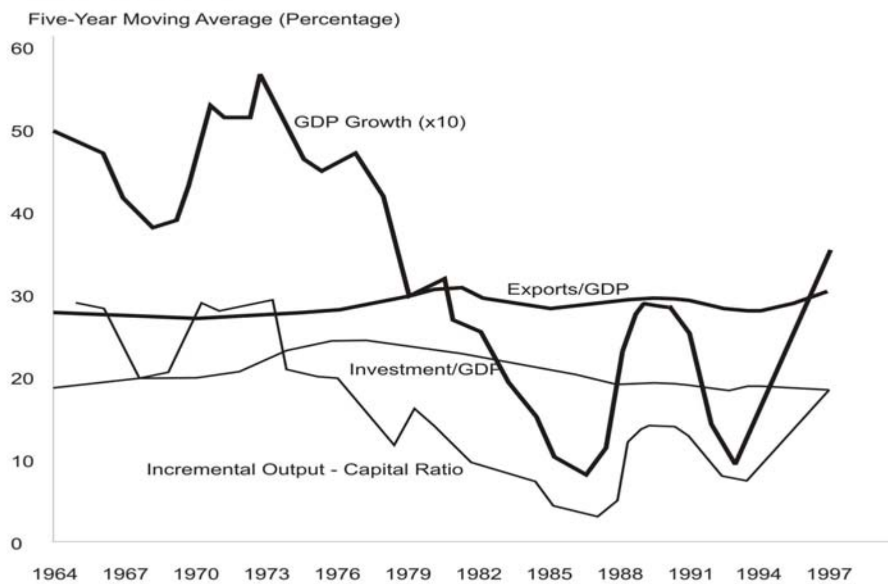
In a two pronged correlation William Easterly tested this idea by first establishing how many four-year long high-growth episodes – 7% and above - were accompanied by the necessary investment rates in the previous four years. He then proceeded, using the four-year averages, to check whether where growth occurred did investment also increase by the required amount. In the cases where growth increased within the four-year periods he found that 'investment increased by the required amount only in 6% of the cases. The other 94% of the episodes violated the necessary condition'. When tested against the first proposition nine-tenth of the countries violated the necessary condition. (2002: 40).

The scientific reach of the model is further curtailed by its failure to realise a basic fact that growth often fluctuates around an average whereas investment has no patterned movement. What this points to is that contrary to the model's postulation, growth is a function not just of investment but of multiple variables, thus making the relationship between investment and growth loose and unstable. In a bid to rescue their model IFIs, deploy a somewhat improvised measure called Incremental Capital Output Ratio

[19] Using available data for eighty eight counties Easterly sought to test the model against two propositions; firstly that there is positive statistical association between aid and investment, secondly that aid should pass into investment at least one for one. What implications his findings portend for the scientific veracity of the model is glaringly obvious. Reporting his findings he write; '[O]n the first test, only seventeen of the eighty eight countries show a positive statistical association between aid and investment, Just six of these seventeen countries also pass the test of investment increasing at least one for one with aid.' As if to indict himself and his co-travellers he goes further to ask whether, 'investment and aid jointly evolved the way that the users of the financing gap model expected?' In response he avers; '[W]e financing gap advocates anticipated that aid would go into investment,…According to my results, investment and aid did not evolve the way we expected' (2002: 38)

(ICOR). Through the ICOR they shift the point of emphasis away from investment to what is known as ‘investment productivity’. ICOR uses the ratio of investment to growth as an inverse measure of the productivity of investment. Using the same measure the year 200 World Bank report concludes that, ‘Africa’s investment productivity, as measured by the incremental output-capital ratio, was only half that in Asia in 1970-97’, which explains the deceleration of growth during this period even though investment may have not fallen by a corresponding figure (2000: 19).

Fig. 1 GROWTH, EXPORTS, INVESTMENT, AND INVESTMENT PRODUCTIVITY IN AFRICA, 1964 - 97



Source: World Bank Report, 2000: 20

Sadly the shift to ICOR does very little to save the financing gap model. Similar to the earlier version of the financing gap model, ICOR is afflicted with the same problem of reifying investment productivity as the sole variable responsible for growth, which as we pointed out is contingent upon several other factors. How for example may we separate the effect that an increase in ICOR has on growth from worsening terms of trade or any other factor that negatively affects growth? Closely related to this is yet one other of the model’s many structural flaws; its exclusive reliance on capital stock as the only factor of production. As Solow (1956) points out, labour and capital are the two major factors of production that work together to produce output. The implications are that a constant increase in one production factor, capital, will lead to declining capital output ratio.

Eager to attract the much touted FDI African countries are counselled to create an alluring market friendly environment. Creating such environment entails amongst other things capital market liberalisation, abolishing foreign exchange controls, etc. In simple terms the latter means doing away with regulations that govern the flow of money in and out of the country. The presupposition is that such deregulation will facilitate the inflow of capital necessary to acquire new capital stock and to build new industries. By the end of the last century almost all sub-Saharan African countries had been forced to phase out their capital control regulations in a bid to make them attractive to foreign capital.

Contrary to expectations the response of western private capital as the World Bank itself reports, 'has been disappointing' (Mkandawire cited in Sundaram, 2005: 3).[20] More disconcerting is the fact that a larger share of what Africa gets in the name of exalted FDI often goes either to the mineral resource sectors, which operate as enclave economies without any backward linkage with the rest of the economy or towards acquisition of existing industries - privatisation. This in turn legitimises the colonially consummated plunder of Africa's natural resources and domination of African economies by western multinational companies. Responsible economists have consistently argued that privatisation does not grow the economy because it leads to the taking over of already existing companies, which can be re-engineered for productivity. Neither does a western dominated mining sector significantly expand employment because of its auto-generated pathological dependence on expatriate labour (Sundaram, 2005)[21].

At this point let us once more be reminded that properly defined investment refers to the actual act of acquiring capital goods necessary for production. This definition obviously excludes short-term portfolio investments, buying into the service sector and other unproductive sectors of the economy. Short-term speculative money and service sector oriented foreign (direct) investment capital that is looking for quick returns cannot obviously serve as a catalyst for sustainable development. Preying on higher real domestic interest rates that are often imposed on African countries by IFIs in the name of macro-economic reforms, portfolio investments not only lead to economic instability but rob the continent of the required resources in order to finance green-field investments. Stiglitz's observation in this regard is worth noting;

> "speculative money ', *which is what African countries get in the name of FDI*, 'cannot be used to build factorise or create jobs – companies don't make long-term investments using money that can be pulled out on a moments notice–and indeed, the risk that such hot money brings makes long term investments in a developing country even less attractive. The adverse effects on growth are even greater" (2002: 65-66 italics mine).

From the foregoing one point becomes obvious, FDI is neither supported by any cogent development theory nor does it survive scrutiny when placed against facts. More telling is William Easterly's observation that the '[F]inancing gap approach had a curious fate after its heyday in the 1960's and 70's. It died out of the academic literature altogether…' (2002: 35). Why it continues to be applied in Africa is a question we cannot answer. There is no gain saying that the consequences for the continent as a

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20 More baffling is the fact that while the rates of return to FDI remain higher in the continent than in other region sub-Saharan Africa's share of FDI in 1999 stood at 1.2% of the total FDI availed by the western sovereign lenders and other multilateral institutions (for figures see Sundaram, 2005: 3).

21 In the same study Sundaram (2005) reports that, 'Much of recent FDI has involved acquisitions encouraged by privatisation, often on ''fire scale' terms. Such investments, which have declined since the late 1990s, accounted for about 14 per cent of FDI flows into Africa'. He goes further to report that 'In 1998 alone, privatisation in SSA attracted US$ 684 million of FDI' (2005: 4 and footnote No. 3).

result of its continued application to the flagrant disregard of scholarly evidence have been dire. It has succeeded in worsening the asymmetrical neo-colonial relations between modern western capitalist countries and Africa; first by discouraging auto-centred and employment driven growth, secondly by deepening Africa's dependence on and vulnerability to external economic players, thirdly by encouraging the flow of capital from the resource poor continent to the resource rich west, fourthly by strengthening the capacity of western multi-nationals to expropriate surplus value from the continent, and lastly by further elaborating a distorted form of capitalism in Africa marked by export dependency or demand side oriented industrial policies.

On Macro-economic Reforms

Clubbed under the term macro-economic reforms is a coterie of economic policy measures that one finds in a typical reform package handed to any structurally adjusting country, i.e. fiscal austerity, financial and capital market liberalisation, currency devaluation, privatisation and labour market deregulation. It is these policies that the institutions of hyper-modernity continue to impose on African countries that initially were seeking stamps of approval for SAP loans but are now begging for debt cancellation. To discipline our analysis we shall focus on two policy aspects promoted under the banner of macro-economic reforms; financial and capital market liberalisation and fiscal discipline\austerity. These it is said help to get the 'fundamentals right'.

Ambassadors of the neo-liberal orthodoxy rest their belief in capital and financial market liberalisation as a catalyst for growth, where growth is wrongly equated with development, on three grounds. Firstly they argue that capital and financial market liberalisation opens the flood gates for the much needed foreign direct investment. The second reason they advance is that with the entry of foreign banks, efficiency increases because they bring along technical expertise and new technological innovations, a corollary of which is increased competition that drives down interest rates as banks vie to outwit each other in capturing a larger share of the market. Lastly, they argue that liberalisation increases the stability of the market by diversifying the sources of funding.

All the three arguments entered in defence of capital market liberalisation deserve closer scrutiny in light of available evidence. As shown in the preceding section the assumed positive correlation between capital market liberalisation and long term investment remains spurious to say the least. In return Africa has continued to attract short-term portfolio investments and short term loans that can be called in at short notice. Contrary to the dictates of this model the beneficiaries of such investments have been Western financial institutions that gamble on the exchange and interest rates not the states said to be in need of long-term investments.

Aggravating the situation is the fact that African countries already suffering from crippling balance of payments are expected to cushion themselves against the negative effects of volatile money by insuring the short-term dollar denominated loans, in the name of good financial standing, albeit the fact that they do not have any influence over the decision as to what use such loans are put. This they basically do by setting aside in their reserves an additional amount equivalent to the total volume of short-term loans taken by private firms. Very few African countries have been spared from the consequences of such policy measures. When short-terms loans are called in, when banks refuse to roll them over or when short-term portfolio funds are withdrawn many companies either default or fold up while the state incurs the responsibility of repaying the loans. It is easy to see then that rather than the liberalising countries benefiting it is the net western lenders who not only benefit but cause instability.

The veracity of the second argument that the entry of foreign banks and other lending institutions increases capital market efficiency is more apparent than real. A closer reading of the evidence reveals that rather than deploy their technological advancement to the benefit small scale\peasant farmers, informal traders, small and medium enterprises these institutions impose on these sectors complicated and technologically advanced evaluation schemes. The information base line they set for their prospective customers excludes these sectors while advantaging multinational companies. Worse still, not only do they exclude those most in need of finances, big financial houses often emasculate small local banks ostensibly designed to cater for peasant farmers and small scale entrepreneurs through soft and low interest bearing loans, thereby leaving a yawning gap in the capital market. Governments restrained by the attendant financial regulations, which capital and financial market liberalisation imposes on them are often left helpless. In this regard it becomes impossible to fathom the meaning of efficiency that neo-liberal modellers operate on the basis of.

It is now generally known that the concept of social responsibility is at variance with the logic of capital. Foremost in its agenda is insatiable desire to maximise profit. The much professed corporate responsibility is an after thought that has recently entered its vocabulary. If not what explanation exists for the consideration of costs emanating from socially responsible activities like environmental conservation, skills development as externalities? If capital is generally irresponsible, foreign capital can be said to be doubly irresponsible. African countries have been witness to the obstinacy of financial and other foreign institutions, which refuse to adapt their operational rules to the context within which they operate. Irked by the same fact MacEwan's observes quite correctly that;

> "[A]s important sectors of capital become more international in their orientation, they are less willing to support the types of state policies, *such as extending credit to small farmers, local sourcing*, which would yield national growth. Industrial policies and programmes to develop national labour force, for example, are of little interest to firms committed *increasing the profits of their foreign shareholders*; indeed in so far as those policies and programmes carry costs – as they always do – such firms are likely to oppose them" (1994: 13, italics mine).

Closer to our consideration of the financial sector is a point that Stiglitz (2002) also highlights; the loss of economic sovereignty that follows from the domination of the financial sector by foreign banks. Through the instrumentalisation of central banks governments exert subtle pressure on domestic banks to respond to the prevailing economic conditions. For example when confronted with a possible economic slowdown governments can encourage banks to expand credit in order to trigger demand or withhold funds in cases of excess liquidity. Stiglitz (2002) refers to this as 'window guidance'. Foreign financial houses that do not owe their host government any obligation deliberately ignore such signals or as Stiglitz observes ‘foreign banks are far less likely to be responsive to such signals’ (2002: 70).

The naivety of the third argument in support of rapid capital inflows in and out of a country lies not only in the fact that they cause large disturbances or generate what economists call ‘large externalities’, but in the thinking that countries facing an economic meltdown can find alternative sources of funding from foreign lenders. Basic economics teaches that markets respond to incentives. What incentives does an economy in recession offer to financial lenders one wonders!!! Where regulations intended to control the flow of money in and out of the country have been done away with in line with the dictates of financial liberalisation lenders guided by the need to maximise profit pull their money out of the countries facing an economic downturn and move to more profit yielding markets. The logic behind this thinking becomes more baffling if regard is had to the fact that economic downturn is a euphemism for (if not logical consequence of) the absence of such conditions for high profitability. Besides haven’t capital flows shown themselves to be pro-cyclical, flowing out in times of recession, exactly at the time when a country is experiencing a cash crunch and flow back when the economy is showing signs of recovery in the process increasing inflationary pressure on the same economy?

Hard to dispute is the fact that when governments spend more than what they generate in taxes and other revenue sources and finance budget deficits through increased money supply in excess of the rate of output growth they inevitably hurt global aggregate demand. All guilty of such act countries involved in the WWII, had contributed to the global economic stagnation that followed immediately after the war. Piqued by this development a leading British economist, John Keynes, published in 1935 an influential book titled, *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money*, in which he sought to explain the reasons for economic downturns and offered a set of prescriptions on how to stimulate global aggregate demand. These were to constitute the basis for the discussions and policy measures later adopted to guide the operations of the two institutions that emerged out of the 1944, UN Monetary and Financial Conference; the IMF and the World Bank. The primary objective in forming these institutions was to pre-empt the plausibility of yet another global depression. This they were to do according to Stiglitz by ‘putting international pressure on countries that were not doing their fair share to maintain global aggregate demand, by allowing their economies to go into a slump’ (2002: 12).

For this reason Keynes’s ideas on how to maintain economies at full employment and acceptable liquidity level become useful in our attempt to understand the second set of macro-economic policy measures, i.e. fiscal discipline and inflation targeting. A more elaborate discussion of Keynesian economic thought is beyond the scope of this paper however a short vignette will suffice for our purposes. Moving from the premise that markets do not always respond effectively and timeously to depressing economic conditions, Keynes argued that in stagnant economies afflicted by low levels of aggregate demand governments can trigger the economy through expansionary economic, particularly fiscal and monetary policies. This they can do by increasing government expenditure, cutting taxes or lowering interest rates thus leaving consumers with more expendable income and encouraging borrowing for investment.

Underlying Keynes argument is a simply but cogent reasoning that it is the ability to sell what is produced that guides investment decisions and determine productivity levels. In this wise it becomes counter-productive to, in times of depression, apply contractionary and inflation targeted monetary policies for this makes the economy more unattractive. The setting up of the two leading IFI's and the determination of their mandates was indeed predicated on the logic that 'markets do not always work efficiently and that they might generate persistent unemployment' (see Stiglitz; 2002: 11-12, 196-197).

Contrary to the Keynesian logic upon which the two leading IFI's were founded they now impose on underdeveloped African economies contractionary and austerity measures that rather than stimulate these economies steer them deeper into recession in the name of structurally reforming them. Through the instrumentalisation of political\economic conditionalities and the international economic architecture western hegemons bring pressure to bear on African countries to institute deflationary policies, i.e. reducing budget deficits to zero by severely cutting government expenditure and borrowing, increasing interest rates to counter inflation, etc., that are all obviously at variance with the expansionary logic of Keynesian economics. Social spending is often the first sector that suffers when these contractionary measures are imposed. The results being low primary and secondary school enrolment and retention ratios, high levels of infant mortality, dilapidated infra-structure and near non-existent social services that are in turn cited by the very institutions as indicators of African under-development.

That these policies are contractionary is self-evident, we not detain ourselves establishing the fact. What deserves our attention is their incoherence and scientific nullity. To begin with no extant knowledge of economics is necessary for one to realise that the term macro invokes an aggregate understanding of the economy. Isolating certain aspects of the macro-economic framework like budget deficit or inflation to the detriment of other equally important issues like unemployment, government spending, growth, investment and productivity levels does not pass for a macro-economic understanding of the economy.

Often market fundamentalist argue glibly without paying attention to the nature of the deficit, whether it is a structural or actual deficit, and irrespective of the purpose for which the deficit is budgeted, that when the government borrows to finance a deficit it competes with the private sector for funds and because of its advantage it crowds the private sector out. For this singular reason academic converts of orthodoxy are wont to argue that any deficit portends an economic disaster albeit the fact that there exist a well supported view that if maintained in the region of 5-7 per cent of GDP and being part of a broader growth strategy, such a deficit might be tolerable. The intellectual poverty of this position is symptomatic of the more generic loss of 'intellectual coherency' that the IFI's have suffered according to Stiglitz (2002: 196).

Following Keynes responsible economist have proved beyond reasonable doubt that expanded public productive expenditure on infra-structural provisioning and other social investments is an effective way to trigger the economy by increasing aggregate demand. By availing resources for improving the production function – technical knowledge of the economy- upgrading roads, providing housing and other social amenities the state not only helps to make the economy liquid but also makes its attractive to investors. Viewed this way targeted deficit budgeting rather than crowd out, it 'crowds in' private investment by creating an environment that supports long-term growth. The paucity of the position adopted by market fundamentalist partly emanates from their failure to see investment not as a function of investor confidence but as 'primarily determined by profitability of investment and the complementarity between investment by the state and the private sector' (ILO; 1996: 29).

Added to the IFI's severely flawed understanding of macro-economic management is the exclusive focus on inflation targeting. Undoubtedly profligate deficit-financed spending that most unpopular regimes engage in by inflecting more money into the economy puts serious inflationary pressure and spells doom for the economy in the long run. However on its own this does not pass for an intelligible argument against deficit budgeting as outlined above. Obsessed with inflation targeting, advocates of neo-liberal orthodoxy often limit the space for African governments to explore other creative ways to finance the deficit in a manner that does not increase the money supply in excess of output growth. Instead they tele-guide underdeveloped African countries to hike interest rates irrespective of the negative effects such upward adjustments have on existing loans and new investments.

Often this route is forced down even upon countries with single digit inflation percentages. While the need to forestall running or uncontrolled inflation cannot be dismissed a fanatical approach to it has no known intellectual basis. Arguing against such a single-minded approach Stiglitz notes that; 'controlling high and medium-rate inflation should be a fundamental policy priority but pushing low inflation even lower is not likely to significantly improve the functioning of markets' (1998: 6-7). Khan reports that in a 44 country study between 1980 and 1988, no evidence was found to substantiate the;

> "notion that a low rate of inflation has in the past and in various countries been associated with improved growth rates; to support thus the statement that low or zero inflation is an essential or very important condition for high and sustained growth, or that government action to reduce inflation would be very likely to have such an effect" (Khan; 1999: 28).

In the context of high government indebtedness higher interest rates obviously lead to an inflated government debt thus creating even more pressure for severe fiscal contraction (Marais; 2002: 215). Beyond helping to control inflation advocates of this model argue that higher interest rates serve a double purpose of making the economy attractive to foreign investors as well as encouraging savings. What this argument deliberately ignores are the facts that higher interest rates reduce the rate of returns to investments in the industrial sector that often depend on domestic borrowing and that the ability to save necessarily depends on the availability of disposable income.

Moreover such reasoning appears oblivious to the enormous benefits that follow from lower interest rates. Firstly, lower interest rates help to cheapen the cost of capital needed for both public and private investment, as well as protect developing economies from the vicissitudes of opportunistic volatile capital inflows that prey on higher real interest rates. To add fuel to the fire poor African countries are made to hike interest rates in tandem with capital and financial market liberalisation a situation that is alluring to speculative short-term portfolio investments. When such money flows out these countries are once more forces to increase interest rates in a bid to support the exchange rate. This serves as an invitation to yet another cycle of short-term inflows and the cycle continues *ad infinitum*.

It is therefore possible to conclude on the basis of the discussion above that rather than help stimulate aggregate demand in depressed African economies in line with the Keynesian model that formed the epistemological basis for the establishment of IFI's, these institutions have on the contrary subverted the logic inherent in Keynesian economic theory. For promoting contractionary policies without proffering any scientifically proven theory in their favour they should take the responsibility of explaining why several decades after African countries structurally adjusted remain in a low growth path.

On Trade Liberalisation

> "There is a general tendency for governments and citizens in developed countries, as well as several international organisations, to view a regime of outward orientation as a good thing, or at any rate, as a lesser evil compared to inward orientation. A priori, it is hard to think of any objective economic basis for this sort of discrepancy in assessments. Arguments based on government-induced 'distortions' under inward orientation are not enough" (Ray; 1998: 676)

If the arguments entered in defence of FDI invoke discounted economic development theories while the host of policies promoted by IFIs under macro-economic reforms subvert the Keynesian logic upon which they are supposedly founded, the logic underpinning trade liberalisation certainly rest on weak theoretical grounds; the Ricardian and Heckscher-Ohlin theories of international trade.

Ricardo's theory of comparative advantage moves from a simple premise that each country either for reasons of factor endowment, preferences or technological advancement will have a comparative advantage in the production of those commodities that utilise more intensely the factor of production with which it is advantageously endowed. A country that is technologically advanced will for example have a comparative advantage in the production of high tech goods in relation to a technologically backward country. Prior to liberalising their trade regimes countries are compelled to stretch their resources or factors of production across all sectors of the economy in order to satisfy all their consumption needs. This leads to reduced productivity and high commodity prices because the supply of production inputs will obviously fail to match the demand. Ricardo's theory then offers a simple and at this stage plausible prescription.

According to him when countries open up their economies to international trade – that is liberalise their trade regimes - they inadvertently increase their production possibility frontiers (PPF) by shifting resources (labour since it is in the Ricardian model the only factor of production) away from the less productive to the more productive sectors of the economy. Effectively, with an expanded PPF they are able to simultaneously produce those goods in which they have comparative advantage and consume those that they are relatively disadvantaged in their production at increased levels for less. Added to this is the fact that commodities in which the country is relatively disadvantaged become available at a relatively cheaper international going price compared to the price that would otherwise obtain under an autarkic environment. Revenue earned from the export of the commodity in which the country is relatively less disadvantaged then become available for the import of those goods in which the country is relatively disadvantaged. Figure 2, demonstrates how this model works.

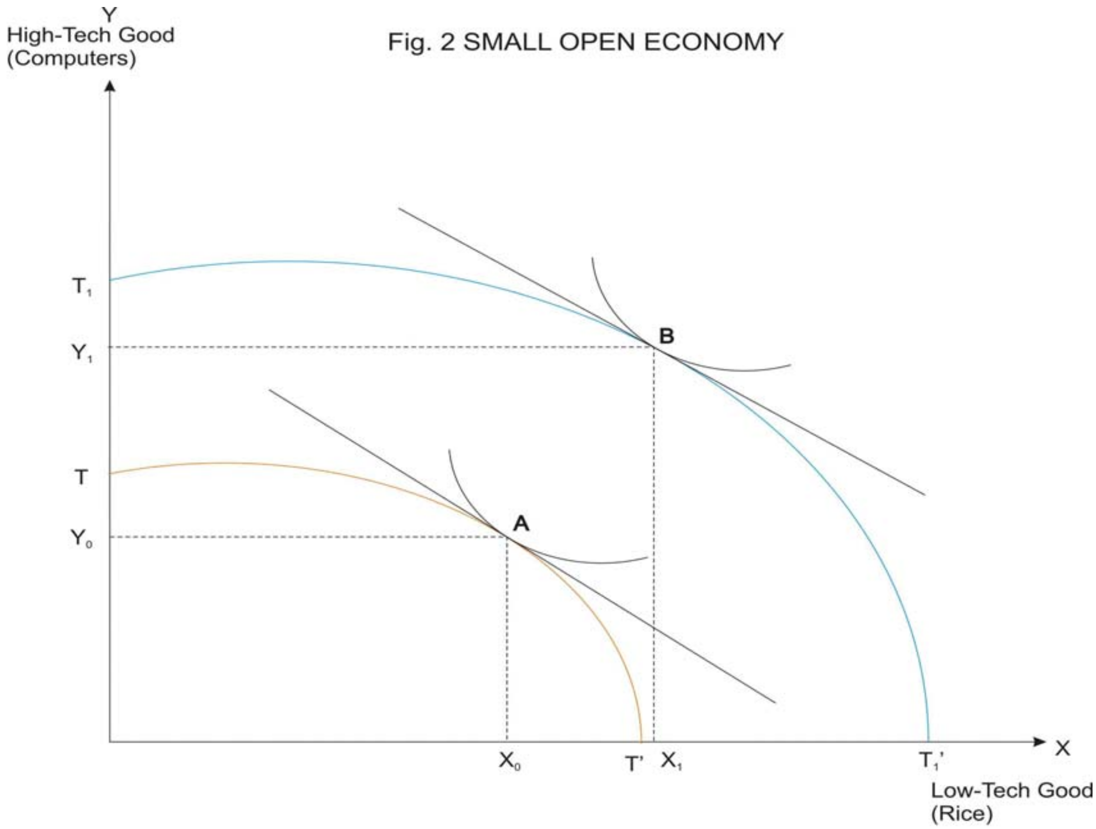
The Heckscher-Ohlin model developed by two economists Eli Heckscher and Bertil Ohlin, basically elaborates on the logic of the Ricardian model, thus no extensive analysis of it is necessary here (see Krugman and Obstfeld; 1994 for an elaborate discussion of this model). Suffice to point out that in this model there are two factors of production, labour and capital, unlike in the simple Ricardian model where labour is assumed to be the only production factor. The Heckscher-Ohlin model enhances our understanding of the theory of comparative advantage by making the point that increase in production at the margin or the expansion of the PPF that results from the maximisation of comparative advantage is not open ended. Constant increase in one production factor reaches a point of non-increasing returns to scale.[22]

Albeit the differences between the two models they both lead to the same understanding of international trade and the implications thereof. Viewed from this light as a way to expand the production possibility frontier of each participating country, trade (liberalisation) becomes ‘an alternative production activity, where quantities of some commodities (exports) are transformed into quantities of other commodities (imports)’ (Ray; 1998: 647). Potential gains from trade at this stage appear obvious enough.

In order to appreciate what implications this theory hence trade liberation has for African economies, which for their hard currency earnings are dependent on primary commodities, we should first ponder over the following observation by Shivji;

[22] Unlike in the Ricardian model where trade expands the production possibility frontier, in the Heckscher-Ohlin model countries experience a difficulty in expanding their productivity by transforming one good to another at the margin. The bowled line in Fig. 2 that represents the point at which it becomes impossible to increase production, called the isoqaunt, irrespective of additional production inputs being made available. This happens basically for two reasons as Ray explains; ‘firstly, if each production function exhibits non- increasing returns to scale, then additional equal doses of capital and labour cannot lead to increasing output at the margin. Second, the ratio of capital and labour released by reduced production of one of the goods becomes inappropriate for the production of the other good’. (1998: 633, footnote No. 7). In other words labour released from the (agriculture) the production of rice may be inappropriate for the (industrial sector) production of cars. (1998: 633, footnote No. 7).

Fig. 2 SMALL OPEN ECONOMY



T-T'= Production Possibility Frontier before Trade
T_1 - T_1'= Expanded Production Possibility Frontier after Trade
A-B= Gains from Trade
X= Comparative Advatage for Country 1

> Nature did not create a group of people with capital on one side and another group with only muscle-power but no capital on the other. Political economists tell us that this great division of the human race, what we call the system of capitalism, is the result of a long historical process. In this historical process, the original capital was acquired through a gruesome process of plunder, looting,…colonialism and imperialism (Shivji, 2005: 37).

Shivji's observation (2005) alerts us to the historicity of Africa's dependence on primary goods. This history as we have shown above extends to the era of early modernity. It was in this and succeeding era of capitalist modernity that while Africa was imputed with a comparative advantage in the production or harvesting of primary goods the West was on the other hand acquiring its industrial capabilities. To demonstrate the point we highlight below a few ways in which the comparative advantage supported policy of trade liberalisation perpetuates dependent capitalism in Africa.

To begin with Shivji (2005) is correct to argue that the international economic system does not mirror a natural state of affairs where factor endowment is naturally determined. What remains to add is that contrary to the claim made by defenders of comparative advantage it is the international division of labour that determines comparative advantage. Mature industrial economies of the West have not existed since the ‘beginning of time’. On the contrary they emerged out of deliberate state policies including the expropriation of surplus value from African beginning from the era of early modernity through capitalist modernity to the current era of global capitalism. Through these different periods the justification for the exploitations of Africa remained the same - bringing modernity to the continent.

History does not have single example of an economy that from the outset aims at penetrating the international market before it has developed to competitive levels. Indeed mature capitalist economies of the west were for a long time insulated form the vagaries of external competition through various protectionist measures. Curiously the same western countries now through arm twisting compel African countries to liberalise, essentially opening up their infant industries for competition with mature western industries.

Industrialisation in the west involved implementing government policies ostensibly designed to protect and nurture infant industries before exposing them to competition. On the other hand Africa countries desirous of diversifying their economies implemented the short lived import substitution industrialisation strategy. However through the instrumentalisation of multi-lateral and other institutions of hyper-modernity western countries compelled African governments to prematurely open up these infant industries to western competition. The result has been de-industrialisation. Expectedly not only did Africa’s total factor productivity (TPF) fall significantly but Africa’s share of world trade fell from more than 3 percent in the 1950s to less than 2 percent in the mid-1990s. What this underscores is a subtle but significant fact that the order of entry matters, a fact Ray does well to note;

> “…there is a twist in the story that wasn’t present a century ago. Then, the now developed countries grew in an environment uninhibited by nations of far greater economic strength. Today the story is completely different. The developing nations not only need to grow, they must grow at rates that far exceed historical experience. The developed world already exists, and their access to economic resources is not only far higher than that of the developing countries, but the power afforded by this access is on display” (1998: 50-51).

The extraverted development that the theory of comparative advantage propagates betrays its most severe consequences for Africa when assessed against the general well-being of the masses. In its organisation the export sector in Africa is western dominated without any backward linkage with the rest of the economy. It integrates a minority constituted by the comprador bourgeoisie into the international economic system through a phenomenal wage gap. By ensuring increasing wages for this class it equally creates a market for western luxury goods that remain an exclusive preserve of this class. With consumption patterns of this class geared towards western luxury goods and the economy generally oriented towards satisfying external demand there results a disarticulation between what is produced and what is consumed in Africa.

Yet again this leads to a skewed allocation of resources in favour of the export sector to the detriment of the production of mass consumer goods. For the rest of the population that depends on the neglected sectors of the economy for survival their meagre wages cannot be expected to trigger aggregate demand for mass consumer goods, which otherwise would have provided the much needed impetus for further investment in those sectors of the economy that provide for the basic needs of the population. If regard is had to the above it becomes fairly easy to understand why underdeveloped African countries - that export cheap primary and import expensive manufactured goods - are bedevilled by worsening terms of trade or current account deficits.

The already precarious situation that Africa finds itself in economically is not much helped by the hypocrisy of the West that while encouraging these countries to adopt trade liberalisation – the eradication of tariffs, quotas and other protective measures meant to protect infant industries – is increasingly becoming protectionist. While we do not share the misplaced optimism in much of the analyses about the possible gains that will accrue to Africa if it liberalises its trade regimes, the fact that tariffs on imports between developed countries average only 1% while tariffs on agricultural products from developing countries have been as high as 20% is worth noting (Sundaram, 2005: 8). Considering the double bind that agricultural product have on African economies, viz., agricultural products are Africa's second export earners behind mineral resources on the other hand most African countries import more than 50% of their food needs, it follows logically that they will suffer a double jeopardy as result of trade liberalisation.[23]

The negative consequences that exclusive dependence on primary products portends are not limited to what the Engel's law supported by the Prebisch-Singer hypothesis - that as incomes grow the fraction of income that is allocated to primary goods, food particularly exhibits a tendency to fall - teaches. Worth underscoring in this regard is the fact that the theory of comparative advantage effectively legitimises Africa's under-development in its logic that African countries should focus exclusively on the production of those goods in which they are relatively advantaged. Simply put the theory is static – it wants to maintain the *status quo sine die*. Deducing from the World

[23] Going by the Prebisch-Singer hypothesis it is not clear how Africa stands to gain from agricultural trade liberalization moreso that intra-African trade and the continents' exports to other non western countries where it is likely to enjoy fair trade terms accounts for only 20% of its total exports while those going to the west account for a whopping 80%. More disconcerting is the failure in much of the analysis to realize that to trade is not an a priori attribute of every economy it is dependent on the capabilities and availability of the required infra-structural and other resources. In his analysis of the same phenomenon Sundaram dissuades us form embracing the pretentious views of those who peddle agricultural trade liberalization as being potentially gainful for African economies. He writes 'contrary to current popular wisdom, it is not clear how much Africa would gain from agricultural trade liberalization. After all, many food importing African countries would be worse off without subsidized food imports while very few economies are likely to be an a position to significantly increase their exports. African agricultural production and export capabilities have been undermined by the last three decades of economic contraction and neglect. Severe cuts in public spending under structural adjustment caused significant deterioration of infrastructure and undermined potential supply side response' (2005: 10). In his list of those likely to gain from such trade liberalization Africa is conspicuously absent. On the basis of available evidence he posits that ,'the main winners from agricultural trade liberalization will be the existing big agricultural exporters of the Cairns group from North America, Australasia, South East Asia and the Southern Cone of Latin America' (2005: 16-17).

Bank report's claim that the reason for Africa's declining exports reflects 'the erosion of the trade share for traditional products' as well as the failure to diversify into '*manufactured* products for which world demand was growing more rapidly', it is fairly probable to conclude that abiding by the static theory of comparative advantage means that in the next three decades African exports will account for less than 0.5% of world exports (2000: 20, italics mine). By then a new term other than negative terms of trade will be necessary to aptly describe the situation countries on the continent will find themselves steeped in.

To counter declining terms of trade occasioned by falling prices of primary commodities market fundamentalist counsel African countries to increase their output. By arguing in this short sighted manner defenders of orthodoxy implicitly suggest that revenue generated from the export of primary commodities in the short and medium run at the expense of long term growth and future generations is justified if the market forces vote in its favour. To conclude for underdeveloped African countries that export primary and import manufactured goods the implications are clear enough. Trade liberalisation implemented in tandem with macro-economic reforms simply means that any deliberate government policy to promote industrialisation or development of value adding industries is distortionary and unacceptable while the take over of African industries by western multi-national companies in the name of privatisation is economically rational and development enhancing. I leave it to the good sense of the reader to conclude what kind of development, will such policies, foster. My inclination is to say that it is de-development.

Although my main objective here has been to tease out continuities between the current neo-liberal development discourse and the larger Enlightenment project I have found it necessary to critique the three policy pillars of this discourse. By so doing I am not insinuating that western modernity can be made progressive or non-polarising. Rather the aim is to highlight ways in which our reality as Africans has and is in this present era of late modernity produced by this discourse and process of western modernity. I am equivocally against any thinking suggesting that our condition and reality can be made better through this discourse. On the contrary is my considered view that in order to transcend the impasse of modernity we have to move beyond its margins and constructs our own discourse of modernity just as 15^{th} century Europe found it necessary to do so in order to escape its reality. We also in Africa might have to call to reason in order to escape our own present, unhindered by the burden of dogma. In the following section, I shall offer a few preliminary remarks on how as we edge closer towards the end of the first decade in the twenty first century might aided by reason escape from our current historically constituted reality.

Beyond Western Modernity

In this section, I shall attempt to address the question; how can as we move further into the twenty first century transcend the impasse of modernity? In my view two perspectives offer themselves through which we can possibly begin to understand and therefore transcend the current impasse of modernity. One offered by Habermas (1980, 1987), the other by Kant (1784). Let us in turn examine each of these and ascertain their efficacy in helping us transcend the impasse of modernity in Africa. Habermas' lifelong academic project has been to defend modernity from its detractors and counter-discourses, a project he shares with Anthony Giddens (1990).

Two arguments entered in Habermas's (1980, 1987) spirited defence of modernity are pertinent to the task at hand. Alongside Giddens (1990) Habermas argues in response to the French post-structuralists that modernity cannot be said to have an end. Both of them aver that modernity should be understood as an incomplete project, still unfolding and thus amenable to further elaboration and improvisation. It continues to evolve and unfold thanks to the contradictions\tensions within the idea itself. Those who discountenance modernity thinking that it has finally met its dead end and therefore argue that we are now in a post-modern era, according to Habermas, 'suppress that almost 200-year-old counterdiscourse inherent in modernity itself' (1987: 302). Similarly Giddens (1990) argues that the recent development witnessed in the closing years of the twentieth century do not as post-modernists are inclined to argue, signal the coming of a post-modern era. According to him 'referring to these as post-modernity is a mistake which hampers an accurate understanding of their nature and implication'. He continues to argue that; '[T]he disjunctions which have taken place should rather be seen as resulting from the self clarification of modern thought'. He then concludes that '[W]e have not yet moved beyond modernity but are living precisely through a phase of its radicalisation' (1990:51). Precisely because the consequences of modernity are becoming more radicalised Giddens christens our era as that of radical modernity.

The lesson both Habermas and Giddens seeks to impart here, is that any discourse fashioned within the boundaries of modernity as a critique or otherwise contributes to its further development, wittingly or unwittingly, the anti-modernist\post-modernist project being a case in point. Its declared objective of deconstructing modernity notwithstanding, it contributes to its renewal and progress. Habermas emphatically states that the post-modern project and several other criticisms of modernity cannot be said to lead to its demise. Conversely, in a typically Khunian structure of a scientific revolution, they contribute to the tensions and contestations within the larger idea and could thus be said to constitute the motive forces propelling it through different paradigmatic moments. He sums the overall effect of their project by declaring that, '[N]o longer can it be a matter of completing the project of modernity; it has to be a matter of revising it' (1987: 303).

The second argument advanced by Habermas (1987) is equally telling even though we need not be persuaded about its veracity. According to him, there has not in history evolved a known alternative order of knowledge that can be correctly said to lie beyond the bounds of modernity. Simply put modernity is the only universal civilisation or modernity remains the only valid and legitimate universal discourse. Even post-structuralists who thought they had set themselves free from the epistemological strictures of enlightenment discourse, he avers, remain in sync in their post-modernist thinking with what he calls the 'normative content of modernity' (Habermas, 1987). He bases his assertion on fact that this counter-discourse has failed to completely repudiate or in his words ‘unsettle the institutionalised *modern* standards of fallibilism’ (1987: 337). That the terms of their discourse and of the debate generally; its premises, norms of acceptability, institutional and epistemological contours are not at variance with the dictates of the theory of modernity is self evident, he submits. He then makes bold to state that either implicitly or explicitly they contribute to further enlightening enlightenment thought, or further modernising modernity. The crux of Habermas’s argument is simply that modernity is capable of reforming itself first by allowing, limiting then appropriating and internalising criticisms. Beyond internalising them it articulates them as internal or self-criticisms. This gives to modernity the well sought after virtue of self-correction.

Although its limitations are glaringly obvious, i.e. imploring us to indulge western modernity and negate our own history, Habermas’s perspective remains useful for several reasons. Primarily, it alerts us to the pitfalls of conducting our development discourse in Africa within the larger confines of modernity or enlightenment thought. By so doing we shall be and actually have been implicitly contributing to its evolution through different stages of firmament thereby approving its claimed universal status. Reading the history of development discourse in Africa one observes that beginning from the 50’s when development was first conceptualised as ‘growth and modernisation’ through the 80’s when development meant ‘getting the prices right’ (SAP) down to the early parts of the twenty first century, where development is now understood as ‘growth with poverty reduction’ (remember the now famous PRSPs) it has been propelled from within by discourses and counter discourses many of the latter coming from the continent and the non-west generally. They include the demand for a New International Economic Order, radical political economy leaning development perspectives, the UNICEF Adjustment with a Human Face, and more recently the Brundtland Commission (1987) championed notion of Sustainable Development and demand by countries of the South fairer terms of trade.

What does history teach us with regard to the adequacy of alternative development discourses fashioned at the margins of modernity? Available evidence confirms Habermas’ proposition that help enrich the repertoire of modernity. Here one needs only to think of the several critical World Bank reviews of SAP and the sustainable development counter-arguments, which are now presented as internal self-criticisms of modern capitalism. The challenge for African development discourse therefore is to step out of modernity, reclaim and assert the autonomy of African initiative and thought. The long monologue of modernity conversing with itself through African voices needs to be challenged by decentring western modernity. Barking at the hallow tree of western modernity with a hope of radicalising it or transcending its alienating social and economic relations negates the fact that ‘[M]odernity can and will no longer borrow the criteria by which it takes its orientation from the models supplied by another epoch. It has to create its normativity out of itself’. This is because according to Habermas it ‘sees itself cast back upon itself without *any possibility of escape*’ (Habermas; 1987: 7).

Our analysis has revealed that modernity in part refers as it were to the capitalist mode of production. Any hope to make modernity progressive erroneously assumes that capitalism can be transformed, made progressive and non-polarising. To further problematise the challenge of making modernity progressive, I suggest that it is more appropriate to think of capitalism (modernity) as existing in its complete form only in the west and to characterise what obtains in Africa as dependent (modernity) capitalism (Amin; 1980). Evidence abounds that the two constitute two sides of the same coin - further development of western capitalism ineluctably leads to the deepening of under-development and elaboration of dependent capitalism in Africa. In effect transforming western modernity means enhancing its capability to exploit or extract surplus value from African economies, the consequences of which are well known.

If so, what Habermas is celebrating are the qualities of autonomous\complete capitalism, its capability to refuse entry and recognition, to alternative models not premised on its fundamental principle of surplus and exchange value. My view therefore is that African development discourse should first excise itself of the ghost of enlightenment\modernity if it has any hope of transcending the impasse of modernity it is now steeped in. Doing so entails questioning the received paradigm of western modernity in its different forms, either as bourgeois economic theory and analysis or Marxism.

In November 1784, Kant was invited by a German periodical Berlinische Monatschrift to respond to the question; ‘What is Enlightenment’. It is to his views, which though recorded two centuries ago remain useful for us in Africa today as we seek to transcend the impasse of modernity that we now turn. So far we have spoken of modernity as an historical epoch marked by a set of empirical features and briefly of it as an idea or discourse. The novelty in Kant’s response is that it leads us to a different understanding of modernity, neither as an historical epoch nor a set of empirical features. He defines Enlightenment as man’s emergence from his self-incurred immaturity, immaturity defined as inability to use one’s own understanding without the guidance of another. Immaturity according to him is self-incurred if its cause is not lack of self understanding but lack of resolution and courage to use it without the guidance of another. Since man is responsible for his\her immature condition only through his\her own efforts will escape that condition (Kant, 1996: 51).

Thus one remains immature or un-Enlightened if he\she refuses to use his own reason but perpetually subjects himself\herself to the authority of others. To be enlightened therefore means to assume full responsibility for ones actions, use reason to understand your own world, and refuse other’s tutelage. Thus Kant summarises Enlightenment with the following dictum; *Sapere Aude*, meaning ‘Think for yourself’. Failure to do so leads one to remain under the guardianship of others. The consequences of such failure are well stated by Kant (1996);

> “[T]he guardians who have kindly taken upon themselves the work of supervision will soon see to it that by far the largest part of mankind should consider the step forward to maturity not only as difficult but also as highly dangerous. Having first infatuated their domesticated animals, and carefully prevented the docile creatures from daring to take a single step without the leading strings to which they are tied, they next show them the danger which threatens them if they try to walk unaided. Now this danger is not in fact so very great, for they would certainly learn to walk eventually after a few falls. But an example of this kind is intimidating, and usually frightens them off from further attempt” (1996: 52).

This is perhaps truer of our situation in Africa than most other part of the world where we have for long remained under western tutelage. Through its modernist discourse the West first constructed us as immature pre-moderns, charted our future for us, evacuated us from our reality into floating objects incapable of autonomous thought, and appointed itself our guardians responsible for seeing us through 'universal' stages of history. Mercantile imperialism, slavery, colonialism, neo-colonialism and the current neo-liberal hegemony the West exercise over the continent are all processes through which it has held us captive to its guardianship. At no point does it miss the opportunity to warn us about the dangers of attempting to break free from the yoke of modernity, and walk unaided. Don't we all the time hear the refrain there is no alternative to the neo-liberal democratic system? Dogmas and formulas whether Marxian or bourgeois are the ball and chain though which Africa's autonomy of thought is immobilised and thus Africa kept in the condition of permanent immaturity. Following Kant advice, it is time we reclaim our autonomy of thought and seek to understand our own reality without the authority of others. Only then shall free ourselves from immaturity and become enlightened.

Commenting on Kant's essay Michel Foucault (1994) impels us to think of modernity not only as an epoch or set of features characteristic of an epoch but as an attitude, a way of relating to the present or contemporary reality. This present is not to be celebrated but critiqued, problematised and imagined in ways other than it is. If we then see modernity as an attitude that problematises man's relation to the present we shall, I think be able to move beyond the margins of received doctrines and restore to Africa the autonomy of thought that modernist discoursed for long has denied the continent. We shall yet again free ourselves from what Foucault calls the intellectual 'blackmail of Enlightenment'. Hitherto we have had to proclaim our position in relation to modernity whether we are for or against it. However once we see modernity as an attitude towards the present it becomes futile to say whether we are for or against modernity. Anticipating this dilemma Kant argued that '[I]f it is now asked whether we at present live in an *enlightened* age, the answer is: No, but we do live in an age of *enlightenment'* (1996: 55). What this means is that we no longer have to choose whether we are for or against the Enlightenment because Enlightenment is a process that involves a critical interrogation of the present reality. I think Kant's theorisation of modernity offers a vantage point through which we can begin to re-examine our relationship with the present. It is of course a present that is historically constituted in part by western modernity.

Contrary to Habermas's (1980, 1987) portrayal of modernity as invincible, Kant's frame of analysis strips modernity of its Habermasean invincibility. Hard as our western modern guardians tried to hold us subject to their authority under colonialism we summoned courage and resolved not remain immature. We may need, fifty years after, to once more resolve yet again to critically engage with our present. Modernist discourse has stretched its imaginative power beyond reach, it can no longer immobilise African thought and initiative. Enough is known and enough has been documented about the history of the continent and the malaise wrought by western modernity. To suggest that there has emerged a much felt need for an alternative to western modernity will not amount to being too liberal with probability. In all spheres of life western modernity is being challenged; African intellectuals are no inclined to defer to western produced knowledge on and about Africa - as such they have resolved to labour unguided towards an African centred epistemic order.

Similarly in the political plane evidence suggest that there is a hiatus between what neo-liberalism can and hopes to achieve, i.e. economic growth that exist only in national statistics but does not touch the lives of the citizens in any significant way, and what the social and political developments in the continent implicitly suggest to be the challenge first for development and development discourse. For evidence we need not look farther than the recent developments in the oil rich Niger-delta region of Nigeria, which suggest that people are no longer ready to accept palliative measured that do not amount to a complete extirpation of the western pillaging of African resources, the wave of popular protests against neo-liberalism in South Africa since 1996, the widespread denunciation of western modernity expressed in various contestations of modern social organisation, moral decadence and alienation induced by modern political and economic processes. With the hegemony of western modernity loosened from its moorings, an opportunity may have finally availed itself for an African development discourse that lies beyond its bounds. The challenge is to cease the opportunity that the fluidity of the situation offers to create a condition whereby society and the state may be conformed in a larger sense to certain formative national-historical tasks in accordance with the development imperative in Africa.

In Conclusion

In the African mind western modernity conjures up three unfortunate centuries of imperial subjugation, slave rape, colonial domination, neo-colonial form of exploitation and the current global imperialism. In the name of modernity we were colonised, robbed of our freedom because were not enlightened. For us to be enlightened we had to be subjected to slavery, our economies mal-formed only then could we be free and enlightened. Because all this happened and we are now enlightened. Thankfully it is the same western modernity that also taught us to value freedom, to resist the idea that we cannot be free and modern without the west, that to be modern we have to be under-developed and super-exploited. Africans who risked their bones against slavery in those Frontier Wars of the Cape, popular forces that fought gallantly to free the continent from colonialism, the under-employed, unemployed urban masses and peasants who braved the guns of SAP implementing military and decadent one-party regimes in Nigeria, Algeria, Zambia, etc. and the various forces that today contest the neo-liberal development paradigm in South Africa are all products of modernity. They have as Kant challenged us dared to think for themselves. Hard as western modernity tried to teach them that their under-development was\is for their own good they are now teaching modernity that they have the will to construct their own modernity different from that of the West.

Since we were formed of western modernity that taught us to value freedom and development but denied us the same freedom and development we cannot be ambivalent in our attitude to western modernity. In conclusion, I following that Indian savant Partha Chatterjee (1997) argue that if for the west modernity meant escaping from the past for us constructing our own modernity will mean escaping from the present – the present epitomised by enlightenment perpetuating bourgeois economic theory and analysis, global capitalism and all that it stands for. A caveat to add is that such a struggle to escape from the present and construct our own modernity can no longer be a bourgeoisie led one just as national liberation struggles were. The reason being that the bourgeoisie' progressive credentials expired with at the point of independence. From then on it becomes an ally of the west – it adopted western modernity as its own modernity.

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