

**NEPAD AND THE TASK OF RE-HUMANIZING THE AFRICAN: A
PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY INTO AFRICA'S LATEST DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAMME**

By

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Abstract

NEPAD (i.e., the New Partnership for Africa's Development) is an overly ambitious continental development programme, purportedly committed to advance the standard of living of Africans, majority of whom live below the poverty line of less than two dollars a day – an indication that many Africans live dehumanized. Presumably, latent in NEPAD is the quest to re-humanize Africans. To do this, NEPAD endorses and without amelioration applies the neoliberal economic model of development, an offshoot of the traditionalist development orientation. This way, from its onset NEPAD fails to address the fundamental causative factors of Africa's underdevelopment by ignoring the philosophies of dehumanization and (neo-) capitalist imperialism underlying neo-liberalism. The aim of this paper is to reflect on the policy thrusts of NEPAD with a view to highlighting the inner contradictions that obstruct its re-humanization agenda. The major question this paper addresses is, how can the western economic model, with the intrinsic design to conquer and dehumanize the African person, be employed for his re-humanization? In other words, does the philosophy of NEPAD contain internal contradictions capable of thwarting its set goals? This paper holds that the western traditionalist development orientation, otherwise conceived as the linear development paradigm is the root of Africa's under-development. Specifically, the western paradigm of [neo-] capitalist imperialism, which has been the key instrument for the actualization and perpetuation of Africa's defeat, cannot be the solution to Africa's re-growth. Re-humanization of the African, therefore, requires breaking away from all forms of imperialistic economic theories or models. The research methodology is expository, analysing data derived from primary and secondary sources.

Keywords: development, re-humanization, person, neo-imperialism, Africa.

Introduction

Development is the process of progressing from a low level of growth to another. Etymologically, development can be expressed "expansion by a process of growth" or "growth or differentiation of some entity along lines natural to its kind" (Lansana Keita

132). Here, one understands differentiation as transformation and when growth or transformation is applied to biological processes, stages of growth become noticeable. For Keita, the noticeable stages of growth tantamount to development or phases of development (Lansana Keita 132). Conceived this way, development is commonly considered as linear or progressive: a sort of movement from earlier, simpler or less advanced stages to later, more elaborate, or ones that are more advanced.

This linear conception of development, it appears, is what is contained in 19th century evolutionism. This evolutionary theory holds that organisms, individuals, races, societies, even thought, or indeed nearly everything, are intrinsically bound to improve themselves, and that changes were progressive, and so on (The Cambridge Encyclopedia 426). This mind-set guided such post-Enlightenment thinkers as Auguste Comte and Immanuel Kant in their argument that human society progresses from less developed stages to more developed ones. Similarly, this mode of thinking finds vent in Karl Marx's thesis that a mature capitalism transforms over time to socialism, which itself upon attainment of further advancement transforms to communism. Besides, this thesis of Marx betrays his quasi-Darwinian conception that "human history was naturally evolutionary progressing from less developed stages to those that were more developed" (Lansana Keita 132).

Noteworthy, however, Marx's quasi-Darwinian conception of history is not original to him, but borrowed from Hegel who is acknowledged to have initiated the idea that development is intrinsically linked with human history (Bruno Ikuli 13). When Hegel developed the idea, he however, denied Africa a place in the history of development. His basic argument is that Africa had not entered the trajectory of human history and so, has no presence in the development map of the world.

Hegel made his argument in the 19th century. Two centuries afterwards, the majority of Africans live below the poverty line of two dollars a day. Besides, in this 21st century, people elsewhere in the world have gone astronomical with developmental achievements and show no limit in their capacity to achieve extraordinary feats; neither do they show signs of slowing down on this course. On the contrary, Africa for too long bears the burden, and struggles with the fact, of development drought. This, indeed, is worrisome and calls to question what might be happening to the continent? Several different reasons have been conjured and projected as explanation for Africa's plight.

Exogenous causes such as colonialism, neo-imperialism, imbalance in global trade, etc. or endogenous factors such as corruption, poor governance, civil wars, ethnic crises, and so on and so forth have been blamed as root of Africa's development predicament. However, when Hegel wrote off Africa from his development map, he attributed the problem to lack of reason in Africans. The question is, do Africans truly lack intelligence? Is that why the continent is trailing far behind others? Evidence in this paper suggests otherwise; much as several African scholars have dismissed Hegel's claim.

Meanwhile, since mere theoretical discourses do not translate to development, African Heads of States in wanting to bring about tangible development have united to raise hope that Africa too can develop. Africans thus, seem to have woken up from their slumber with the realization that Africa's development paralysis is worsening at a time when other parts of the world are really making rapid and tremendous progress. This is not the first time African leaders would have to wake up to the continent's challenges. Historically, however, this reawakening started with a handful of African leaders, who in 2000 A.D. attended the G8 Summit in Okinawa, Japan. To catch up with the progress being made in other climes, or, at least, to close the gap, these leaders returned home with "an initiative", which evolved into an apparently overambitious development programme called The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

NEPAD is presently Africa's latest development programme. It is manifestation of the resolve of virtually all African heads of states to take the driver's seat to propel Africa and its people out of poverty and into competitiveness with continents and peoples elsewhere. By implication, African leaders have come to the consciousness of the development backwardness of Africa and its people. In addition, they have come to the awareness of the vital role they and their governments need to perform in order to move their land and people away from the dehumanized, sub-humanized or, even, animalized conditions of underdevelopment to re-humanized ones of proper development. Of course, it is a truism that if Africa has to develop, African heads of states have primary responsibility. Therefore, the effort of African leaders at putting NEPAD together is commendable.

Nevertheless, there are several pertinent questions one needs to ask, a few of which are required here. For instance, what is the philosophy of NEPAD? Now, presuming that NEPAD has one; does that philosophy contain internal contradictions with potential to jeopardize and ruin its entire ambition? Does NEPAD truly have what it takes to make Africa overcome its development backwardness? What is NEPAD's sense of the African person? Has NEPAD investigated the root cause of the dehumanized conditions of the African person? How does NEPAD intend to achieve the re-humanization of the African person?

This paper observes that the originators of NEPAD appear not to have given thought to most, at least, some of the questions just asked above. In addition, it notes that although latent in NEPAD is the desire to re-humanize Africans, NEPAD missteps by endorsing the western linear conception of development when it adopts and applies in its entirety western formulated and approved economic doctrines, mechanisms and approaches in its attempt to attain 'sustainable development'. The paper notes that the NEPAD framework does not address the two most fundamental causes of Africa's development paralysis; namely, (1) Western philosophies of dehumanization and (2) their (neo-) capitalist cum (neo-) liberalist imperialism. Rather, it aids and abets them or advances/furtheres their course when it holistically adopts its economic model.

The central question this paper seeks to address is, how can the western economic model, with the intrinsic design to make Africa vulnerable, be also employed for its re-humanization? The position of this paper is that Africa's development paralysis of which a grave consequence is the dehumanized state of existence of most African persons has root in the western linear development paradigm, which rides on the western [neo-] capitalist cum [neo-] liberal imperialist economic model. Continuation, therefore, with the same western economic model is not the solution for Africa's regrowth and cannot be its panacea. This paper, however, does not propose solution to Africa's development challenge: it simply draws attention to the root of the problem.

To realize its major objective, this paper is divided into three sections. In section one, the paper gives insight into the Re-humanization of the African person in the traditional African culture, section two deals with the policy thrusts of NEPAD and the task of Re-humanization. In section three, the paper does a philosophical inquiry into the issues. This section also embodies the conclusion.

Re-Humanization of the African: A Theoretical Framework

The term "re-humanization", which is, "to make human again", is a phase or tier of development of the human being. In this context, it is restricted to a phase in the development of the African person. It follows "humanization" and "de-humanization", which, respectively, mean "to make human" and "to unmake as human" phases – that is, the construction and deconstruction stages of development of the African person. In other words, re-humanization is the third or reconstruction stage of the dialectical movement in the development of the African person. Before it, the African person has had to go through the stage of humanization (a stage when he was human or was "made human") followed by de-humanization stage orchestrated by political and economic declivities that denied him of "humanity" or "un-made him as human". This de-humanization stage is Africa's current reality: on it, the living African stands as he waits for restoration of his humanity. What follows next is a modest exposition of the foregoing preview.

The humanization stage in Africa's development

The "humanization" or say "humanized" stage of Africa or, of the African, is the period of self-governance. This stage of development saw Africans organize themselves into communities, wherefrom they derived social security, complementarity in the provisions of their daily meals and necessities of life. Beyond these most basic things of life, the society ordered institutions such as marriage and procreation, education of the young, labour, trade, and governance, in ways that allowed harmony and humaneness. This account does not suggest that the ordered way of life of Africans at the time qualified their communities to be described as paradise. Far from it, African communities lacked both the scientific and technological advancement available today that make some places

Eldorado. However, despite noticeable weaknesses, ample 'sense of consideration for the other person' and 'collaboration with them' flourished in African communities. Such allowed for simultaneous growth for both the individual and community. Inclusivity was norm. It fostered self-actualization and self-fulfillment for individuals within the social milieu and a shared 'sense of personhood' amongst neighbours. The high point of this period is the prevalence of a general sense of contentment within communities.

It was a stage, which saw the African live within a community with an assuredness of not being alone. His aspirations were to find meaning in life by identifying with the norms and ethos of the community. Life and living made sense, where existence meant not just strong ties with one's immediate and extended families, but with neighbour as per other families, one's community and the clan. Community, clan and kingdom provided a sense of belonging and the essence or worth of life in varying ways and extent. Life's values gained expressions in the ethos of the community and the ethos of the community gained life from the collective contributions of members of the community. The African at this stage lived for the community and the community for the individual or person. This, it may be contended was a 'golden period' in the development of the African.

That was a stage of development where existence and consciousness transcended narrow, myopic and destructive "selfish-self" or egotism to attain an expanded, broad, visionary and constructive "self-interestedness" or altruism that gives thought to the feelings and interests of "others" and so makes space for them. This level of development is morality-oriented and value or moral-laden. For Kwasi Wiredu, it transcends the level of "prudence or enlightened self-interest" to take note of human sympathy as key factor in the effort to harmonize individual interests with communal interests (Olusegun Oladipo 119). The humanization phase is a level of development of shared affection amongst persons in their communities or societies. In the words of Kwasi Wiredu:

A communalist society is one in which an individual is brought up to cultivate an intimate sense of obligation and belonging to quite large groups of people based on kinship affiliations. This inculcation of an extensive sense of human bonds provides a natural school for the enlargement of sympathies, which stretches out beyond the limits of kinship to the wider community (21).

In a communalist society, fairness as the principle of social cooperation is imperative. It goes thus: "In all inter-personal situations put yourself in the skin of the other and see if you can contemplate the consequences of your proposal with equanimity" (Wiredu cited by Olusegun Oladipo 119). For Oladipo, the definitive characteristic of African "traditional communalistic ethos" is reciprocity (119). Briefly, the humanization stage of Africa's development, communalism recognized the individual as a person and treated

the individual as one; while simultaneously guaranteeing that the interest of the group or other persons – that is, the community – was carried along. Development here is, therefore, of mutual gain to all parties or of collective benefits to all.

One may criticize the foregoing with the claim that a fair sense of cooperation and reciprocity alone does not define development in society talk less of acquiring the description as “golden age”. One may further ask, were African communities better than ‘communities of pigs’? It seems ridiculous that Africa’s humanization stage gains so much admiration and eulogy for its mere egalitarian character and mutual sharing of stocks, which was the practice for the bare sustenance of plebeian lifestyle. In the *Republic*, Plato exposes Glaucon’s disdain for such category of civilization. Specifically, Glaucon ranks such as a “city of pigs” despite the application of the principle of economic specialization to production of goods and services, which makes enough food, shelter and clothing available to all to live healthily and enjoy some relaxation and the company of their fellows, (Purshouse38). In Glaucon’s thinking, a human settlement, which activities barely transcend production and satisfaction of the basic necessities of life is merely “a city of pigs”. Thus, for him, the community or city must aspire to lofty heights and allow for luxuries, hierarchical social organization and vast space for meritocracy before one can accept such as a republic, civilized or developed community or city.

Remarkably, the expressions and attitude of early European writers about African peoples and cultures are not significantly different from Glaucon’s view. The question, did African communities look anything like “cities of pigs” to the early European arrivals. Could that be the reason why early European writers denied Africa of civilization and described her civilization as primitive? African communities were, certainly, not cities of pigs. According to Walter Rodney, both Europe and Africa were developed, but there was “a slight edge in Europe’s favours – an edge representing the difference between a fledgling capitalist society and one that was still emerging from communalism” (82). Indeed, African communities revealed such levels of sophistication to them as evidenced in the administrative structures and systems of some of their kingdoms and empires. This caught the envy of European explorers with the result that Europeans connived to sow seeds of discord to weaken and ruin them with the intention of making them less competitive. In some others, they found satisfactory administrative structures on ground for their implementation of indirect rule system. Thus, the Europeans abruptly interrupted the humanized or humanization stage of Africa’s development and the downward spiral of de-humanization kick-started.

The De-humanization Stage in Africa’s Development

As noted above, European infiltration into Africa whittled down African communitarian values and practices to near nothing. The Europeans condemned several traditional practices as ‘primitive’ and proceeded to abolish them. Africa’s traditional community settings, organizational structures, traditions and culture in general were not only

disrupted and distorted, but also made to decay and die with time. The foreigners did not just stop at down grading the African traditional culture and values, within a short time, the African himself became degraded and undervalued.

The degradation of the African person started in large scale and full force in the 15th century with his commoditization, which peaked in the late 18th century. The African and his products stood for sale in the same market. As commodity, the African lost his essence as person and became a thing, an object. His devaluation negated his development. A new phase of degenerate or reverse development unbundles his humanity and confers on him the inferior status of 'animate thing' – that is, an animal. The African soon became a mere beast of burden, classified as sub-human and called 'primitive' (a derivative of primates).

In all of this, he lost his status as a person. This loss is the most brutal, vicious and worst of all forms of attack on his humanity. The loss of personhood holds the explanations for all of his development problems and paralysis. Understanding this fact is crucial: it is in this knowledge that the key for his survival, resurgence and flourishing lie hidden. In other words, the re-humanization of the African revolves around understanding what destroyed 'African personhood' and what is required to revamp the African person.)

Recall that a 'sense of community' and 'fellow feeling' or 'human sympathy' is what underlined the attitude of personhood in Africa, since the African person had to pay attention to the impact of his actions on others and enjoyed reciprocity from them. Western societies have subtly introduced these great qualities in the form of welfare, despite the noticeable defects in those systems. In Africa, these great qualities were intricate part of the definition of the African person such that the idea of a person carried with it strong moral 'character' and 'force'.

However, when Europeans came to Africa for exploration and exploitation, they came along with a distorted conception of person. The conception of person Europeans held when they invaded Africa was devoid of the ontological Christian patrimony bequeathed to Europe or the West, despite the fact that they came accompanied by Christian missionaries. They came with the distorted psychological conception of person introduced by the French thinker, Rene Descartes. This conception of person lacked both the moral character and force contained in the way Africans perceived and treated persons. They treated Africans according to this psychological conception of person and so induced a gradual replacement of the African conception of person, which fostered a 'sense of community', 'fellow feeling' and 'human sympathy' and treated people as 'ends-in-themselves' with theirs, which promoted 'individualism', 'egoism' and 'self-glorification' and (ab)used people as 'means-to-an-end'. Thus, an inferior, weaker and easy version of alien concept of person killed and buried a superior, stronger and a morally difficult-to-practice conception of person. By implication, a strategy in the

dehumanization of the African required a systematic destruction of the traditional conception of person among Africans.

‘Rationality’ or ‘reason’ makes the key difference between a person and an animal. While animals possess sensation, instinct and can know and so, express emotions, they lack rationality. Rationality, which transcends the mere act of knowing, which reaches the height where ‘knowing becomes conscious of itself as a knowing subject’, is the distinctive feature of man. When one adds rationality to “the individual and concrete man, in all his concreteness, uniqueness, and unrepeatability”, such is known as a person. Furthermore, the ontological concept of person conceived as the totality of the individual being, includes: matter, the substantial form (i.e., the soul), the accidental form, and the act of being (*actus essendi*) (Mondin 248).

The Western thinkers jettisoned the above conception of person, a Christian patrimony to the West and to the world in general, and showed preference for the psychological conception of person introduced by Descartes. Descartes’ psychological conception of person strips the human being of ‘autonomy of being’, which the ontological definition recognizes. It replaces the idea of ‘autonomy of being’ with that of ‘self-consciousness’. This is spelt out in Descartes’ “*Cogito, ergo sum!*” which translates as “I think, therefore I am!” The implications include ‘I am a person, because I think’ or, conversely, ‘Because, I cannot or do not think, I am not a person’. This understanding endangers infants that have not attained the age of reason or the mentally impaired. It also excludes those who are slow to learn, as well as those whose level of intellectual awareness or expertise is limited or hindered for different reasons. It further implies that the man without thought, say an imbecile or the comatose, is inferior and no more a person – mildly put, ‘a no-body’. Besides, the intellectually more advantaged and so more competitive may look upon the intellectually disadvantaged and less competitive with scorn and disdain and treat the latter as object, tool or animal.

Following this psychological conception of the person, those with impaired mind or inability to think or who lag behind others in reasonability risk being denied personhood. On the other hand, the man with superior thought is considered a person because he knows that he knows; animals know, but do not know of knowing. Similarly, the man who knows of his knowing is the real person; the one that merely knows is not a person; he is, perhaps, an animal – and maybe, fit for a beast of burden. He is suitable for enslavement. Thus, the psychological conception of person inadvertently endorses the exploitation of the disadvantaged, weak and vulnerable. It promotes intellectualism, but lacks morality. Its morality is arbitrary and unconventional, simply put, predatory on the disadvantaged.

Plato calls those that possess superior knowledge, who do not just hold opinions, but know the forms of things, ‘philosopher-kings’, conventionally known in his times as aristocrats; for Nietzsche, they are the Supermen. Theirs is the right to rule. Theirs is the

responsibility to determine values, assign values and responsibilities, to take charge, to be in control, to dominate, to use and to abuse. They give directives and command. Since they hold themselves as owners of superior knowledge, they believe their decisions and actions as always right or justified. Again, knowledge being power, their alleged being owners of superior knowledge affords them to act out of 'overflow of power'.

Europeans or Western expansionist explorers visited Africa with this mind-set. This mind-set dictated their perception and interpretation of everything African. It determined their relationship with Africans since their earliest encounter. It is responsible for starting and sustaining the hitherto phase of "de-humanization" of the African. As noted above, the de-humanization phase of Africa's development began with enslavement, colonization or imperialism and now neo-colonization or neo-imperialism. Neo-colonization is thus, the phase in which the African is birthed and lives in today. It is the phase in which the current African is estranged from himself. It is a phase of a loss of identity, disconnection with the self and being at war with the self and others. It is a phase of crisis; a state of unsettling and dis-settling; thus, Africa's development crises or paralysis.

As a matter of fact, in the thinking of the colonizer or imperialist, the African, though he owns a house, drives a luxury car, flies around the world, studies in prestigious universities around the world, uses high technological products, etc. is technically not a person in the thinking of the neo-imperialist. The imperialist takes the African as someone living a borrowed life. He does not make or produce those luxuries. The African gets the luxuries he uses in exchange for the wealth from natural resources endowed in his environment. Natural resources are 'produced and owned' by God or Nature. Technology is 'produced and owned' by the westerner. Therefore, what does the African 'produce and own'? He virtually 'produces and owns' nothing. When he works in western factories, the African is perceived as a living machine. Contrary to owning and producing technology, the imperialist views the African in assorted odd ways: a consumerist, himself a 'glorified 'product – i.e., a living commodity, etc. Thus, the westerner sees the African as someone who borrowed his existence from nature and sustained by the ingenuity of the westerner.

Authentic humanity, however, is thought to not mostly depend on the given-ness of the 'Other' or 'others'; but, levitates on autonomy – on what one can and is able to produce or perform by oneself. In this sense, re-humanization is about self-ownership and taking charge – being in control – of the instruments and accoutrement for one's meaningful existence and wellbeing. Hence, the strong yearning and burning desire among Africans to overcome this renegade level of development or de-humanization. The quest to overcome or surpass the present condition is the search for "re-humanization".

The Re-humanization Stage of the African

Re-humanization is the act or process of making human again; of restoring humanity to the stripped or denied; of making individuals to become persons again. Re-humanization of the African, therefore, is the quest to evolve beyond the current stage of living on supposedly borrowed existence or sub-humanity or animalized conditions to becoming fully human with all the dignity of personhood. Re-humanization of the African entails liberating the African from the conditions of being 'objects', 'things' or 'animals' or 'human-herds' to becoming 'persons' again. The African was or used to be a person. Re-humanization of the African is to remake the African a person – in fact, a person who when he sits in conferences around the world with other supposed "persons", participates in world sports, addresses the United Nations or meets with other world leaders, he is no less a person than the other supposed "persons" are persons. In other words, they do not assign him a place and value; he as others takes his place, freely apportions values to persons, places, things and events as he morally, and rationally – not whimsically – finds them fit. He defines himself; he does not depend on the 'other' – the supposed persons from the 'developed world' – for his definition.

Re-humanization does not occur and would not happen with foreign impositions, dictations or directions for such are 'externally initiated, oriented and driven' and they reinforce 'borrowed existence'; only authentically 'internally initiated, oriented and driven' initiatives contain and express the liberty proper of real persons. A common feature in both the ontological and psychological definitions of person is the fact of rationality (i.e., reason, its use, intellectualism, self-consciousness). The quest for re-humanization, therefore, requires the development or maximization of the rational or intellectual capacity of persons via massive and robust educational programmes. Such must deviate from the educational system inherited the colonial masters.

Sadly, development programmes in Africa often fail to provide much content for in-depth education of the populace; instead, greater focus usually goes to trade, foreign direct investment, infrastructure, technology, etc. Thus, the several failed efforts in the past at the re-humanization of Africans through the many development programmes. It is against this backdrop therefore, that this paper subjects NEPAD and its task of re-humanizing the African to a philosophical examination.

NEPAD AND THE TASK OF RE-HUMANIZATION: A PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY

The underdeveloped condition of Africa and its dehumanizing impact on Africans is a problem long noticed and so has remained a lingering subject of discussions, researches and collaborative efforts, especially, by governments across Africa. Consequently, to develop Africa and 'remake the African person' or make the African 'human again' is a

task, confronting successive African governments. That is the Organization of African Unity (OAU) now known as African Union (AU), implemented several continental development programmes in addition to regional ones.

Notable among the OAU implemented continental development programmes are Areas of Cooperation in Economic Problems (1963), Africa's Strategy for Development (1970s), African Declaration on Cooperation, Development and Economic Independence, also known as the Addis Ababa Declaration (1973). Further, "The Revised Framework of Principles for the Implementation of the New International Economic Order in Africa" (1977), the "Monrovia Declaration of Commitment of the Heads of States and Governments of the Organization of African Unity on Guidelines and Measures for National and Collective Self-Reliance in Social and Economic Development for the Establishment of a New International Economic Order" (1979). There are several others including, the Lagos Plan of Action (LPA) for the Implementation of the Monrovia Strategy for the Economic Development of Africa (1980), the World Bank Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery, APPER, (1986 – 1990), the United Nation's Programmes of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, UNPAAERD, (1986 – 1990) and Bretton Woods Institutions' Structural Adjustment Programmes, SAPs, (1980s) (Ake 21-22, Ikuli 14-15).

Sadly, every one of the aforementioned development programmes failed to produce the desired results. It is no wonder then that one is puzzled at why efforts made at the development of the African content have failed. Both internal and external factors account for the failures. Several authors have linked the internal factors to bad governance, lack of political will power, poor policies implementation etc. Some others have linked the external factors, to the foreign origin of the programmes and the excessive dependence of African states on the G8 nations and Bretton Wood institutions for the implementation of the programmes (Ikuli 15).

It is not surprising then that many raised questions regarding whether NEPAD would succeed where others had failed. There was this general feeling that if NEPAD must succeed, then it would have to be a lot different from the past development programmes and the approach to implementing it too must improve significantly. While these concerns and suggestions are not out of place, the philosopher thinks the problem is deeper and so a deeper kind of investigation, one that digs deep to the root of the problem is necessary. Here, the thrust is to determine the philosophy or philosophical foundation upon which the partners built NEPAD. This determination may probably provide explanation also for why every past development effort in Africa has defied all solutions. The approach is to establish if NEPAD's philosophy contains internal contradictions capable of frustrating the ambition of the development programme. If there are internal contradictions capable of jeopardizing the development effort, it may as well imply that internal contradictions in past development efforts are responsible for

their failures. To properly undertake this investigation, an exposition of NEPAD, the thought of its founders about Africa's predicament and the methodological approach is necessary and so a priority.

NEPAD: Origin, Objectives, Methodology and Philosophy

The origin of the development programme, its conception of the condition of the continent, approach to solve the problem and the constitutive philosophy are important indicators of what to expect from it. Therefore, any thorough and serious investigation must commence and concentrate on them.

One can trace the origin of NEPAD to the G8 Summit in Okinawa, Japan, in 2000 in which several African heads of States including President Olusegun Obasanjo participated. That summit gave birth to the Millennium Partnership for African Recovery Programme (MAP) document. These leaders joined MAP with the OMEGA Plan, a document sponsored by President Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal. At the OAU Extraordinary Summit in March 2001, in Sirte, Libya, the marriage between MAP and the OMEGA was consummated in the New African Initiative. African leaders adopted and endorsed it, however, they presented it to Africans as an internally or endogenously evolved development programme – a pseudo-claim, it appears. (Ikuli 61).

The initiators of NEPAD had observed that most Africans lived below the poverty line of less than two dollars a day, which was a serious indication of the dehumanized conditions of the majority of Africans. Following the “escalating poverty levels, underdevelopment and the continued marginalisation of Africa, the primary objective of NEPAD was to eradicate poverty by placing African countries, both individually and collectively, on a sustainable process of growth and development. It also aimed to halt the marginalization of Africa in the globalization process and to enhance its full and beneficial integration into the global economy, as well as accelerate the empowerment of women in the continent (Department of Foreign Affairs, Republic of South Africa, Revised Framework of the New Partnership for Africa's Development 1).

The partners were to implement NEPAD via a Programme of Action, acclaimed to be a holistic, comprehensive and integrated sustainable development initiative for the revival of Africa. This programme of Action envisaged long-term funding from participating states to take care of its priorities, which include: (a) establishing conditions for sustainable development, (b) policy reforms and increased investments in certain priority sectors, and (c) mobilization of resources. However, given that most African countries are poor and so unable to fund the programme, such created ample room to source massive financial and technical support from the G8 nations. The implication was that African leaders were to depend on the G8 nations, their financial institutions and capitalists or financial investors.

Thus, an internal contradiction emerges as a key principle of NEPAD, which is that NEPAD is to forge a new international partnership that changes the unequal relationship between Africa and the developed world (What is NEPAD? 3). The error in this lies in the fact that the dependent does not and cannot force an equal relationship with the independent under normal circumstances and all things being equal. This reminds one of the saying, “he who pays the piper dictates the tune”. Another curious principle of NEPAD is the claim of African ownership and leadership of the development programme. The reality is that right from its inception and operationalization in 2002, Africa has never owned or led this new international partnership.

On the contrary, Africa has been at the receiving end, helplessly doing the bidding of its superior foreign partners. Meanwhile, the latter gives difficult conditions to the African leaders for foreign direct investment (FDI). These include trade liberalization, privatization, deregulation, devaluation of national currencies, free trade, reduction in public sector expenditures, etc. They insist that without the implementation of these conditions, Africa cannot attract FDIs. In other words, if any African state seriously desires FDI, it must have to make reforms by relaxing its economic policies enough to allow the foreign partners to make sufficient profit for their capital or investments.

There was evidence of succumbing to foreign manipulations and pressure as early as 2005 in Nigeria, where critics accused foreign partners of “sabotaging cabotage through waivers that were not provided for in the law, by allegedly getting top government officials to bend the rule” (Businessday 3). Defending the breach of the law, the then Minister of Transport, Abiye Sekibo, explained that cabotage came into operation with the hope that locals would build, own and operate vessels. However, in the absence of local capacity, the government introduced waivers to allow foreign investors to fill in the gap until such a time Nigerians would develop the capacity to take over. According to him, “We cannot sack them overnight, and the capacity to sack them is not there” (BusinessDay 3) – the word “them” referring to the foreign investors. The question that follows, therefore, is, what is the philosophy of NEPAD?

The Philosophy of Africa’s latest Development Programme – NEPAD

There is no expressly stated philosophy of NEPAD. Nevertheless, given its principles of economic liberalization, privatization, deregulation, devaluation of national currencies, free trade, reduction in government spending, austerity measures, increased role of the private sector in the economy and society, one can easily deduce the operational philosophy of NEPAD. The approach, simply, is to expose the ideology behind the aforementioned economic principles, and then dissect the philosophy or philosophies underlying them. Immediately, it emerges that what the foreign partners have foisted on the African leaders by way of the outlined economic principles are nothing but neo-liberalism. Simply put, it is free market capitalism (Wikipedia 1).

In relation to developing countries, one can reasonably argue that the philosophy behind neo-liberalism is neo-capital imperialism. Imperialism is driven by extreme expansionism. Paul Treanor asserts in this connection that a general characteristic of neoliberalism is:

... the desire to intensify and expand the market, by increasing the number, frequency, repeatability, and formalisation of transactions. The ultimate (unreachable) goal of neoliberalism is a universe where every action of every being is a market transaction, conducted in competition with every other being and influencing every other transaction, with transactions occurring in an infinitely short time, and repeated at an infinitely fast rate (6).

Part of its dynamics is the hatred for protectionism. Rather, free trade and deregulation are part of its essential ingredients. They remove government intervention and any other economic obstacles in trade deals. The strong, smart and competitive has free rein in such climate to exact its prowess and extort maximum profit.

Following the above, one can argue that the philosophy of NEPAD is imperialistic – specifically, it is neo-colonialism in a new garb. If colonialism de-humanized Africans, neo-colonialism, which is a “new” form, kind or version of “colonialism” will definitely not re-humanize Africans. On the contrary, neo-colonialism implies “neo-dehumanization” and so has the tendency to re-colonize Africans in fresh, complex and complicated ways that make it even more difficult for the African to extricate himself from his economic doldrums. This way, rather than re-humanize the African person, NEPAD becomes an instrument or an agency for the new means, form, kind or version of dehumanization of the African.

That is not all. By accepting neo-liberalism as its driving philosophy, NEPAD endorses the western linear conception of development. This conception of development conceives development in terms of economic growth from a lower or impoverished state to a higher state of sufficiency usually calculated in terms of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Gross National Product (GNP), etc. The thrust of these economic indices is maximization of profit and minimization of losses, which ordinarily are commendable strategies for doing business. The problem, however, is the fact that the culmination of this conception and approach to development is concentration of wealth in the hands of a few powerful and rich nations and individuals. This way, neoliberalism fortifies the advantages of the few strong and the rich over the many weak and poor. This arrangement harms the many weak and poor individuals and nations. It dehumanizes the disadvantaged.

NEPAD's choice of neoliberalism as means of re-humanizing the African person, therefore, appears to be self-negating, contradictory and counter-productive. It is a puzzle that in the pursuit of re-humanization of its people, who are economically backward, African leaders adopt a system that compels competitions that give winners all and losers nothing, except indebtedness as furtherance of poverty and weakness.

Neoliberalism's emphases on "comparative" and especially "competitive" advantages subject persons to unending contests, where only few winners emerge and several others lose. Its emphasis on deregulation is a tacit return to a "civilized" or "modern" economic version of Hobbes' state of nature. Hobbes' state of nature was that each person struggled against all in a survival battle determined by harsh realities of invisible hands and unpredictable market forces. This condition results in losses for the many economically-naïve, docile and disadvantaged persons/nations, which live and operate within the same market space with the few predatorily economically versed, domineering and over-advantaged individuals/nations. This breeds newer forms of colonies, slaves and dehumanization of workers – all of which tantamount to a stripping of targeted persons of their humanity. So, neoliberalism exacerbates and perpetuates inequalities between persons; it puts wedge between persons and promotes the negative, in the sense of causing deep segregations, erecting counter-opposing dualisms, by throwing up "haves" and "have-nots", "powerful" and "weak", "advantaged" and "disadvantaged", "optimists" and "pessimists", where these dualisms occur as outcomes of age-old hegemonic and imperialistic philosophies.

Neoliberalism's Meta-philosophies of Dehumanization and Neo-capitalistic Imperialism

Worthy of note is that neoliberalism is an advanced version of liberalism, an offshoot of western linear conception of development. The western linear development conception or paradigm itself has root in assorted hegemonic and imperialistic philosophies. Here, one considers a few examples.

In medieval times, Machiavelli advanced the frontiers of these hegemonic philosophies by encouraging his prince (monarch) to expand his might abroad by physically devastating foreign states, establish colonies there and install weak leadership that would depend on his might to remain in power. This way, the prince can stay in the home country and extract wealth from its foreign territories. This means that Machiavelli's prince remotely influences and controls events abroad. He writes:

When states newly acquired ... have been accustomed to living freely under their own laws, there are three ways to hold them securely: first, by devastating them; next, by going and living there in person; thirdly, by letting them keep their own laws, exacting tribute, and setting up an

oligarchy which will keep the state friendly to you. In the last case, the government will know that it cannot endure without the friendship and power of the prince who created it, and so it has to exert itself to maintain his authority (Machiavelli (16)).

By the foregoing, Machiavelli gave a philosophical justification to colonialism and entrenched it in the minds of political actors that expansionism is not only attractive, but also financially lucrative and rewarding. Modernity added another twist to this hegemonic and neo-capitalistic trend of rationalist philosophy.

Nietzsche expands the existing political lexicon at the time with the introduction of two species of morality: the “master morality” and “slave morality” and the “Will to Power”. Nietzsche argues that there is in every person the drive to dominate the environment or the world. According to him, this drive is the Will to Power. The Will to Power, he says, is beyond the mere survivalist instinct. Rather, it is an inner drive to express a vigorous affirmation of all of man’s powers. He says, “the strongest and highest Will to Life does not find expression in a miserable struggle to existence, but in a Will to War. A Will to Power, a Will to Overpower!” (Stumpf 389). He goes on to say that man expresses the fullest of his elemental powers when he tries to realize these Wills. It is for this reason that Nietzsche disdains the Judeo-Christian morality. This latter, he argues, is contrary to man’s basic nature; besides, its anti-natural ethics gradually weakens man and breeds “botched and bungled” lives.

Nietzsche says that the master morality is the morality of the aristocrats, the noble type of men. For this morality, “good” has always been “noble” in the sense of “with a high calibre” and “evil” has always meant “vulgar” or “plebeian”. Therefore, Nietzsche’s noble man regards himself as the creator and determiner of values. He does not look outside of himself for any approval of his acts. He passes judgment upon himself. His morality is one of self-glorification. This noble individual acts out of a feeling of power, which seeks to overflow. He may help the unfortunate, but not out of pity, rather from an impulse generated by an abundance of power.

In Nietzsche, therefore, one clearly sees the outright rejection of the Christian conception of person started by St. Augustine and developed by Boethius and St. Thomas Aquinas. He radicalized and distorted the idea of person to mean the one who possesses the courage to undermine conventional values and set up his own even if unpopular, but so long as he obtains what he desires. Nietzsche promotes the philosophy of ‘the end justifies the means’. Neoliberals adopt this philosophy to inflame their unquenchable and unlimited quest for wealth and power.

Now, one can see how these philosophies combined to inform the way the developed western nations, the international financial houses and the international bourgeoisie pursue wealth or extreme wealth in whichever corner of the world they can find them.

One can also deduce from all these why persons are not considered as persons, but as some kind of slave or animal that is being helped to stay alive, rather than being seen for what is truly happening to them – that they are being dehumanized. These philosophies create predatory and aggressive nations called ‘developed’ nations, international financial institutions, multilateral corporations and international business moguls that control global capital flow and use capital to strengthen or weaken nations and continents around the world. With these philosophies, the predatory group laud it over the prey and defenseless nations.

The development paradigm, which predatory nations establish, is the traditional development orientation; their development ideology is neoliberalism; and neo-imperialism is the core of their philosophy. The western powers sold this neoliberal ideology to some of the African leaders in the G8 nations’ summit in Okinawa, Japan, in 2000. This informed the policies of NEPAD. While its policies, mechanisms and approaches are good for the western developed nations, they spell disaster for the poor and weak African economies. This explains why realistically African economies continue to nosedive into further poverties and vulnerabilities despite every effort applied by the African heads of states.

Conclusion

This paper set out to look into the policy thrust of NEPAD’s development agenda. It looked into the humanization stage of Africa’s development characterized by connection, solidarity and reciprocity and the care of one for another. This stage as the paper tries to show was arrested by the invasion of the European adventurers with their concomitant dehumanizing values.

The attempt to re-humanize Africa and Africans through the instrumentality of NEPAD has been thoroughly examined and from the findings of this paper, it is obvious that the western economic development model adopted and implemented by NEPAD has not worked for Africa and may never work. Think of it: How possible is it for a western economic model designed to conquer and dehumanize the African person, at the same time help such in their re-humanization? By adopting and applying neoliberal policies, NEPAD adopts imperialism as its philosophy. It is in this respect that one can say that NEPAD is self-contradictory in its re-humanizing efforts. Further, given the fact that the economic model (capitalism) which the Europeans brought to Africa contributed in no small way in dehumanizing Africans, the western traditionalist development orientation, otherwise conceived as the linear development paradigm, has not helped the continent out of its economic woods and development challenges either. Thus, any attempt to develop and re-humanize Africa must revise or embrace alternative policies other than the prevailing ones.

Specifically, it is the position of this paper that there is a need for NEPAD to reconsider its policy thrust and embrace a philosophy of development that is human centred and more in line with the re-humanizing needs of the African continent. In other words, continuation with the western [neo-] capitalist imperialism, which has been the bane of Africa's development aspirations, cannot be the solution to Africa's re-humanization.

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