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The Development of Higher Education in Africa
The Role of Foreign Aid—with a Special Focus on the World Bank

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NOTE: This reading comprises Chapter 7 ("Thematic Perspective: The Role of Foreign Aid") of a book titled *A History of African Higher Education from Antiquity to the Present: A Critical Synthesis* by Y.G-M. Lulat (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2005) For more on the book click here: http://bit.ly/hedbook

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Thematic Perspective: The Role of Foreign Aid

For reasons that should be obvious from reading Appendix II, the autarkic development of African countries in the modern post–1492 period was completely ruled out. Regardless of the sector in question, African countries would be reduced to what has turned out to be, so far, as permanent supplicants for foreign development assistance, be it in the form of finance or technical assistance or both—and higher education has been especially dependent on such assistance. From the first education missions sent out abroad (by Egypt's Muhammed Ali) more than a 100 years ago, to the current World Bank loans and U.S. philanthropic donations, foreign assistance has been a vitally integral component of university development in Africa in the modern period. There is good reason for this circumstance: For any country, higher education is not only highly resource dependent by its very nature, but it is also a relatively complex sector of the economy and society. Higher education is a fusion of extremely heavy capital expenditures (physical plant) and highly labor-intensive saturated processes in which there is an exceptionally high dose of creativity and imagination (teaching, learning and research) that takes place within a context of fiscally burdensome and permanently recurrent budgetary allocations (salaries, stipends, utilities, etc.). As if this is not enough, the sector produces an output (graduates) that not only has an economically intangible component to it that is large, but has the ever-present potential to become an economic waste (under/unemployment).

Therefore, it is not surprising that one of the central themes that runs throughout the history of the development of modern higher education in Africa

is that Africa has always depended upon external assistance in support of all these different aspects of higher education from not only governmental sources, but nongovernmental ones as well.[1] Besides colonial governments (and their proxies, the Christian missionaries—from the perspective of education) such assistance, during both the colonial period and throughout the postindependence period up to the present, also came from other overseas actors and agencies who have played (and continue to play) a highly critical support role. During the colonial period there were two that stand out for mention, overseas universities and private philanthropic organizations. In the postindependence period, in addition to the traditional latter two, critical foreign assistance has come not only from the former colonial powers, but from other foreign governments and multilateral development agencies as well.[2] The donors, in turn, for a variety of reasons (moral, altruistic, strategic, religious, etc.), have obliged, but as will be shown below, not always in a constructive way. Of all these various donors, it would not be an exaggeration to say, that the current circumstances of African higher education bears the biggest imprint of the multilateral development agencies (specifically, UNESCO and the World Bank); consequently the focus of this chapter is on them.[3] But first, however, a brief look at bilateral aid.

The postindependence development of higher education in Africa, especially in the early years, was greatly assisted by bilateral government support, without which African higher education would have not have seen as much progress as it did. This was the period, it must be remembered, when higher education had not yet fallen into disrepute in policy circles at the World Bank and at the United Nations agencies. The kinds of bilateral support received by higher education in countries throughout independent Africa echoed the complexity of that sector. That is, almost every aspect of higher education has been targeted for support, including: assistance with buildings construction; provision of student scholarships for staff development; payment of partial or whole salaries of both local and externally recruited staff; assistance with logistical purchases (library materials, computers, lab equipment, etc.); assistance with the establishment of programs of study; and so on.

Over the decades following independence, among the prominent country donors (and their relevant assistance agencies) have included the following: Belgium; Canada (Canadian International Development Agency); former Eastern bloc countries (USSR, etc.); France; Germany (German Academic Exchange Service); the Netherlands (Netherlands Universities Foundation for International Cooperation, International Training Center, Royal Tropical Institute, International Agricultural Center, Institute of Social Studies); Norway (Norwegian Agency for International Development); Sweden (Swedish International Development Authority); United Kingdom (the British Council, the Inter-University Council for Higher Education Overseas); and the United States (Agency for International Development).

Compared to the period immediately following independence, the role of bilateral aid has steadily diminished as multilateral aid (especially through the World Bank) has grown in importance. In this trend the termination of the Cold War (beginning around 1990) has also played a part. During the Cold War, bilateral aid from the United States and its allies on one hand and the former Soviet Union (together with China and Cuba) on the other was made available to allies (or potential allies) in Africa—usually in the form of scholarships for African students to study at institutions in donor countries, the loan of teaching staff, financing of some element of the infrastructure and so on. In one of the few studies of Soviet aid to Africa in the area of training and research programs, Weaver (1985), concludes that generally this aid was of greater relevance to African needs than Western aid (because of the ideologically driven Soviet effort to support not only the political but the economic independence of Africa).

One of the legendary channels for Soviet aid to Africa (and other pre/quasi/developing countries) was the establishment of the Lumumba Friendship University in 1960. Although the Soviet Union was already hosting thousands of students from Africa and elsewhere at its existing institutions, it felt it necessary to build a separate university targeted at the special needs of foreign students (e.g., providing them with Russian language skills).[4] More importantly, from the Soviet point of view, Lumumba was to provide training to the nonofficial students coming from abroad (that is those who were not part of the official bilateral relationship). The aim here was three-fold: provide access to higher education to students of working-class and peasant backgrounds; develop curricula that were better suited to societies that were in the early stages of industrialization, and create a pool of international graduate alumnus sympathetic to the Soviet Union and its allies. (See Weaver for the inner workings of the institution during the Soviet period.)

Incidentally, the university continues to function but with a new name, Russian University of People's Friendship, and it is no longer free; it charges fees. While most of the students who go there continue to come from outside, roughly a quarter of its enrollment is made up of Russian students. Fields of study remain roughly the same as in the Soviet era: agriculture, engineering, history and philology, economics, and law, and so on. Lately the institution has been in the news because of the growing racial intolerance toward foreigners (especially people of color) in Russia today—some foreign students have even been murdered with the police looking the other way. Foremost among the perpetrators of hate crimes against foreign students is the thriving neo-Nazi skinhead movement, which gets semi-official encouragement because of its fierce and reactionary loyalty to the Russian state.[5]

UNESCO

There are two prominent multilateral assistance agencies that, historically, have been concerned with the development of higher education in Africa, and both are part of the United Nations system: the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and its two associates: the International Finance Corporation and the International Development Association (often referred to collectively as the World Bank) and the United Nations Educational and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). (In practice, it ought to be mentioned, the former, unlike the latter, is virtually independent of the U.N. system.) Given their multilateral reach, coupled with their prestigious status in international development circles—born of both actual and verbal accomplishments—these agencies, taken together, have had a virtual monopoly lock on shaping policy on higher education among assistance donors throughout the postindependence period up to the present. Unfortunately, from the perspective of the development of higher education in the developing world generally, and in Africa specifically, the outcome of this stranglehold on policy directions has not been an unmitigated blessing; on the contrary, to some degree, it has been quite detrimental to the development of African higher education, as will be shown below.

Until very recently, UNESCO shared the same mistaken view of the World Bank that the priority subsectors of education were primary and secondary-level education, and not higher education. With its sponsorship of the World Conference on Higher Education in 1998 (Paris, October 5–9), there appears to be some indication that its views in this regard began to change (see the *Summary of the World Declaration on Higher Education* produced by the conference). UNESCO, in any case, is a financially poor agency in that its ability to provide financial assistance to countries that need it is extremely limited. While it does undertake, from time to time, what are referred to as *technical cooperation projects*, these are generally financed through sources outside its own budget (e.g., the World Bank, philanthropic foundations, other U.N. agencies, bilateral assistance agencies—such as Britain's Ministry of Overseas Development, etc.) African beneficiaries of these projects have included Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Nigeria, and Zambia.

However, UNESCO's greatest contribution with regard to the education sector generally, and the higher education subsector specifically, has been in the area of ideas. That is, whatever support UNESCO has provided to the development of higher education in Africa to date has occurred primarily in the form of consultations, symposia, workshops, conferences, publications, and the collection of statistical data. Through these avenues, UNESCO has provided those involved with the development of higher education with benchmarks (against which progress can be evaluated), targets to aim for (as a means of motivating progress), and opportunities for interchange of ideas among planners, practitioners, and holders of purse strings.

With specific reference to Africa, one of the most important contributions UNESCO made in the realm of ideas was to sponsor, in 1962, the first Africa-wide higher education conference of its kind. It was held in Tananarive (September 3–12), and it was appropriately titled, "Development of Higher Education in Africa." The conference looked at such issues as the role of higher education in economic and social development; higher education planning; financing of higher education; staffing of higher education institutions; curricular choice and adaptation; inter-African cooperation; and the role of foreign assistance in the development of higher education in Africa (see the conference report: UNESCO 1963).

The next UNESCO conference dealing specifically with higher education in Africa did not come until the 1990s, when, in preparation for the UNESCO-sponsored World Conference on Higher Education (Paris, October 5–9, 1998), The Regional Conference on Higher Education for Africa was held in Dakar (April 1–4, 1997). This conference covered essentially the same issues as those dealt with by the 1962 conference (not surprisingly, since these issues have remained current up to the present), as well as concerns of more recent vintage, such as autonomy and academic freedom, sex equity, and information technology.

Of course, in between these two major conferences UNESCO has sponsored (and continues to sponsor) a number of symposia, workshops, and special projects dealing with specific higher education issues and usually executed through its regional offices in Dakar, Nairobi, and Harare. Examples of these include: Project on Strengthening the Social Sciences in Africa (included the formation of the African Council of the Social Sciences); Seminar on Institutional Development of Higher Education in Africa (held in Lagos from November 25–29, 1991 in alliance with the Association of African Universities and with funding from the United Nations Development Program); University Twinning—UNITWIN—(a project to promote networking between higher education institutions along a North-South and South-South global axis); Regional Project on Development of Learning/Training Materials in Engineering Education in Africa; project to develop capacity for collection of statistical data for educational planning by creating the National Education Statistical Information Systems (NESIS); infrastructural and curriculum projects to help increase the output of scientists and engineers; and so on. Mention must also be made here of the series of conferences of African ministers of education that UNESCO has sponsored over the years. (Officially titled "Conference of Ministers of Education and Those Responsible for Economic Planning in African Member States," it has been held six times so far: in 1961 in Addis Ababa, in 1964 in Abidjan, in 1968 in Nairobi, in 1976 in Lagos, in 1982 in Harare, and in 1991 in Dakar.)

THE ASSOCIATION OF AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES

One very important indirect outcome of the 1962 UNESCO conference was the birth of the Association of African Universities. The few heads of African universities present at the conference took the initiative to meet in Khartoum in 1963 to propose a draft constitution for an association of African universities that would promote cooperation among them and serve as a research clearing-house for its members. Of course, they had already had an example before them when a year earlier, in 1961, the International Seminar on Inter-University Co-operation West Africa, meeting in Freetown, had proposed an Association of West African Universities (see recommendations of plenary session in Congress for Cultural Freedom [1962]). The Association of African Universities was officially inaugurated, after a few delays, in Rabat, Morocco, on November 12, 1967. The decision for the location of its headquarters (Accra), however, was not taken until three years later at the sixth meeting of its executive board in Lagos. In its early years it received help from the Africa-America Institute in the United States, and through the institute, the U.S. Agency for International Development.[6]

Among the notable achievements of the association over the years have been sponsorship of a scholarship program (the INTERAF Scholarship Program) to permit exchange students to study at member institutions, and a staff exchange program. Donors to these programs have included the United States, Britain, Canada, Germany, and others. Other significant activities have included a publishing program by its documentation center; sponsorship of workshops and seminars; publication of a *Handbook on Academic Freedom and University Autonomy* (reproduced as Appendix I of Ajayi, Goma, and Johnson 1996) and *Code of Conduct for Academics* (reproduced as Appendix II of Ajayi, Goma, and Johnson 1996); cooperation with the U.N. Economic Commission for Africa in the African Priority Program of Economic Recovery; and cooperation with external donors in instituting higher education support programs.

The association has also produced two major reports on the state of higher education in Africa: one in 1973 (Yesufu 1973) and the other in 1996 (Ajayi, Goma, and Johnson 1996). Among other things, both reports have reiterated the mission of the African university originally promulgated by the 1962 UNESCO conference: namely, that the African university must go beyond simply serving as a factory for the production of certified personnel to fulfill the personpower needs of a country. It must undertake an active role in the national development effort by helping to articulate the national development agenda and determining ways by which the university can help in implementing it. The 1996 report, however, is candid enough to conclude that this developmental role of the African university has yet to see any significant implementation by African universities, with the exception of a handful.

While on the subject of pan-African cooperation, it is necessary to be reminded of the fact that ultimately, the development of the African continent as a whole will always be hobbled by that elephant in the room that few wish to discuss: the colonial legacy of the fragmentation of the African continent into small countries with radically different ideological affiliations. Such a fragmentation has made it almost impossible to develop a single, Africa-wide, economic and political entity, without which for any one country in isolation, comprehensive and organically integrated but diversified economic development is impossible, because of limitations imposed by economies of scale problems, as well as lack of balanced natural resources. To further clarify this point: the assertion here is that the present political, economic, and social difficulties of individual African countries, for example, would be of a considerably lower magnitude and impact if these countries were simply provinces or states belonging to a single country called, perhaps, the U.S.A.—the *United States of Africa* (for a seminal contribution on this issue, see Green and Seidman [1968]).[7]

WORLD BANK

UNESCO, as already noted, is a financially poor agency, therefore its capacity to provide financial assistance to countries that need it is extremely limited; consequently, it is the World Bank that has been the principal architect of postindependence educational assistance policies in Africa (and elsewhere for that matter), given its control of the purse strings; coupled of course with its domination of the arena of development assistance generally, both financially and intellectually.[8] In other words: to state that from the perspective of educational planning in Africa, throughout the postindependence period, of all the international agencies (including nongovernmental organizations), it is the imprint of the World Bank that has proven to be the most enduring, would not be an exaggeration. In essence, this imprint has been characterized by the view that higher education generally, but most especially universities (in contrast to other postsecondary institutions, such as colleges, institutes, polytechnics, etc.), were, in its view, more of a hindrance than a help to the national development effort for three primary reasons: they sucked up a highly disproportionate amount of scarce educational resources; they were, primarily because of state involvement, inefficient (both internally and externally) even on their own terms; and they, at the same time, existed mainly for the benefit of elites, rather than the vast poverty-stricken masses burdened by, among other things, widespread illiteracy. How the bank came to adopt this view, and the impact it had on the development of higher education in Africa following independence, is a story that constitutes one of the major strands of the history of higher education in postindependence Africa.[9]

Now, up until the beginning of the 1960s, the World Bank did not provide loans for any purpose other than economic infrastructural development (roads,

bridges, etc.); mainly because it felt that as a multilateral *governmental* institution it was in the business of precisely this type of non-entrepreneurial economic activity that was the legitimate province of the state; and at the same time it firmly believed that the success of all other economic development efforts depended on the presence of an adequate economic infrastructure. However, for reasons well described by Jones (1992), the bank soon thereafter began to provide loans to the education sector—slowly at first, but becoming in time the most prominent international provider of funds for educational development in Africa and elsewhere. It executed its first education loan in 1962; the recipient was Tunisia. That loan was a harbinger of the general approach the bank would adopt toward educational development in Africa: the loan was for the purpose of building secondary schools.

That is, initially and for many years to come, the bank was not overly keen on providing loans for university development, in part because the bank's leadership, specifically in the person of George Woods (became president of the World Bank in 1963), was distrustful of universities—especially with regard to their budgetary practices. Woods held the perception, to quote Jones, "that university presidents were crafty characters who could not be trusted to spend grant monies for purposes approved by donors" (p. 49). This view, in practice, was taken to mean that the bank was to be minimally involved in university funding—unless the loan was for an institution specializing exclusively in technical or professional education (e.g., an agricultural or medical or teacher training college). The first policy document of the bank on the subject of educational funding, in fact, stated this position (Jones 1992). Subsequent published documents, in the form of sector policy papers, would reiterate *in various guises* the same essential policy (see, for example, World Bank 1971, 1974, 1980, and 1999).

Now, although lending to the education sector would be greatly expanded during the presidency of the former U.S. Secretary of Defense, Robert McNamara (became World Bank president in 1968 and remained at the helm until 1981 and who over the course of this period transformed the bank from a comparatively nondescript institution with an annual loan disbursement portfolio of only $1 billion to about $100 billion by the time he left), university development remained, largely, a stepchild relative to other subsectors (e.g., primary, secondary, vocational) of the education sector. Justification for continuation of this approach was now freshly available in the form of McNamara's well intentioned insistence that development priorities be based on addressing the needs of the poorest segments of society—that is, the vast majority of the population who resided in the countryside—and not the small populations of urban elites. This view came to be called the *basic-needs approach* to development.[10]

The "Basic Needs Approach"

In terms of education, the basic-needs approach found its expression in a policy that it laid out thusly: "The bank considers first-level education the minimum foundation on which countries should gradually and systematically build higher levels of a comprehensive network of formal and nonformal education and training equally accessible to all segments of the population." The bank articulated its rationale for this approach in these terms: "Appropriate basic education enables the majority of the poor, in both rural and urban areas, to lead productive lives and to benefit from social and economic development of the community. Moreover, the effectiveness of higher levels of education depends on the completion of the basic level. Therefore, support for basic education should not be justified by considerations of needs for trained manpower" (from the 1980 *Education Sector Policy Paper*, p. 88, in which tellingly there was almost no mention of higher education).

From the perspective of practice, that is actual policy implementation, the basic-needs approach to economic development, according to Jones (1992), would remain for the most part in the rhetorical realm (see also Kapur, Lewis and Webb 1997). Why? Cooper (1993: 88–89) puts his finger on the problem:

> The very people who benefited from inequality were politely asked to redistribute their gains. The state became a dues ex machine solution to the shortcomings of the growth model. Such a view fails to penetrate the connection of economic and political power, substituting a pious hope that considerations of long-term stability would triumph over self-interest….Thus the World Bank defined the problem as poverty, avoided asking if subordination and exploitation were intrinsic parts of certain forms of economic growth, and implied that the 'problem' could be solved without disturbing the power of capital.

Not surprisingly, a decade or so later, even this well intentioned rhetoric on basic-needs began to recede into the background (to be replaced by the policy of *structural adjustment*) in the face of a massive deterioration of the economic circumstances of most of Africa in the early 1980s. The reality, therefore, was that meeting basic-needs was a concept that could not be sustained even rhetorically, given that the policy of structural adjustment demanded the adoption of severe austerity measures by African governments—most especially with respect to social spending. Under these circumstances, the bank was even more adamant than before that the development of higher education be put on the back burner. Consequently, when in 1988 it published an important policy document, *Education in Sub-Saharan Africa: Adjustment, Revitalization, and Expansion* (World Bank 1988), not only there was no policy departure regarding the relative weighting of the different subsectors of education, but, instead, with respect specifically to higher education it called for retrenchment, arguing that in the face of budgetary constraints the first order of business was to institute reforms toward three simultaneous ends: transfer some of the burden of financ-

ing higher education on to parents and students, reduce unit costs, and at the same time shrink public sector participation in favor of the private sector. These set of reforms were termed by the report as *adjustment* because they facilitated "[a]djustment to current demographic and fiscal realities" (p. 2).

Seven years later, in 1995, the bank issued its *Priorities and Strategies for Education: A World Bank Review* (World Bank 1995) and it reiterated the 1988 policy recommendations with even greater emphasis: "Basic education will continue to receive the highest priority in the bank's education lending to countries that have not yet achieved universal literacy and adequate access, equity, and quality at that level." The report went on: "As the basic education system develops in coverage and effectiveness, more attention can be devoted to the upper-secondary and higher levels. Bank lending for higher education will support countries efforts to adopt policy reforms that will allow the subsector to operate more efficiently and at lower public cost. Countries prepared to adopt a higher education policy framework that stresses a differentiated institutional structure and diversified resource base, with greater emphasis on private providers and private funding, will continue to receive priority" (World Bank 1995).

What is especially instructive about the 1995 document is that from the perspective of higher education, it reflected in substance, a universities-specific report, *Higher Education: The Lessons of Experience* (World Bank 1994) that it had released the year before (and which in turn would spawn a substantive critique by experts allied with European assistance donors—see their report, Buchert and King 1995). This latter World Bank publication was an interesting document in that it was a policy document that masqueraded as just another "reference" document surveying what it called "best-practices" in higher education throughout the world (and from which, as its title indicates, one could extract policy lessons for the bank and others). Support for making this charge comes from considering Girdwood (in Buchert and King 1995) who, in the course of describing the genesis of the document and the internal World Bank politics behind it, astutely pointed out that in identifying the so-called best-practices, the bank was hardly in a position to avoid being guided by its own policy visions, developed over decades, on the role of higher education—compare, for instance, with World Bank (1988), mentioned a moment ago, in which one clearly detects the seeds of the major policy concerns (see below) of the best-practices document.[11]

It is telling that one area of the world from where the document gleaned a number of best-practices was Asia. The document blithely trotted out examples from such countries as China, Singapore, South Korea, and India, as if their unique (and recall, dirigiste) histories were of no significance in the matter of exporting their best-practices to some other parts of the world, such as Africa. King (in Buchert and King 1995), for example, reminded us that if we took the case of India we would have observed that during the colonial period, higher education in that country had developed along completely different lines than it

had in British colonial Africa, where in the case of the latter, as will be recalled from Chapter 4, a major foundational principle of the British was not to replicate, in their view, the errors of India; namely, a proliferation of diverse low-quality higher education institutions (albeit with little state funding) producing a vast population of unemployable *babus*.[12] (See also Ashby 1966.) In other words, the very element that the World Bank considered laudatory (high capacity with relatively low government funding) was based on a history of higher education development that was widely denigrated by India's colonial masters.[13] The document was flawed in another very elementary way: coming up with one-size-fits-all blunderbuss-type policy proposals. For instance, it was all very well to propose a concerted and expanded role for the private sector in higher education for say a country such as China, but could one seriously consider the same strategy for many of the African countries whose levels of development boasted per capita incomes of around a dollar a day or less. (Even in the case of China, one had to be careful in not assuming that all of that vast country was undergoing the same level of economic development—see Cheng in Buchert and King 1995.)

However, leaving such methodological issues of relevance and ahistoricism aside, the significance of the 1994 document for Africa lay in the fact that in this one of the very few World Bank documents *that dealt exclusively with higher education policy*, it clearly reflected, to all intents and purposes, the bank's policy trend *as it had been evolving up to that point and would be pursued with even greater vigor from that point on*; which in a nutshell, as has already been noted above, was—with regard to Africa certainly—the marginalization of higher education relative to the other subsectors of education by means of first the basic-needs approach to education policy and now, what one may correctly describe here, the structural adjustment approach to higher education.[14] Of course, such a policy of marginalization has probably never been openly described as such; in fact, on the contrary, rhetorical nods to the importance of higher education in terms of national development were rarely wanting in World Bank policy documents. Even more to the point, the spirited pursuit of the central policy concerns of the 1994 publication, *on the surface*, appeared to seductively suggest quite an opposite perspective: the desire to make higher education "relevant" to the economic circumstances of countries such as those in Africa by encouraging the adoption of what it saw as capacity-building reform measures. [15]

However, if one were to unwrap the dry techno-diplomatic language characteristic of World Bank documents in which its policy prescriptions were delivered, the thrust of its general policy line was unmistakably clear. In the case of the 1994 document, for instance, if the bank had never played a critically positive role in the development of higher education in Africa up to that point, then at this critical juncture when that sector was in dire straits, it was not yet about to step up to the plate; instead, to put it bluntly, the bank was willing *at the level*

of practice to allow the sector to wither on the vine. Consider the significance of the message behind the following statements that undergirded the document:

> [T]he overwhelming fiscal reality in most developing countries is such that quality improvements and enrollment expansion in higher education will have to be achieved with little or no increase in public expenditures (p. 3).
>
> Within the education sector…there is evidence that higher education investments have lower social rates-of-return than investments in primary and secondary education and that investments in basic education can also have a more direct impact on poverty reduction, because they tend to improve income equality (p. 85).
>
> [Consequently,]…primary and secondary education will continue to be the highest-priority subsectors in the bank's education lending to countries that have not yet achieved universal literacy and adequate access, equity, and quality at the primary and secondary-levels. In these countries, the bank's involvement in higher education will continue to be mainly to make its financing more equitable and cost effective, so that primary and secondary education can receive increased attention at the margin (p. 85).
>
> [Therefore, c]ountries prepared to adopt a higher education policy framework that stresses a differentiated institutional structure and diversified resource base, with greater emphasis on private providers and private funding, will continue to receive priority (pp. 85–86).

The truth, however, is that this approach rested on a singular disregard or (perhaps) ignorance of African circumstances, which meant that strategies in support of the structural adjustment approach to higher education development helped to merely reinforce the beleaguered status of higher education that characterized much of Africa by the 1980s. There was a time when African universities could hold their own in the international community of universities, but by the 1980s they were, with the few exceptions located at the extremities of the continent, in a parlous state. The grim fact was that the remarkable quantitative progress that African higher education had registered in the decades following independence, masked, sadly, a proportionate qualitative degeneration on a massive scale. It was symptomatic of the emergence (to varying degrees of course, depending on what part of Africa one was looking at) of an enduring pattern of woes: crippling budgetary constraints as institutions were starved of funds; large-scale deterioration of physical plant; overflowing classrooms; poorly equipped laboratories and other similar facilities set against a logistical background of intermittent supply of even such basics as water and electricity (not to mention consumables like chemicals); shrinking and outdated libraries as collection development came to a virtual standstill against a backdrop of widespread looting of holdings; overworked and underpaid faculty who often moonlighted to make ends meet; inefficient administrations as talented and able administrators left for greener pastures; teaching, learning, and research that was bereft of even the most basic logistical support (such as chalk, textbooks, photocopy machines, etc.); almost complete loss of autonomy as governments vilified and obliterated academic freedom; and the list went on. As for the quali-

ty of the teaching and learning enterprise specifically, given this awful state of affairs, one could only assume the worst. In fact, the bank itself, in its 1988 report (mentioned a moment ago), had observed on this matter: "The low (and possibly declining) standard in African higher education is now pervasively bemoaned by teacher, student, employer, and government official alike. Nor could the situation be otherwise, since indirect evidence of a crisis of quality in African education is overwhelming."[16] The report goes on to state:

> The most immediate consequences of the drying up of nonsalary inputs to higher education are that research ceases and instruction is reduced to little more than rote learning of theory from professorial lectures and chalked notes on blackboards. Chemists who have not done a titration; biologists who have not done a dissection; physicists who have never measured an electrical current; ...engineers who have never disassembled the machinery they are called upon to operate; social scientists of all types who have never collected, or conducted an analysis, of their own empirical data; ...lawyers who do not have access to recent judicial opinions; medical doctors whose only knowledge of laboratory test procedures is from hearing them described in a lecture hall—qualitatively deprived graduates such as these are now appearing in countries that have been hardest hit by the scarcity of nonsalary inputs (World Bank 1988: 74–75).[17]

By 1990s the situation had become so critical that even the U.S. Congress was moved to hold a special hearing in May of 1993 on the subject (U.S. Congress 1994); as Senator Paul Simon, the chair of the Subcommittee on African Affairs of the U.S. Senate, explained after first drawing attention to the initial heartening progress in higher education achieved by African countries following independence: "We are holding a hearing on the question of higher education in Africa…. there has been a rapid deterioration in the higher education [subsector] as the economies in Africa decline." He went on: "Of the thirty African countries with higher education institutions, there are few institutions that really thrive today. Many of them are in very bad shape. And even among those that exist, opportunities, for example, for women and the number of women faculty members is not at a healthy level" (p. 1).

However, there is more to this matter on two scores: First, the bank, throughout its relations with Africa, appeared to be completely unconcerned with the problematic of developing a science and technology infrastructure in the absence of university development. The reason for this is of course obvious, and it has already been mentioned in passing: it did not see the necessity of advocating a meaningful development of a scientific and technological infrastructure for Africa in the first place—for reasons that will be evident shortly.[18] Now, while science and technology cannot solve all the problems of Africa, there is absolutely no question that in terms of the narrower focus of economic development, absolutely no success is possible without the massive (but appropriate) use of science and technology.

At the same time, in a context where there were almost no non-university research institutions, the university was the only viable institution that could create and sustain the necessary science and technology infrastructure.[19] Moreover, it was somewhat ironic that there was almost no report that surveyed the state of higher education in Africa that did not make its obligatory call for a greater emphasis on the development of a science and technology infrastructure. As a report written for the Association of African Universities (Ajayi, Goma, and Johnson 1996) observed: "The literature is replete with calls for the countries of Africa to strive determinedly to become active and significant contributors to scientific and technological advancement; to refuse to be mere recipients of or mere spectators to, the rapidly emerging sciences and technologies; and to struggle to promote a culture of science-inspired creativity and technology innovation linked to the entrepreneurial enterprise" (p. 213).

Second, the issue of World Bank policy on African higher education, it should be stressed, is not only one of simply inadequate funding of university development by the bank itself, but its policy influence as well on other foreign assistance donors: they too became reluctant to provide financial and technical assistance to the higher education sector. Consider the example of the United States; at the Congressional hearing mentioned above, the U.S. agency responsible for managing U.S. foreign aid, the U.S. Agency for International Development (A.I.D.), through its representative at the hearing, John Hicks, articulated its policy position on higher education that in essence was a reflection of World Bank thinking: Beginning with the question, "Why has A.I.D. focused on supporting African basic [primary-level] education?," he went on to explain "A.I.D. has chosen to support basic education for a variety of reasons. First we have chosen to focus in this area because the need was evident and the opportunity to work with the African and donor community was present. Second, the underlying economic rationale was provided several years ago in a number of studies, culminating in the 1988 World Bank study on Basic Education in Sub-Saharan Africa. These studies indicated that the rates-of-return to basic education were higher relative to other segments of the education sector and at least as favorable relative to investments in physical capital."[20] As for A.I.D.'s policy response to the predicament of the African universities that had led to the hearing: it was a vintage World Bank policy position:

> *Let me underline that until the Africans deal systematically with the current underlying problems concerning the African higher educational system, it is difficult to envision major across-the-board engagement and investments in the higher education sector on the part of the donor community.* While we see indications that many Africans understand the depth of the fundamental issues confronting their universities, it will require tough decisions and commensurate action on their part to address the difficult issues of finance, governance and autonomy, quality and equity, before the donor community is likely to engage in any substantive assistance to higher education (p. 7; emphasis in the original).

The pervasive influence of the bank on policies of other educational assistance donors is further corroborated by Samoff and Assie-Lumumba (1996). In an extensive review of scores of educational sector policy papers (these are papers that outline educational assistance policies and provide theoretical justifications) produced by a variety of external donor agencies to guide educational assistance policy in Africa, they conclude, among other things, that higher education generally received short shrift in these documents (see also Banya and Elu 2001).[21]

The foregoing, of course, it is important to stress, does not imply by any means, that there was no lending whatsoever for the purposes of university development—after all, the bank was (and continues to remain to date) the single largest supplier of funds to the higher education subsector as a whole—rather, it was much less than should have been available had World Bank educational lending been informed by a different policy perspective: one that emphasized *balanced* development of the entire education sector.[22] After all, it is not as if the World Bank was unaware, *at least at the rhetorical level,* of the importance of universities in the overall national development effort. Even in one of its latest comprehensive publications on Africa, it reiterates a long held rhetorical position: "universities have a potentially greater role to play in Africa than in many other regions—they are often the only national institutions with the skills, equipment and mandate to generate new knowledge through research or to adapt global knowledge to help solve local problems" (2000b: 106). However, in spite of this position, it had always held the view that the level of this importance was not sufficiently high enough to merit *a concerted public-sector support*. As Jones (1992: 212), had observed: "Despite the retention of the bank view of the developmental potential of higher education, it is currently imposing through project covenants all manner of restrictions on public support for higher education, and not always in countries displaying an imbalance between publicly supported primary and higher education."

In the final analysis, the awful circumstances of higher education in much of Africa was a function of a combination of two factors: the massive contraction of educational budgets, which itself was a reflection of the severe economic predicament that most African countries were now grappling with (discussed below), and lack of competent guidance in the evolution of African higher education during the postindependence period that could have helped to nip in the bud the kinds of problems that would later arise and which the World Bank would legitimately (one can concede) complain about with increasing stridency, such as the inefficiencies and the high unit costs.[23] Regarding the latter, so long as the World Bank and other foreign assistance donors remained disinterested in university development in Africa, then it also meant that African universities were denied much needed policy *guidance*.

One can legitimately conjecture, for example, that had foreign assistance donors become intimately involved with university development in Africa *on a*

consistent basis throughout the postindependence period, from the very beginning up to the present, then they could perhaps have played a positive role in coming up with policy strategies for increasing internal and external efficiencies; as well as reducing unit costs without at the same time undermining access for those on the margins—the poor, women, and so on. (The underlying suggestion here, in other words, is that the ability of African higher education to weather the financial downturn it would later experience was severely compromised by some of the policies it had adopted in the past.)

Yet, the best that the bank could come up with to address the rapidly deteriorating circumstances of African higher education was insistence on a structural adjustment approach: since, in its view, universities were not as critically important to Africa as lower levels of education, the budgetary difficulties were an opportune time, it felt, to rethink their financing and their role; hence the call for user fees, privatization, a moratorium on creating new universities, and so on, among other proposals.[24] Surely, the bank ought to have recognized that given that most African countries had arrived at independence with almost no experience with creating universities, thanks to colonialism, and given that they were, at the same time, burdened *by extremely low per capita income levels*, responsibility for the development of universities (the most expensive subsector of education) could only be entrusted to the state. The bank, however, had never let this "minor" fact get in the way of its educational policies. Now, the question that stridently emerges here is: Why? Why had the World Bank taken such a consistently jaundiced view of university development (relative to other sectors of education), *even long before African countries began to reel from budgetary crises in the early 1980s*?

There are several possible answers that one can postulate; but none are rooted in malevolence one must hasten to emphatically add—rather it's a question of good intentions resting on bad policy because of the inherent limitations of the bank as both a *Western* and a *capitalist* institution on one hand, and on the other the problem of faulty theories (which, of course, has been the bane of many development assistance programs in Africa). Some examples regarding the inherent limitations of the thinking that undergirds the work of the bank: it had never contemplated championing the idea that may be the budgetary difficulties facing governments in not only Africa, but all across the planet, could have been alleviated to a considerable degree by—preposterous this may sound to the typical Western mind—drastically reducing expenditures on the war-making apparatus (euphemistically termed "defense"). Neither did it contemplate suggesting, for instance, to some of the African governments, that it was time to begin looking at the issue of good governance (something that it would only take up years later, around 2000 and after, and even then only because of external pressures) so as to eliminate waste (e.g., financing white elephant projects) and corruption (e.g., embezzlement of funds), and thereby save money.[25] On the contrary, the bank, preposterously, appeared to see no contradiction in

enforcing repayment from borrowers for projects *that the bank itself had designed and funded but which had completely failed* (Surin 2003). Nor did it champion equitable economic relations between the West and Africa from the perspective of trade, investment, surplus extraction, and so on (contrast here the recommendations of the report of the British sponsored Commission for Africa [2005]).

It felt reluctant to ask (and act upon) such simple but highly pertinent questions as: Why was the West bent on lumbering the vast majority of Africa's peoples, the barefoot and illiterate poor, with the burden of heavy debts for generations to come by lending to their illegitimate and corrupt governments for illegitimate and white elephant projects from which they (Africa's poor) would derive no benefits whatsoever? How could genuine development occur in a continent that was so politically and economically fragmented when one of the abiding lessons of economic history is that without mass markets—first internal (and later, if necessary, external)—no real development is possible? Why was the West so keen to sell billions of dollars worth of armaments to a continent that neither needed them nor afford them? As for faulty theories there are at least three that quickly come to mind: one has to do with the place of Africa in the global economic schema, another concerns the role of the state in society, and the third has to do with higher education and educational planning.

The Bank and the Economic Place of Africa in the Global Arena

In the course of subjecting a report produced for the World Bank in 1991 titled *Education in a Declining Economy: The Case of Zambia, 1975–1985* (authored by one, Michael J. Kelly), to scathing criticism, Caffentzis (2000) writes: "This reduction [of higher education] is advocated in the name of higher efficiency and a more egalitarian distribution of educational resources. Yet, the evidence provided and the guidelines prescribed raise serious doubts about the actual motives behind this policy. More likely, the [World Bank's] attempt to cut higher education stems from its bleak view of Africa's economic future and its belief that African workers are destined for a long time to remain unskilled laborers. This would explain why the World Bank has made the shrinking of Africa's higher education institutions the centerpiece of its policy and has identified the improvement of academic life with this reduction" (p. 3–4). In other words, the allusion here is to the bank's perspective on where Africa's comparative advantage lay in the international economic system: as a producer of natural resources for the West, which in turn brings up the broader issue of the development strategies that had been historically (and continues to be) advocated for much of Africa.

Now, consider this sobering fact: Western countries and international institutions, together, had poured into Africa since independence in the early 1960s, billions of dollars of foreign aid; yet, by the late 1980s and certainly by the

1990s (and since then the situation has only worsened) much of Africa found itself poorer than it had been at the time of independence. On almost every measure of development, Africa lagged behind (with little sign of improvement) when compared to other PQD countries elsewhere: per capita food production, the lowest in the world and constantly declining (in the minus column for years); the ratio of external (public) debt to GNP, the highest; the frequency of famine-induced hunger, the highest; the rate of HIV infections, the highest; annual population growth, the highest; percentage of world trade, the lowest; intra-regional trade as a percentage of external trade, the lowest; average life expectancy, the lowest; the ratio of debt to export earnings, the highest; levels of industrialization, the lowest; export earnings, the lowest and frequently on the decline; the population of refugees, the highest; the number of violent conflagrations (wars), the highest; the rate of literacy, the lowest; the rate of school achievement, the lowest; and so on and so on.[26] Not surprisingly, symptomatic of this abysmal statistical picture is that, without any doubt, the vast majority of the African peoples have suffered massive declines in their standards of living over the past forty or so years despite all the aid the continent has received.[27]

There are, of course, many complex economic, geographic, political, and social factors that *taken together* explain this situation—not least among them the irresponsible governance and stewardship of the African leadership itself, coupled with the Western support of tyrants and dictators during the Cold War—a dark period in Western history marked by immense wastage of resources as a result of the arms buildup and massive violations of human rights in the PQD countries through proxy wars. However, among these complex factors must also be included this one: the strategies of economic development that Africa had been advised to pursue as a conditionality for accepting foreign aid. These strategies not only helped to drive African economies into their awful economic predicament, but also took away from it avenues for recovery, especially in circumstances of natural disasters and such external economic shocks as that brought about by the sudden and massive international oil price increases. What are these strategies then? There are two that specifically come to mind: the *import substitution* strategy and the *comparative advantage* strategy.

Throughout the past four decades of independence, the kind of economic development that Western countries have always pushed for in Africa has been one based on highly limited industrialization resting on manufacturing and/or assembly of consumer goods for domestic consumption in a context of a small limited market. This strategy is sometimes referred to as *import substitution industrialization* (ISI) and it stands in opposition to true industrialization because in reality (and ironically) it is *import-dependent* import substitution. Yet, even here, the import substitution that was pursued in practice was not one that truly addressed the needs of the mass market, but rather the elites (hence concentration on the production of luxury commodities, that not only can not be sustained for long in a market dominated by the poor, but also requires a large degree of

importation of the necessary inputs—thereby consuming enormous amounts of scarce and highly precious foreign exchange).[28] Not surprisingly, this strategy had run its course very early on, with the result that most industries that were set up under this strategy fell apart in most of Africa (and are now gone) with disastrous socioeconomic consequences.

Coupled with the ISI strategy, under the influence of classical economics theory that the Bretton Woods institutions espouse—and to some degree the U.N. agencies as well (but mainly because of influences from the former), Western aid donors to Africa emphasized the importance of producing raw materials for export (e.g., cash crops like tobacco, cotton, coffee, and cocoa; and minerals like gold and copper) because therein lay a comparative advantage, it was so argued, for natural resource-rich Africa. In other words, from the very beginning up to the present, they have not seen independence as a reason for the Africans to deviate from the economic role (supplier of raw materials) that colonialism had delegated to it.[29] It will be remembered that economic development under colonialism was highly constricted given that the colonial economies where considered to be no more than mere appendages of the metropolitan economic system. This in effect meant that their principal function was to supply raw materials to the metropolitan industries on one hand, and on the other, provide a market for their output.

Without going further into the merits of the notion of comparative advantage and the ISI strategy (the proof of the pudding is in the eating: look at the abysmal economic circumstances of Africa over the past several decades up to the present, a hint of which was provided a moment ago), it will suffice to note two points. (1) Even on its own terms, the Africans were not told that a devastating hypocrisy underlay advocacy of the comparative advantage strategy: their commodity exports would be subject to unfair competition in the West through such measures as tariff barriers and domestic agricultural subsidies (with resultant economically crippling consequences for Africa). One should also mention here another consequence of such ill-conceived advice: the depression of world commodity prices (to the benefit of the industrialized economies) because of over-production—as countries were encouraged to undertake production of these commodities *in competition with each other*.

(2) An outcome of these strategies was a de-emphasis of the development of higher education in general and science and technology in particular.[30] Why would you need scientists and engineers if the economy was designed to remain agrarian (and not only that, but one that would not require industrialization), or if the economy was to rest on the production of minerals for export, or if the only form of industrialization advocated was one that would be restricted to the manufacture of light consumer goods (soap, beverages, etc.) and assembly of a few industrial goods from imported parts for limited domestic consumption? In other words, the idea that Africa would require a viable research and development infrastructure never even entered the equation.[31] Note that this matter

brings up the dialectical relationship between the development of higher education in general and the development of science and technology infrastructure on the other: downplay one and it negatively affects the other. The World Bank was never keen to encourage the development of the science and technology infrastructure in Africa either—as already stated.

The Bank, the State, and Structural Adjustment

Like all modern capitalist institutions, the bank has always had an anathema for direct state participation in the economic arena, for both economic reasons (judging it to be highly inefficient, not to mention the fear of unequal competition for capital) and political reasons (its revolutionary potential for distributive justice, which would undermine the dominant position of capital). The latter concern is usually unstated. This jaundiced view of the role of the state at the policy-level found its expression in the anti-*dirigisme* strategy of *structural adjustment*.

Structural adjustment strategy is a strategy that economists at the World Bank devised on the basis of neoliberal monetarism (devaluation of currencies, unrestrained convertibility of currencies, etc.) and neoclassical (elimination of trade barriers, privatization of state enterprises, free flow of investment capital, etc.) macroeconomic principles. In essence the strategy called for a drastic reduction of state participation in the economy and society, in consonance with the theme of the supremacy of market forces that underlay and unified these principles, and firmly eschewed any attention to the inequitable domestic and international social relations of production (see, for example, World Bank 1981). The strategy arose out of a misguided characterization of a number of African economies as, in so many words, "socialist"—and therefore perceived as not only inherently inefficient but viewed as an anathema in the context of the Cold War—because of the large economic role accorded to state and *parastatal* corporations.[32]

The practical policies that ensued from this strategy included a wholesale move toward privatization of as many government functions as possible; devaluation of national currencies; elimination of barriers to currency convertibility; implementation of packages of deep austerity measures in an effort to balance national budgets; removal of state subsidies and price controls; renewed emphasis on agricultural production for export (in consonance with the theory of comparative advantage); removal of controls on trade and payments; and a reduction and rationalization of bureaucracies (see Biersteker 1990). Most of these measures when taken together came to be referred to as the "Washington Consensus" (on the solution to the economic woes of PQD countries). In reality their net effect was to benefit the continued domination—as well as its further deepening—of the PQD countries by transnational monopolies (most of whom are domiciled in the West).[33] While it is true that advocacy of *some* of these

measures was certainly a step in the right direction, when the package is taken as whole it has been a prescription for disaster. Why? A central component of the basis of the economic ills plaguing Africa was never addressed (and could not be addressed given the ideological underpinnings of the consensus): the web of Western-dominated international economic relations in which Africa has been enmeshed for centuries ever since it was forged in the wake of 1492 (see Appendix II)—ranging from unnecessary heavy debt burdens to inequitable terms of trade; from unfair trade policies to resource squandering and environment degrading investment projects; from economically crippling extraction of investable surpluses to import-dependent investment enterprises. In other words, in the absence of other much needed reforms—especially in the political realm domestically, and the economic realm, internationally—whatever benefits may have accrued to the structural adjustment strategy have, after more than twenty years, yet to materialize. As *The Economist* (a magazine that is *de rigueur* reading for Western capitalist classes) observed in its recent survey of Africa: "Sub-Saharan Africa…is the world's poorest continent: half of its 700m[illion] people subsist on 65 U.S. cents or less a day. Even more worryingly, it is the only continent to have grown poorer in the past 25 years, despite the explosion of technology and trade that has boosted incomes in other regions" (2004: 3–4).[34] The case of Zambia is classic: it is among the most structurally adjusted countries in Africa; yet, it has failed to halt its descent from a country with among the highest per capita income in Africa at the time of independence, to one with among the lowest today—in fact, in terms of development indices, it ranks among the poorest in the world.[35]

What is of interest here, however, is that among the consequences of the structural adjustment strategy that most of Africa has been forced to accept, in return for foreign assistance, has been both direct and indirect negative implications for the development of higher education. The direct implication arose out of massive cutbacks in state budgets that have left virtually no funds for even the most rudimentary of state functions—including education—let alone such "luxuries" as developing higher education. The indirect implication stems from the notion of comparative advantage and the relegation of Africa to a producer of raw materials, as explained above.

Higher Education from the Perspective of Educational Planning

Because the bank is fundamentally a capitalist economic institution, not surprisingly, economic theory (neoliberal/ neoclassical economic theory) undergirds all its major policy decisions. Consequently, when the bank first began its assistance foray into the education sector, it only did so under the aegis of the newly rediscovered economic theory of human capital (see below); most especially that part of the theory that spawned the rates-of-return techniques for the purposes of educational planning. A recent report co-sponsored, ironically, by

the bank itself (together with UNESCO—see World Bank 2000), is critically candid about the influence of these techniques:

> These techniques seemed to demonstrate that higher education offered lower private returns than primary education. They also showed that social returns were lower and, considering that higher education absorbs considerably higher investment, they demonstrated that the public interest in higher education was substantially lower than that in primary education. Taken together, these results provided a powerful justification—especially for international donors and lenders—for focusing public educational investment at the primary-level. This justification was further reinforced by the obvious gains in social equity associated with such a strategy, as highlighted and endorsed by the Jomtien Declaration in 1990. The World Bank drew the conclusion that its lending strategy should emphasize primary education, relegating higher education to a relatively minor place on its development agenda. The World Bank's stance has been influential, and many other donors have also emphasized primary and, to some extent, secondary education as instruments for promoting economic and social development (p. 39).

Given, then, the enormous influence that the theory of human capital has had on educational planning in PQD countries under the sponsorship of international assistance donors like the World Bank over the past forty years or so, it is necessary (at the risk of eyes glazing over), to provide an overview of it, *as well as* consider the merits of the theory as it has been applied in practice through the rates-of-return techniques.

Human Capital Theory

Now, it will be recalled that the emergence of new nations out of the chrysalis of colonialism in the 1950s and early 1960s, in Africa and Asia, was accompanied by an escalation of the Cold War, which in turn would set in motion powerful ideological winds that would blow through the corridors of social science departments in many universities in North America (and in the West generally). The result was the birth of a desire among those academics with interest in PQD countries to contribute through their work to international assistance policy decisions with the hope that the new nations could be nurtured on to a development path that would replicate that taken by the capitalist West (and not the communist East). Altruism, of course, was not the name of the game, one must hasten to add; rather, it was opportunism—given the preponderance of ideology and government funding opportunities in their calculations. Be that as it may, one such academic, among many, was W. W. Rostow, who published an unapologetic paean to economic growth, detailing the path Western nations had supposedly followed in achieving super abundant economic growth and which the developing nations would have to emulate if they wished to arrive at the same levels.

His book, titled *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto*, (Rostow 1990—third edition), identified five stages in this path: the traditional society, the preconditions for take-off, the take-off, the drive to maturity,

and the age of high mass consumption. Even though the book proved to be very controversial, what is important to note here is that this emphasis on economic growth (as measured by increases in per capita GNP) as the engine of development found resonance among neoclassical economists concerned with the fate of the newly independent nations. The most important question in their minds, then, was how to promote economic growth because to them economic growth became synonymous with development.[36] In seeking to answer this question they had to, however, first resolve a puzzle that some of them had been grappling with on this very issue of economic growth, but with respect to the experiences of Western nations, such as the United States.

The puzzle was how to explain the "residual" that economists had discovered when charting economic growth in the United States. Specifically, economic output (measured in terms of the gross national product), had been growing at a relatively fast rate and yet this growth rate was not paralleled by increases in the conventional factors of production. Thus, whereas the average increases in the GNP in the United States between 1919 and 1957 had been 3.1% annually, the average increases in human-hours employed and capital equipment deployed during the same period was 0.8% and 1.8% respectively (Schultz 1961a). At first, explanation for this phenomenon was sought in terms of technical change. It is the improvement in machinery and technology that had given rise to large increments in output beyond the measured conventional inputs. This explanation however, begged the question, and in response Schultz (1961a) emerged with the theory that education was the missing variable in the explanation, and thereby overturned the long-held notion that education was a consumption rather than an investment item.

Schultz, in another article published during the same year (1961b), went even further and argued that expenditures on education constituted an investment in "human capital"—thus was the classical economics theory of human capital reincarnated. To many, the beauty of human capital theory in essence was that it appeared to render the intuitive factual: educational systems as a whole provided inputs (albeit unobserved by economists hitherto—or so it seemed) that were essential to economic growth, such as: skills and knowledge necessary for technological advancement; the proper workforce conditioning through the agency of the hidden curriculum of schools (discipline, punctuality, respect for authority, etc.); greater productivity, creativity and commitment to work; and so on. In other words, to invest in education was to invest in economic growth.[37]

With the reformulation of the human capital theory by Schultz, there emerged a new branch of economics, called the "economics of education," which its practitioners confidently assumed would allow them to quantify the complex linkages between education and the economy.[38] Two kinds of research emerged in this field as it developed: one concerning the economic analysis of the educational system (e.g., how to allocate resources to the different parts of

the system); and the other concerning the interaction of the educational system with the economy (e.g., what portions of resources must be allocated to the educational sector). It is the latter kind of research, where the dominant underlying concept is that economic development is not only predicated by education, but education itself is also a factor of growth, that is of particular interest here. Economics of education gave birth to three basic types of studies that would soon become the basis for educational planning in PQD countries: correlational studies, manpower planning studies, and the rates-of-return studies.

Correlational studies involved international comparisons of the levels of GNP and levels of educational provision. The key work in this kind of research was undoubtedly that of Harbison and Myers (1964). They collected data from seventy-five countries and devised a so-called "composite index of human resource development." They then proceeded, via correlation techniques involving the index, national income and other socioeconomic indices to validate the thesis that a high-level of national income was a function of a high score on the index of human resource development. Other similar kinds of research that found a positive correlation between education and economic growth included the work of Anderson and Bowman (1965), who studied correlations between levels of literacy and per capita GNP; and Bennett (1967), who correlated general and vocational education to three economic indices, and found a positive correlation between growth in technological education and economic development.

Manpower planning studies were primarily concerned with calculating future manpower needs of a country. As already explained earlier, the basic technique involved was the calculation of the quantitative links between the occupational-educational structure of the labor force and the level of output (measured usually in terms of sectional value added). This then became the basis for forecasting manpower needs.

The rates-of-return studies (also sometimes known as cost-benefit analysis) grew out of disenchantment with the manpower forecasting approach to educational planning because of a number of serious weaknesses (see above), as well as dissatisfaction with the correlational studies.[39] Very briefly, the rates-of-return (to investment in education) approach involves calculation of social costs, which includes the true cost of providing the education and the cost of lost production while the student is absent from the world of work; and the social benefits (which in the first instance is the difference in pretax salaries between graduates of the educational level for which the analysis is being made and graduates from levels below this level). In a similar fashion, private rates-of-return can also be calculated. Thus for example Carnoy and Thias (1969) calculated that in Kenya the individual rate-of-return on higher education was 20% (while the social rate-of-return for the same type of education was only 9%).

Among the more well-known studies on rates-of-return to investment in education is undoubtedly the work of George Psacharopoulos (1973, 1981, and 1994). The principal conclusions of his work were: rates-of return are generally higher in PQD countries; primary-level education tends to yield the highest returns; (returns to human capital exceed those on physical capital—taking the 10% opportunity cost benchmark for physical capital); returns to general education exceed those for such other forms of education as technical, vocational and scientific training; and differences in per capita income can be explained better by differences in human than in physical capital.

As can be easily surmised, with such findings the stage was set for not only pouring large amounts of resources into educational development, but also for insisting that resources be directed away from higher education toward the lower levels of the educational system, especially primary-level schooling. Schultz (1974), for example, was adamant: "What are the implications of my guide for investors in education? Let me venture to suggest the following approaches in contribution to education in the developing countries. 1. Concentrate on the enlargement and improvement of elementary schooling; and thus give less attention to college and university instruction than has been true during recent years." (p. 56). Even at the basic intuitive level, this recommendation appeared to possess the hallmark of common sense: how could you plan for the development of higher education when large sections of the population did not even know how to read and write? However, as one looks in retrospect it is evident that not only did the massive infusion of resources in educational development not achieve the desired economic results, but the relative neglect of higher education did not have positive effects on the general development effort either (witness the current awful predicament of most countries in Africa). Leaving aside the many political, social, and economic variables that account for this outcome (not least among them the extremely problematical nature of the mode of insertion of the former colonies into the world economic system—see Appendix II—and the continued perpetuation up to the present of the basic parameters of that insertion, which neoclassical economists like Schultz, Psacharopoulos, and others appear to have never understood), there is also the very questionable issue of subjecting the highly complex relationship between education and the economy to quantitative reduction techniques (see, however, McMahon [2002] for a more promising approach in this regard).

The Pseudo-economics of Economics of Education

Painful as this may sound to economists, the simple fact is that even at the basic intuitive level, most educators know that education is too complex a phenomenon to approach with such quantitative techniques, and that more importantly, the "technical" relationship of education to the economy encapsulates but only a fragment of this relationship, and even then it is only a sliver of the entire educational system that is engaged thusly. To elaborate on the latter point, in almost all societies today, only a small portion of the entire educational sys-

tem has a relationship with the economy that can be termed as *technical*, meaning that the educational system is a factor supplier—in this case skilled personpower. This is the portion that comprises vocational educational institutions that train welders, plumbers, bricklayers, and so on; departments and faculties of higher education institutions that train professionals such as doctors, lawyers, and engineers; and colleges for agricultural extension officers, teachers, secretarial workers, and so on. As for the rest of the educational system that is involved with producing persons with general education (or academic education) qualifications, the relationship with the economy *as posited by the human capital theorists* is a very tenuous one indeed. For, the basic function of general education is not economic but rather sociological; that is, it is a means for social differentiation (Hussain 1976). Educational qualifications enable society to differentiate between different classes of occupations (e.g., low-wage manual-labor occupations, and high-wage mental-labor occupations) not because of the technical content of the occupations themselves, but because of the demands of a social structure that is specific to societies with a dichotomous economic system, where not only the producers are not the owners of the means of production, but they have no control over why, how, and what is produced and how it is disposed of. Most occupations, when seen purely from the point of technical competence required in performing them, bear little or no relationship to the educational qualification required to enter them.

The fact that there is a *perception* of the presence of such a link between education and occupations has little to do with any present-day empirical facts. Rather, it seems that it is an outcome of what was generally true in preindustrial times. To explain: the dual process of the formalization of education, and the uncoupling of education from the world of work characteristic of present-day modern societies is, as Amin (1982) has observed, essentially a product of a particular form of division of labor intrinsic to modern industrial societies: a form involving on one end of the production spectrum (the technology/machinery inventing/manufacturing end) a continuous *accretion* of super-labor skills, and on the other end (the technology/machinery use/operating end) a continuous *attrition* of almost all labor skills that go beyond the rudimentary.

In preindustrial societies, however, no such comparable division of labor was present. Though that does not imply that there was no division of labor, but that the division was *between* and not also *within* the production processes of discrete occupations (farming, weaving, carpentry, pottery, metal working, etc.). In preindustrial societies therefore, the linkage between education (be it formal or informal) and work was extremely tight. In the interest of increasing productivity (achieved via rationalization of production techniques involving such measures as the introduction of mass assembly line production systems—which demand a labor force bereft of skills like those possessed by the blacksmiths of preindustrial times), modern societies have broken this link. Yet in breaking this

link, which has had to be preceded by the monopoly of the means of production within the hands of a small group of owners, without which large aggregated production units could not have emerged, it has been necessary to imbue education with its social differentiation function, as well as the ideological function of rendering this differentiation justifiable in the eyes of both those in the upper strata of the social structure (comprising in the main the owners of the means of production) and those in the lower strata (comprising in the main the workers). In this ideology, those who possess a larger share of educational credentials are deemed to be entitled to a greater share of social benefits (employment, income, status, etc.). Furthermore, intrinsic to this ideology has been the notion, albeit a false one, that attainment of educational credentials is a function of purely individual effort and attributes *(agency)* and no other factors come into play, such as socioeconomic background *(structure)*. Consider for a moment that if one were to extend the logic of the meritocratic reasoning by performing a thought experiment, this is the ridiculous conclusion one would arrive at: there is no reason why every one in society should not all be wealthy to the point where they are all members of a single class, the upper class. What is the thought experiment? By means of a miracle every one in society woke up tomorrow morning *possessing the best individual qualities necessary for the highest levels of academic achievement*. Clearly, the thought experiment reveals the supreme asininity of the meritocratic logic.

It follows from all this, that if the distribution of a particular qualification along a given educational axis, such as length of period of school attendance, or subject of specialization, or level of academic performance required for a given occupation were to increase dramatically in the labor force, thereby producing a glut of qualified persons far in excess of the numbers of vacancies in the occupation, then one should see a corresponding change in the qualification requirements for that occupation. That is, for example, if the differences within the labor force along the axis of the length of school attendance were to diminish through a measure such as compulsory schooling, then employers would turn to find another axis, such as type of curriculum pursued, to differentiate job applicants. For a detailed description of the educational consequences of this phenomenon, see Dore (1976) and Seidman (1982).

Clearly then, if the relationship between general-education qualifications and occupations in the economy is not a technical one—specific knowledge/skills required for a given occupation are not functionally correlated to a particular general-education qualification—then it is obvious that (1) personal income is not determined by the type of general education qualification, but rather it is determined by the type of occupation, (2) an increase in educational provision will not lead to disappearance of low-wage paying occupations, and (3) the number of vacancies in an occupation has no relationship to output of educational qualifications, but rather it is related to the general health of the economy (for more details on this see Hussain 1976).

In light of the foregoing, one can assert with absolute confidence that the numerous rates-of-return studies much beloved by people such as George Psacharopoulos and his colleagues at the World Bank (see, for example, Psacharopoulos 1973 and 1981) do not show what their proponents claim they show. Rather all that these studies demonstrate is that some occupations carry with them higher incomes than others. However the differences in income between different occupations is not a function of the levels of education demanded for entry into them, but rather it is social differentiation. Thus certain classes of jobs for example will almost always have low wages/status attached to them, regardless of the level of educational qualifications of those performing these jobs. To demonstrate positive correlation between income and lengths of education, as rates-of-return studies often do, cannot be taken to automatically imply that educational qualifications per se are sources of income. *If this were so then there would be no unemployment among the educated.* The basic function of education, especially *general* education is to serve as a selection mechanism for employers; and it is a mechanism that has little to do with the productivity merits of the employee.

This point becomes forcefully obvious the moment it is recognized that the triple underlying assumptions of rates-of-return studies are fallacious. These are: (1) the labor market in capitalist societies rest on competition for wages; (2) that the market itself exists to match supply and demand; and (3) all educational access is market determined (whereas only a small segment is). In other words, for all the econometric engineering human capital theorists may indulge in, at the end of the day they are left with this fundamental fact: there is absolutely no empirical basis to the assertion that wages are rooted in the marginal productivity of educated labor that investment in education supposedly increases. For further details see Hussain (1976) and Maglen (1990). In addition, see Klees (1986) and Eisemon (1987), both of whom delineate major methodological weaknesses of these types of studies. Paul Hurst's pithy review article (1987) is also relevant here. He subjects the whole number-crunching approach, which undergirds rates-of-return studies, to the study of educational phenomenon to severe criticism: “an ounce of insight is worth a mountain of multiple regression” (p. 69).[40]

This is not all, however. Even if these studies, like the other human capital studies, were on their own merits sound, that is that they captured the education–economy nexus beautifully, there still remains this fundamental weakness: the inordinate emphasis on characteristics of the individual in the effort to promote economic growth, with little regard to structural impediments. In other words, human capital theory, like all modernization theories, fail to take into account that it is not simply *subjective* factors (agency), but *objective* factors too (structure) that stand in the way of economic growth (and national development). Among the latter factors are three major *sets* of *dialectically* interrelated factors: One set are those bequeathed by colonialism, another set of fac-

tors are the distortions that have emerged in the postindependence period, and the third set are those connected with participation in an international economic system in which the rules of the game are determined primarily by those who first set up the system: the Western industrialized nations. To briefly elaborate on each set:

The colonially inherited set of factors include: a monoculture export-dependent economy, which facilitates a hand-to-mouth economic predicament where investable surpluses are almost nonexistent for purposes of economic diversification—a situation that has now caught up with many of the oil exporters too—which is so absolutely essential for long-term economic health and stability; lack of an indigenous capitalist class sufficiently developed to stem the hemorrhage of surplus and resources taking place via activities of foreign multinational corporations; and fragmentation of large geographical areas (e.g., the African continent) into small countries with radically different ideological affiliations, making it almost impossible to develop a single, large, economic and political entity, without which for any one country in isolation comprehensive and organically integrated but diversified economic development is impossible, because of limitations imposed by economies-of- scale problems, as well as lack of *balanced* natural resources.

The postindependence distortions include: planning and implementation of development projects aimed to benefit the minority urban elites rather than the rural masses; economic mismanagement on the part of governments of PQD countries via misuse of whatever little investable surplus that has been available in order to sustain economically parasitic middle-class standards of living enjoyed by their elites who model their lifestyles on those of the elites of the Western industrialized nations; outright economic corruption by elites where financial resources have simply been siphoned out of the country to build financial egg-nests abroad—usually in the West; political instability as rival elite factions have sought to gain control of political power upon which their very status as the elite has come to depend, given the lack of alternative viable modes of large-scale acquisition of wealth, such as ownership of the major means of production; and political corruption—often aided and abetted by Western multinationals and governments, as in the case of Chile in 1973—of which endemic military coups and dictatorships are simply but one manifestation, thus preventing the development of democratic institutions that can help to eradicate these politically induced economic ills.

The third set of factors include: the unequal terms of trade between the Western industrialized nations and the PQD countries, made possible in part by the monoculturally induced hand-to-mouth economic position of the PQD countries, as well as the extremely low demand-elasticity of many of their exports—clearly demonstrating the irrelevance of the theory of comparative advantage when applied to trading partners of unequal economic strength; usurious lending rates of foreign financial institutions; massive transfers of investable sur-

pluses out of PQD countries via "legal" as well as such illegal activities of foreign multinationals as false pricing and invoicing; and concentration of investments by foreign multinationals in those branches of economic sectors that provide maximum returns to investments in the shortest possible time and with minimal capital and technological outlay—usually the light, elite-oriented, consumer industry or the resource extraction sectors. Among this third set of factors, one must not also forget the inappropriate planning advice and assistance from international organizations such as the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank, of which the strategy of pursuing import-dependent import-substitution industrialization advocated in the sixties, or the human-capital strategy, or the trickle-down (crumbs from the table) theory, are excellent examples.

In light of the foregoing, then, it is little wonder that one of the early well-known practitioners of economics of education, Mark Blaug (see, for example, his *Economics of Education* published in 1970), would more or less recant and simply denounce the entire field of economics of education that human capital theory first helped to create by simply stating that, in his words, "[o]ne might also go so far as to say that the economics of education now lies dead in the mind of both professional economists and professional educators" (Blaug 1999: 101). He further explains:

> The simple fact is that the field has failed to deliver the goods. We are certain that education contributes to economic growth but then so does health care, housing, roads, capital markets, et cetera, and in any case we cannot quantify the growth-enhancing effects of education under different circumstances and we cannot even describe these effects except in the most general terms. We can measure private and social returns to educational investment but since we cannot specify, much less measure, the externalities generated by educated individuals, not to mention the consumption benefits of education, the "social" rate of return to education is a bogus label. But even if the externalities of education were nil, it would still be true to say that we have been unable to separate the productivity from the screening functions of schooling and hence cannot even say what the social rate of return to education means.... A subject that after 25 years of study and investigation is unable convincingly to resolve at least some of these issues is not to be taken seriously. And, indeed, it is not taken seriously (p. 102).

Yet, the fact is that organizations such as the World Bank, the OECD, and USAID, are highly unlikely to pay heed to these criticisms any time soon—*at least at the level of policy formulation and implementation.* To be sure, under pressure from assistance recipients and the enlightened elsewhere, the bank has recently begun to make noises to the effect that it is reconsidering its view of the role of universities in development (see Bollag 1998 and World Bank 2002). However, a convincing program of funding support still appears to be absent. The reassessment remains in the rhetorical realm. Consider the 1999 education sector report. It states that bank staff, "now look more at education as an integrated system, one part of which cannot function well if another is ailing.

The emphasis on basic education, for instance, does not mean that nothing should be done in tertiary education: the role of tertiary institutions as centers of excellence, research hubs and training grounds for tomorrow's teachers and leaders is critical" (World Bank 1999: 24).[41] But when the proposed policy implementation plan of the report is examined, one quickly notes that higher education is hardly even mentioned! It is only in an important 2002 publication that we see indications of some rethink within the Bank; but even here one has to be wary.[42]

The truth really is this: The international donor agencies are too heavily invested in the human capital theory as expressed by the rates-of-return techniques to give it up as the principle determinant of their educational assistance policies so easily. But not only that, as Marginson (1999) points out from a sociology of knowledge perspective, economics of education is too tied in to the existing power system given that its principle focus is also a major function of the state. Consequently, they will blithely continue to use human capital theory as a basis for educational planning and funding.

Three further points will conclude this chapter: First, as long as support for higher education by the bank and its allies in the development assistance business continue to insist on a structural adjustment approach to higher education, it does not bode well for Africa, especially for the marginalized. While one may, *perhaps*, accept the necessity to introduce some kind of "user fees," given the level of poverty in most of Africa, there has to be mechanisms instituted that will allow the needy to pursue further education (e.g., student loans).[43] Yet, the question here is, Do African countries have robust and relatively efficient bureaucracies that can manage such mechanisms? The answer is that most do not. (See Johnstone and Teferra [2004] for more on issues of finance in the African context.) Ultimately, a mix of private and public education institutions *may* be desirable; however, the bank's approach *in practice* has been to push for privatization or even marginalization of *existing* institutions rather than calling for expansion of higher education through addition of new but private institutions. However, even here one must be careful not to reproduce the U.S. model where private institutions become the means for the permanent reproduction of the capitalist class. Leaving the issue of morality and ethics aside, deep levels of inequality *may* be tolerable in societies such as the United States, but certainly not in PQD countries (for that is an invitation to instability).

Second, the description of sources and types of assistance to African higher education (see also endnote 3), it is necessary to point out, should not be taken to imply that such assistance has been an unmitigated blessing. Especially in the postindependence era, the benefits of assistance to African higher education is, at times, questionable in light of the fact that the assistance does not serve its intended purpose, or is much too limited to be effective, or is misused, or even "misplanned." In fact, in recent years, the dire economic straits of many African countries has helped to highlight another kind of problem: the uselessness of as-

sistance given a context where no local funds exist (for reasons of severe budgetary constraints) to permit the continued functioning of the assistance project following its completion. For example, building expensive laboratories when maintenance of the laboratories—especially from the perspective of consumables—cannot be guaranteed. Under these circumstances, the motives of the donor become highly questionable: perhaps the assistance project was agreed to for primarily diplomatic/political reasons instead of altruistic ones.

There is without doubt a need for the development of a new assistance model: perhaps one that involves not only *capital* expenditure support for a given project, but also *recurrent* expenditure support on a diminishing shared-cost basis (e.g., 100% support in the first year, 90% in the second year, 80% in the third year, etc.), upon completion of the project. There is a clear need for imaginative approaches to the assistance relationship than the prevalent one. For example, consider tweaking the above suggested model in this way: the recurrent expenditure support does not necessarily have to come from a single or project-originating donor, it could come from a consortium of two, three or more donors. (An excellent book on the general issue of assistance to African education that is still very relevant today more than a decade and a half since its publication, sadly (suggesting unlearned lessons), is Hawes and Coombe 1986.)

Third, although some within and without the foreign assistance community have begun to advocate the elimination of foreign assistance altogether—other than humanitarian assistance—(see, for instance, Dichter 2003, and Theroux 2003)—foreign assistance, especially of the type provided by the World Bank (that is, publicly-funded assistance) is still necessary. What is required is a new and imaginative restructuring of the bank and its allied institutions, such that there is a genuine commitment to the poor (who—Westerners constantly need to be reminded about this—constitute a *majority* of the world's population). However, is such restructuring possible in the present international political climate, dominated as it is by the agendas of the transnational monopolies (effected through proxy by their inordinate influence on the governments of countries like the United States)? [44] Perhaps not. As Pincus and Winters have observed: "The need to reinvent the World Bank is urgent and will remain so for the foreseeable future. But the prospects for reinvention are as dim as they have been at any time in the institution's history" (2002: 4–5). The reason why this is so, can be best assessed from what Caufield's excellent but mind-numbing book (1996) states about the range of actors involved who have a deep interest in maintaining the status quo: the bank's bureaucracy (today about 11,000 strong—with their dependents they can easily constitute a small town); heads of governments, especially the illegitimate ones; "well-connected contractors, exporters, consultants, and middlemen" in the wealthy countries; and transnational monopolies and banks. The upshot of this circumstance is summarized by Caufield thusly: "The past half-century of development has not profited the poorest people, nor the poorest countries. Rather, they have paid dearly—and their de-

scendants will continue to pay dearly—for the disproportionately small benefits they have received." On the other hand, she continues: "Their relatively small investment in fifty years of development has left the rich countries—and especially their richest citizens—richer than ever before. Given all this, and given the fact that development funds, including the World Bank's, are ultimately supplied by ordinary taxpayers in donor nations, there is much truth in the saying that development—at least in the monopolistic, formulaic, foreign-dominated, arrogant, and failed form that we have known—is largely a matter of poor people in rich countries giving money to rich people in poor countries" (Caufield 1996: 338). What is particularly chilling is that this assessment was already clear more than two decades ago when Payer (1982) came out with her devastating critique of the bank. Clearly, the World Bank, *as it is presently constituted (and given that its origins are rooted in a time period when roughly two-thirds of the planet was under some form of European colonial rule)* should be disbanded. However, the pseudointellectual representatives of the ignorantsia (let alone the politicians) who regularly feed at the bank's trough will hardly disagree more.

NOTES

1. One may want to acknowledge here that, in a sense, all university development throughout history, regardless of country, has depended on foreign assistance if one were to enlarge the scope of the term to include the interchange of scholars and researchers. As Appendix I demonstrates, for instance, the development of universities in the West owed a great deal to the Islamic ecumene. And even today, Western universities continue to receive assistance (though that is not how they probably would perceive it) in the form of subsidized intellectual labor (foreign teachers and teaching/graduate assistants, whose education in the early stages of their careers have been paid for by societies they come from).

2. Some may also add a third actor: foreign scholarly societies. Informal (and sometimes formal) support has also come to African higher education through membership by their staff, on an individual basis, of foreign scholarly societies, such as the African Studies Association (United States), the American Economic Association, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and so on. This support is essential not only for the personal academic growth of the individual staff member, but also for the institution as a whole because it provides it with links to the international scholarly community. Of course, as African higher education develops its internet connections, the importance of such international scholarly support will increase. (See McMurtie 2000, for more on this issue.)

3. While space does not permit an exploration of the roles of all the various donors in the history of the development of African higher education in the colonial and postindependence periods, a hint of their presence in that history can be had from considering the following brief descriptions of the two principal nongovernmental actors, categorized by period:

Overseas Universities—Colonial Period: During the colonial period, the role played by overseas higher education institutions in the development of higher education in Africa took three basic forms: first, was a passive role effected through overseas training of African students; the second was also a passive role played out by means of externally-run secondary school (and even university level) examinations; and the third was a direct role involving institutional affiliation and the granting of external degrees.

Overseas Universities—Postindependence Period: As in the colonial period, support for the development of higher education in Africa would take several forms: the passive one of providing overseas training for African students destined to become teachers in the their home universities (staff development); and such active ones as the following: sending staff to work in African universities for temporary periods to facilitate program, departmental, and institutional development; creating partnerships between themselves and their African counterparts in support of various institutional programs, sending staff to provide advice on institutional planning, and so on. Select higher education institutions in all countries throughout the world with well-developed higher education systems have played this postindependence role: The institutions range from those in the former Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc to those in the United States; from those in India to those in Canada; from those in China to those in Britain; from those in France to those in Australia.

Private Philanthropic Organizations—Colonial Period: When discussing the role of overseas private philanthropic foundations in the development of higher education in colonial Africa, there is in essence only one that really comes to mind: The Phelps-Stokes Foundation. The Foundation came to play, for a short time, an important role through the agency of the Phelps-Stokes African Education Commission (discussed earlier in this work).

Private Philanthropic Organizations—Postindependence Period: Mention has already been made of the prominent role played by one private philanthropic organization in the postindependence period: the Carnegie Corporation (founded by Andrew Carnegie, who had made his fortune in the U.S. steel industry, in 1911). The corporation, it may be noted here, had already begun to develop links with Africa much early on, in the 1920s. It played a part in the development of a public library system in South Africa. The corporation, as part of its effort to improve the quality of educational and cultural life in British colonial Africa, had dispatched Milton J. Ferguson (the well-known state librarian of California) to study libraries (the few that there were) in southern Africa in 1928. Upon his recommendation, and with some $63,500 in matching funds donated by the corporation, a program was launched to develop a nation-wide public library system in South Africa. (One may note in passing, that, unfortunately, the plan that emerged did not include a racially integrated approach to the library system [Hull 1990].) The corporation's role in the development of higher education in independent anglophone Africa began with the funding of the Nigerian Commission led by Sir Eric Ashby, discussed earlier.

The corporation also helped to finance the Lockwood Commission report on the establishment of the University of Zambia, also mentioned earlier. Now, the significance of this activity should not be underrated, it assisted in funding higher education planning initiatives that helped to continue the tradition of U.S. involvement in African education. If the early involvement, through the Phelps-Stokes Commission, was a mixed blessing for the Africans (encouraged the British government to be directly involved in expanding educational provisions, but at the same time considerably narrowed the type of educational provision), the postindependence involvement has been overwhelmingly positive. Why? Because it has led to a much needed modification of the British civic university model that the Asquith plan helped to export to colonial anglophone Africa. (For an extensive look at the role of the Carnegie Corporation in African higher education, see Murphy [1976].)

Other foundations that have been involved with higher education assistance in Africa in-

clude the Edward W. Hazen Foundation, W. K. Kellog Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation. These foundations provide assistance directly, or is more often the case through contracts with either individual U.S. universities or through such U.S. organizations as the American Council on Education, the Institute of International Education (which also administers the Fulbright exchange pogram begun under the 1944 Fulbright Act sponsored by Senator William Fulbright that facilitates the exchange of scholars to lecture, study, research, etc.) and the Africa- America Institute.

More recently (in 2000), a consortium of four philanthropic foundations in the United States began an initial five-year partnership program (renewable depending upon outcomes for another five years) to assist select universities in a number of African countries (which include Kenya, Nigeria, Mozambique, Tanzania, Uganda, and South Africa). The four foundations are: the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Ford Foundation, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and the Rockefeller Foundation. Their justification for this initiative, described in their press release (Carnegie Corporation 2000), was the recognition that any renewal process African nations undertook could not proceed without the involvement of higher education, given "the multifaceted contributions that universities can make in national development and poverty alleviation," and the fact that "(s)trong African universities can play a role in protecting basic freedoms, enhancing intellectual life, and informing policy making." The principal criteria for the selection of universities to receive assistance was explained thusly: "Being located in a country undergoing systemic public policy reform; Supporting innovation, particularly through use of new technologies, to better position the institutions to meet the specific needs of their countries; Engaging in a strategic planning process in which a key element is a commitment to helping build national capacity for social and economic development; Having creative, broad-based institutional leadership" (Carnegie Corporation 2000).

4. Hard data on international students, in general, studying in the then Soviet Union is hard to come by (see Kuraev-Maxah 2004 for a discussion of this problem). However, Weaver (1985: 109, 111) provides some data: for instance, between 1956–57 and 1963–64 the number of African students in the Soviet Union would jump from around 14 to 3,000! (In these figures students from some 37 African countries would be represented.)

5. For recent news stories on Russian hate crimes against foreign students go to the news archives of the www.bbc.com website.

6. The Africa-America Institute, a nonprofit organization founded in 1953, it may be noted, continues to be active in support of African higher education. The institute, which is funded by a variety of donors (private, corporate, the U.S. government, and so on), helps to provide opportunities for Africans to obtain short and long-term graduate education and professional training in the United States, among its many activities. The institute also ran, from 1963 to when it was dissolved in 1997, the well-known long-running African Graduate Fellowship Program (AFGRAD). Among its current ongoing programs is the African Technology for Education and Workforce Development Initiative (AFTECH), which aims to provide Africans with technological skills in order to enhance Africa's global competitiveness and growth.

7. A new USA—the United States of Africa—is a dream that has been articulated by countless African intellectuals for more than a century. Yet, as the 21st century continues to unfold, its realization appears as remote as ever (witness the ongoing heart-wrenching civil wars). However, if one may take a page from the history of Europe—where a borderless Europe is, today, within the realms of possibility (clearly demonstrating that internal conflagrations, however longstanding, are not insurmountable)—the in-

itial path to a borderless Africa may lie in the less romantic, but yet meaningful, sectorally diverse, cross-border institution-building that rests on the premise of exploiting economies of scale. One such institution that holds out the promise of cross-border cooperation for the mutual benefit of all participants is the university. Universities need not wait for a borderless Africa, they can help toward its realization by engaging in the creation of cross-border consortia where universities can share resources optimally, develop regional centers of research specialization, exploit the educational benefits of the flow of students and faculty across borders, and so on. Cross-border institution building is the quickest way to demonstrate the practical benefits of a borderless Africa as a precursor to its eventual creation.

8. The World Bank is made up of three closely knit institutions (hence it is sometimes referred to as the World Bank Group): The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, The International Finance Corporation, and the International Development Association.

9. While Girdwood's point is well taken (Girdwood 1995) that in referring to the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) as "the World Bank" or "the Bank" one risks reifying it, from the perspective of the recipients of its attentions across the world, however, its alien and seemingly monolithic public face does take on a reified form (notwithstanding the very human differences, disagreements, etc., in the internal workings of the organization—a characteristic of all human organizations). Moreover, the bank's own publications are not averse to the use of the same terminology.

10. A word or two about this once much-vaunted World Bank policy approach: To the observer with perspicacity, the beginnings of the almost messianic zeal with which McNamara would take up this policy theme, to the chagrin of the rank and file at the bank—and recall that in irony of ironies this is the same man who had presided over an immoral war (as he himself would later come to describe it) in which tens upon tens of thousands of the poor had perished, that is the infamous Vietnam War—was already evident in McNamara's maiden address to the bank's Board of Governors (on September 30, 1968). In it he began with the observation that the "cheerful statistics" that appeared to show progress in the development of the poorer countries, concealed "a far less cheerful picture in many countries" in which "much of the growth is concentrated in the industrial areas, while the peasant remains stuck in his immemorial poverty, living on the bare margin of subsistence" and went on to insist that the richer countries, despite being afflicted with aid-fatigue had to do more by way of development assistance, especially considering that over the preceding decade they had "added to their annual real incomes a sum of about $400 billion, an addition itself far greater than the total annual incomes of the underdeveloped countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America" (McNamara 1981: 4).

A decade or so later, in another address to the governors (on September 26, 1977), he would be even more forthright and adamant, though ever mindful that the bank was not after all in the business of philanthropy: "Basic human needs are by definition critical. And for governments to assist the poor to satisfy them is not public philanthropy, but a wise investment in human capital formation." "It is the poverty itself," he argued, "that is a social liability. Not the people who happen to be poor. They represent immense human potential. Investing in their future productivity—if it is done effectively—is very sound economics. Certainly what is very unsound economics is to permit a cul-

ture of poverty to so expand and grow within a nation that it begins to infect and erode the entire social fabric” (p. 463).

However, even as McNamara continued to insist on targeting development efforts toward the masses, the poor, the *basic-needs* development policy would founder on the shoals of a number of negative realities, ranging from the global politics of the Cold War that intruded in bank operations, through bureaucratic inertia and resistance within the World Bank itself (an institution long nurtured on the milk of neoclassical economics in which the goal of economic growth reigned above all else, including issues of equity), on to sometimes insurmountable elite-resistance within the PQD countries themselves. As Caufield (1996: 106) has pointed out: “McNamara’s passionate rhetoric created the impression that the bank was now concentrating on fighting poverty, but his statistics show otherwise. Most of the $77 billion worth of loans made during his reign supported industrialization through traditional infrastructure projects: highways, dams, gas pipelines, ports, cargo handling facilities, and the like. Less than 10% went to education, health, family planning, water supply, and other programs that might help the poor directly. In that category, too, most of the funds were spent on construction and the import of high-tech equipment, not on the provision of services.” In fact, by the time he left, a new concern was beginning to become the overriding policy at the bank, especially with respect to Africa, that of structural adjustment. (For a sympathetic history of the rise and fall of the poor at the bank see Kapur, Lewis, and Webb 1997. For a critique of the supposed resurgence of the poor in World Bank thinking in recent years Bergeron 2003 provides a useful entry point. Wolff’s critique (2003) of the absence of social structural considerations—specifically “class”—in World Bank thinking and in the thinking of its detractors is also relevant here.)

11. As Girdwood comments: “It must be acknowledged at the outset that the team responsible for *Higher Education: The Lessons of Experience* prepared a thorough analysis of the difficulties facing higher education in many countries.” However, she continues, “[m]uch of the data was generated within the bank to meet its own institutional needs, and therefore implicitly prepared to reach certain conclusions. Many of these issues remain contentious; and yet throughout the commissioned literature the World Bank’s overall concerns and orthodoxies are often referred to ‘as conventional wisdom.’” (p. 66)

12. A *babu* was a derogatory term applied in colonial India by the British to an educated East Indian who they despised as an “uppity nigger” who did not know his proper place.

13. See also Cheng (in Buchert and King) who, in contextualizing the merits of some of the document’s “best-practices” from the perspective of China, has this “health warning” label (to borrow an apt phrase from Buchert and King): “The Chinese reform was formally launched in 1985 with little input of international experience and with little adherence to theories developed elsewhere…. The reform in China agrees in form with many of the World Bank recommendations, but the causes and results of such reform measures may differ from those in the World Bank analysis…. Much of what is quoted in the World Bank paper about China’s reform occurs only in some part of China, or occurs more effectively in some part of China than in others. Decentralization and diversification have caused some institutions to prosper but have put others in deep crisis…. [T]he reality in China demonstrates that few reform policies bring about absolutely positive results” (pp. 206–207). What is more, as in the case of Chile as well to which

the document refers approvingly, there is no mention of the political circumstances within which the reforms were accomplished: the absence, to put it politely, of a democratic government. Perhaps, brutal blood-soaked dictatorships (the horrors of Augusto Pinochet's Chile, are, as of this moment, at long last receiving official acknowledgement by way of a commission of inquiry, and one should not forget Tiananmen Square—to give just one example from China), do have their uses.

14. See also King's summary of the World Bank policies on higher education up to 1994 in Buchert and King (1995). Here Ilon (2003) is useful as well.

15. What, then, were these policy concerns that shaped the identification of the best-practices surveyed in the document? There were essentially four, very briefly: diversification of higher education provision (Chapter 2 of the document): that is, the arrest of traditional patterns of university development, and instead the transformation of higher education in two other (hitherto neglected) directions: nonuniversity-level institutions (e.g., technical colleges) and privately-funded universities and colleges; diversification of funding sources (Chapter 3): that is, development of alternative mechanisms for financing higher education ranging from fees from students to financial support from industry (but with due regard to issues of equity); the eclipse of the direct role of the state in higher education (Chapter 4): ranging from measures to support institutional autonomy to encouragement of privatization of higher education; and the enhancement of efficiency (Chapter 5); that is, the improvement of the quality of higher education—in terms of both internal matters (e.g., quality of teaching) and external matters (e.g., efficient matching of training with labor market needs). On the surface, and baldly stated thus, there wasn't much that one could quarrel with here. However, a closer look at them demonstrated three fundamental limitations: weaknesses at the conceptual level of some of the individual policy prescriptions; the inapplicability of many of the suggested directions of reform to the specific economic circumstances of much of Africa; and the marginalization of universities as engines of progress and development. While space does not permit exploration of these limitations in depth and here the reader is directed, instead, to consult Buchert and King, some examples illustrating these limitations will suffice:

The relationship between lower levels of education and higher education is a dialectical one: improving one, improves the other; at the same time, neglecting one effects the other negatively. To put the matter in another way: good primary schools strengthen secondary schools and good secondary schools strengthen higher education (for the simple reason that the student who enters higher education begins his/her educational journey at the primary school level); conversely, good primary schools and good secondary schools can only come about through good teacher training which is the province of higher education, especially universities. It is, in fact, interesting that the Asquith Commission had dealt with this very question decades back in its report; and had arrived at this exact same reasoning:

> While admitting that the development of popular instruction is most urgent, we cannot agree with the inference that the development of university education should be postponed. On the contrary, we hold that the latter is all the more imperative on this account. For the situation does not present a simple issue between the claims of higher and lower education; progress at any level of education is dependent upon progress at other levels…. Indeed, the lesson to be drawn from history is quite clear even if at first sight quite paradoxical; it is that where education as a whole is backward, ef-

fort is most rewarding when it is directed at higher levels. It may be remembered that the development of universities in Europe preceded the systematic organization of popular education. (United Kingdom 1945a: 12)

In light of this commonsensical fact, how then could the World Bank have insisted (and continues to do so in practice, despite recent policy noises to the contrary) that countries such as those in Africa concentrate on the issue of universalizing primary-level education and pay less attention to the development of higher education—because, in its view, wiping out illiteracy came before all else (never mind the fact that historically universities in the West developed amidst a sea of illiteracy or never mind the fact that some of the very countries from whom it derived its best-practices examples, such as India and China, harbored huge numbers of people who were illiterate [a situation that still persists to the present and this in countries that can build atomic bombs!]). Although, to give another example, the World Bank was adamant on marginalizing the role of the state, if one stopped and thought for a moment—and as Watson (in Buchert and King) points out—the true lesson of the best-practices was that the state had to continue to play a central role in higher education for without it none of the best-practices could be implemented. Regarding the matter of the inapplicability to the economic circumstances of Africa: consider the issue of the development of science and technology educational infrastructure. As King (in Buchert and King) pointed out, World Bank lending to this sector of higher education was traditionally highly biased in favor of the Asia/Pacific region, with only a small fraction (less than 5% of the dollar amount) going to Africa. Now, as King further observed, the ability of the former region to absorb such lending was predicated on a prior, historically determined, presence of infrastructural capacity (in which indigenous ownership of capital—regardless of whether it was owned by the state or the individual—had been determinatively critical), however, the document in its characteristic air of unrealism waxed lyrical on the necessity of building industry–university relations as a basis for developing the science and technology educational infrastructure with minimal recourse to state funding.

Yet, anyone with even the slightest knowledge of Africa knew that historically, much of capital in Africa had been and continued to be foreign owned, and therefore the research and development wing of capital, with rare exceptions, had never been located in Africa, but abroad. Given this circumstance (which one should emphasize continues to be the case to the present day), On what, one may derisively ask, was the linkage between industry and higher education to be based? What is more, the bank had (and has) never seriously looked at Africa in terms of promoting genuine industrial development—viewing the continent, instead, as a supplier of raw materials to the world. To give another example: while the bank was correct on the necessity of some form of user-fees because tuition-free higher education is subsidized by the poor, it proposed dealing with the issue of equity through student loans. Now, when governments in the West have never really been able to efficiently operate student loan schemes, on what basis could it assume that such administratively weak governments as those that characterize much of Africa could operate student loan schemes?

On the marginalization of universities, symptomatic of which was, for instance, its vehement decrying of the traditional tendency of lower-level higher education institutions being eventually upgraded to university status (never mind the fact that the history of higher education tells us that almost throughout the world, including in the West, that

is how most universities came into being), Court (in Buchert and King) captured the problem: beginning by noting that the general thrust of the best-practices document was to champion the vocationalization of higher education (including the universities) he goes on to counter: “While this might seem a particularly appropriate emphasis for the poorest continent in the world, Africa—perhaps more than other places—also needs institutions for *unapplied* teaching, learning, reflection and research. This is because of the powerful and continuing sense of technological, intellectual and cultural dependence upon the West and the consequent need to think out its own course and model of development.” He further explains: “The point is hardly a novel one: universities, particularly in an era of pluralistic politics, represent the most likely places for the training of original thought and the conduct of basic research which in the last resort are the only means by which societies can take control of their own destiny.” Moreover, he notes, “[s]uch a function…is not a luxury that can be dispensed with for a period, pending better economic times, but an integral part of the development process itself” (p. 111).

16. Tragically, the situation since then, as all who have visited a number of African countries in recent years know from first hand, has worsened considerably. Here, one may also wish to look at Theroux 2003 for a sympathetic but honest grass-roots level eyewitness account of the terribly depressing broader socioeconomic and political circumstances that characterizes much of Africa today, and of which the awful predicament of the education sector generally and the higher education subsector specifically is a reflection. See also the report of the British sponsored Commission for Africa (2005).

17. Or consider this chilling description of the circumstances of what used to be one of the most prestigious African universities in East Africa: University of Makerere: “By 1990, Makerere exhibited in extreme form the resource constraints facing universities throughout Africa. No new physical structures had been built and no maintenance carried out in twenty years. Journal subscriptions had declined to zero, as had chemicals for science laboratories…. A ‘pillage’ or survival culture prevailed which put at risk to private theft any saleable and removable item, from computers and telephones to electric wires and door fixtures—and sometimes the doors themselves! In a situation of limited transport, few if any working telephones, and the absence of needed equipment and stationery, it is remarkable that the university managed to remain open throughout this period” (Court 1999: 3).

18. The phrase “science and technology infrastructure” is meant to encapsulate all the software and hardware elements of training, research and development in the areas of both basic and applied science and technology: ranging from classroom courses and programs of study to laboratories to research and development centers.

19. It is characteristic of World Bank “experts” that they never saw a contradiction in suggesting that there were high rates-of-return to primary education, especially in agrarian Africa (comprising much of the continent), and therefore that is where all the effort was to be concentrated, but at the same time did not see the need to build a science and technology infrastructure that could provide the necessary research inputs for best agricultural practices that could allow the realization of the high rates-of-return!

20. See the discussion in this chapter on the issue of *rates-of-return* studies and their influence on educational policy in PQD countries.

21. This point raises a broader issue: Few appear to realize how powerful the intellectual influence of the World Bank, for good or ill, has been—and continues to be—on how the problem of economic development (of which educational planning is a part) in

PQD countries has come to be perceived, from the perspective of knowledge, theories and ideas, over the years. The matter is well described by Stern and Ferreira (1997: 524). Given, they observe, the enormous research budget (relative to one that any university anywhere in the world can ever afford—in the 1990s averaging $25 million annually), the army of economist and researchers it employs, and of course the magnitude of the lending program itself (running into tens of billions of dollars annually), "the bank's potential influence is profound, and that the bank cannot be seen as just one of a number of fairly equal actors in the world of development economics" (emphasis added). This intellectual reach of the bank, they explain, is effected through a variety of mechanisms at its disposal that when considered in combination are almost unique to itself: generating ideas (e.g., by setting research agendas, conducting research for operational purposes, collating and disseminating raw data, extracting lessons from its field experiences); stimulating research activities and ideas in the external academic community (e.g., by commissioning research, organizing conferences, participating in conferences organized by others, etc.); disseminating and promoting internally and externally generated ideas, theories, research, etc. (e.g., by establishing research centers in target countries, providing training for external researchers, serially producing *must-read* influential documents—such as its country studies, world development reports, sector policy papers, and journals—moving personnel from its research wing to its operational wing); and most important of all the application of ideas and theories through its operations (project implementation) in the field (e.g., by means of its "lending leverage, policy dialogue, and technical assistance on projects").

What is particularly troubling about this influence (though not mentioned by Stern and Ferreira) is that anecdotal evidence suggests that those in the academic community concerned with education in PQD countries, regardless of where they are located, have often found it difficult to mount genuine critiques of World Bank policies once they have gotten used to drinking at the trough of World Bank largesse while in pursuit of research grants, research commissions, and so on. (On this matter contrast, for example, Court's trenchant critique of the bank's structural adjustment approach to higher education that he appears to have written in his capacity as an academic, Court 1995, with another paper he wrote, Court 1999, albeit some years later, in his capacity as a research consultant for the bank—in the latter he waxes lyrical on the relevance of the same approach.)

22. The method the bank uses to disburse loans is to select projects, rather than sectors (an approach that itself is highly problematic), that it finances jointly with the receiving country. Now, consider the following: taking the total expenditure on all projects that the bank helped finance for the education sector as a whole, throughout the world, during the period 1963 to 1990, then the allocation for higher education was only about 12% (calculation based on data in Jones (1992, p. 137, 182). If higher education is defined to include all forms of postsecondary education, including vocational training, then the percentage rises to about 30%. (See also Banya and Elu [2001], and Ilon [2003] for more on World Bank lending patterns for higher education.) However, the bulk of total lending for higher education sector as a whole, broadly defined, appears to have gone to Asia; certainly in the period 1980–1993, according to the best-practices document, Asia received 54% compared to Africa's 10.7% (p. 81).

23. See Lulat (2003) on this issue; that is the genesis of the high unit costs of African higher education.

24. Mamdani (1993: 10) states that the bank was privately even more belligerent than it was in its public pronouncements (reports, etc.). He recalls: "At a meeting with African vice-chancellors in Harare in 1986, the World Bank argued that higher education in Africa was a luxury: that most African countries were better off closing universities at home and training graduates overseas. The thrust of the bank's logic ran as follows: that education is an investment like any other, foolish to make unless the returns are profitable." However, Mamdani further comments, "[r]ecognizing that its call for a closure of universities was politically unsustainable, the bank subsequently modified its agenda, calling for universities to be trimmed and restructured to produce only those skills which the market demands."

25. Good governance also has to do with the issue of democracy and human rights—and the latter in turn impinges on the matter of the war-making apparatus since governments in the developing world have tended to use this apparatus against their own people. One ought to point out here that the term *good governance* (like "civil society") is a relatively new buzzword in the lexicon of Western development experts and aid donors. It is as if all of a sudden they have woken up to discover that things like good governance (and a vibrant civil society) are necessary after all for national development to succeed. Consider, for example, the following statement which is almost laughable in its obviousness made by the African Development Bank, an affiliate of the World Bank, in one of its recent reports: "Governance is now one of the cornerstones of economic development. Good governance, in its political, social, and economic dimensions, underpins sustainable human development and the reduction of poverty in that it defines the processes and structures that guide political and socioeconomic relationships" (African Development Bank 2001). Of course, despite calls for good governance there is a palpable absence of accompanying analysis of why good governance has been absent in most of Africa all these years. Could it be that one factor (among many, it goes without saying) has been the role played by external agents: Cold War super powers, former colonial masters, foreign multinational corporations, and, yes, even multilateral agencies such as the Bretton Woods institutions (the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund)?

26. Information source: various data banks and publications available online through websites maintained by the World Bank and its affiliates; the various U.N. agencies; and bilateral donor agencies like the U.S. Agency for International Development. This data is also available by consulting the annual hard-copy statistical publications of these institutions and government agencies. Note that no single source of data exists for the information provided here; multiple sources must be consulted. However, if one were to insist on a single source, then the recent report from the World Bank (2000b) titled *Can Africa Claim the 21st Century* comes closest.

27. Consider the following simple, but awful statistic: for most of the past three decades, the annual average percentage growth rate of per capita GDP for the African continent as a whole has never made it into positive territory! Or contemplate this fact: in 1965 the per capita GDP for Sub-Saharan Africa was at $841 while that of East Asia and the Pacific stood at $632. Compare these figures thirty years later: in 1995, $933 for Sub-Saharan Africa and $2,253 for East Asia and the Pacific (World Bank 2000c: 131). Not surprisingly, on the Human Development Index Sub-Saharan Africa is at the very bottom. Note also: data just presented for Sub-Saharan Africa also includes South Africa. If South Africa was not included the figures would be even more astounding and de-

pressing. Of course such statistics in themselves tell us nothing, especially these particular variety, about the awful "tears of blood" inducing qualitative circumstances of the lives of ordinary people, as those who have visited Africa—specifically rural Africa—in recent years will attest to.

What is more: it is not simply that the economic circumstances of the majority of the African population have deteriorated terribly since independence, but as if to add insult to injury, the population has been simultaneously subjected to political thuggery of the worst kind on a relentless basis. As if the daily life struggles of simply putting bread on the table has not been challenging enough for the vast majority, they have been forced to endure widespread and relentless political oppression over the years involving massive violations of their basic human rights. Only the slightest hint—it can not be any more than that—of this circumstance can be elicited from considering these stark facts compiled by the African Development Bank in its latest report: Between 1963 and 2000 there were 180 leadership successions in Africa. Of these over 50% took place through coups, wars or invasions. The rest involved retirement, assassinations or impeachment. Only about 7% occurred because the incumbent lost an election. During this same period, to look at this matter from a different angle, the political life over 200 regimes was terminated by means of coups, civil wars or invasions. The report from which this data comes (African Development Bank 2001), further observes:

> Africa is famous for leaders with long tenure. Fourteen present national heads in the region have been in office for between ten and 20 years; nine have served more than 20 years. The mean tenure for all former African leaders is 7.2 years, and about twice that for leaders who died in office or retired…. Of the 101 past leaders who left office due to a coup or similar unauthorized event, roughly two-thirds were killed, imprisoned, or banished to a foreign country. Twenty-seven former rulers died violently, counting five whose deaths appear to have been independent of a coup or coup attempt. The remaining 22 leaders in this category clearly perished as a direct result of coups. Of Africa's overthrown leaders who were not executed or assassinated, 37 were detained and held in jail or placed under house arrest. Twenty-nine other ex-leaders were forced into exile, at least temporarily. That figure does not include nine ex-leaders who experienced periods of both imprisonment and banishment.

A very strong word of caution is in order here: there will be the temptation among some, especially the Eurocentrists (and the like-minded), to immediately jump to the conclusion on the basis of the foregoing that all of Africa's problems are a matter of *agency* rather than the *structure* of the Western-dominated international political and economic order. In other words, the question that emerges here is this: Are the problems just mentioned a symptom or a cause of Africa's current awful predicament. The answer is that it is both; *it is not entirely one or the other*. That is, Africa's current circumstance is a product of *both* structure and agency, dialectically intertwined (see Appendix II on the matter of structure).

28. The issue of a mass market (for elite goods) could have been resolved to some degree if there had been a push for a borderless economic union of Africa; but neither the foreign powers nor most of Africa's leaders had any interest in the matter. On the contrary, the foreign powers—especially the former colonial powers—found it in their interest to encourage Africa to remain divided (and continue to do so), initially for both Cold War reasons and for relative economic advantage (though today it is only the latter factor that is relevant).

29. It never occurred to the foreign aid donors that circumstances of comparative advantage could be created. The notion of comparative advantage is a false concept as has been amply demonstrated by countries such as Taiwan and South Korea. However, the more serious flaw in their thinking is, of course, the failure to be cognizant of the inherently unequal terms of trade between the PQD countries and the industrialized countries, coupled with the low demand-elasticity of many of the raw materials exports of the PQD countries. (See, for example, Dasgupta 1998.)

30. Of course, one can also argue that the West had taken this position (of advocating an elementary economic role for Africa) because it was hardly in a position to use its resources to assist Africa to become its economic competitor in the global market—at least that is how the Western politicians and public would have seen it. The fact that the United States and other Western countries, for example, continued (and continue) to refuse to lower their high tariff barriers against labor-intensive, low capital manufactured products (e.g., textiles, processed foods, etc.) from African countries—that is countries that are among the poorest in the world—lends support to this view. Yet, the economically astute would have recognized that, on the contrary, an economically thriving Africa could only have meant greater economic opportunities for the West as well, because of increased commerce and trade that would have ensued (much in the same way as would occur with respect to East Asia)—not to mention such other benefits as reduction or elimination of foreign aid to Africa, and so on. Imagine this scenario: an economically united Africa—that would include South Africa—with a well-developed industrial base capable of producing commodities for export to countries within Africa itself and globally as well. It could well have happened if the West had pushed for it from the very beginning, that is, at the time of independence.

31. The literature on economic development in Africa is now vast, diverse, complex, confusing and at times even highly contradictory. Given the depth and duration of the development malaise that afflicts the continent, this is, perhaps, not surprising. Anyhow, those wishing to delve further into the economic aspects of development briefly mentioned here may want to look at the following sources: Cooper (1993); Gereffi and Fonda (1992); Leys (1996); Logan and Mengisteab (1993); Lewis (1996); Lubeck (1992); Mbaku and Saxena (2004); McPherson and Goldsmith (1998); Mytelka (1989); Rieff (1998); Saul and Leys (1999); and various past and present issues of the journal, *Review of African Political Economy,* published in the United Kingdom.

32. There was a complete failure here to understand that in reality these were still capitalist economies, except that while the means of production was state-owned, the appropriation of surplus was at the individual level (politicians and bureaucrats). At the same time, there was little appreciation of the roots of the development of state capitalism in Africa: colonialism had left the state as the only indigenous player with access to reasonable amounts of capital. The obsession with market-driven economic growth strategies, one must add here, however, went beyond echoes of Cold War rhetoric. As Surin (2003) points out, even in circumstances where judicious state intervention in the economy had been the hallmark of capitalist economic success—as in East Asia—the World Bank did everything it could to downplay this fact even as it touted the so-called East Asian "economic miracle." (See also Wade [1996] for a critique of the "East Asia Miracle paradigm," and the sources in endnote 21 in Chapter 8.) The fact is that no matter what the World Bank experts said, they were absolutely wrong on at least two counts if one examined the circumstances of such newly industrializing countries in Asia as

Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea, and Taiwan: state intervention in the economy was necessary, and higher education (though broadly defined) had an important role in their economic development. Now, to be sure, there were many other variables that accounted for the phenomenal success these countries had in registering average growth rates in the order of 7% per capita GNP, decade after decade, and in the process radically transforming their countries into relatively powerful economic players in the global market. However, it is also clear that the state had played a very crucial role in directing economic development by means of policies of judicious intervention in various economic sectors—in fact it would not be an exaggeration to say that in most of these countries dirigisme had been the order of the day; and it is also clear that the relationship between the development of higher education and economic growth had been a dialectical one (and here again, of course, the state was playing a very important role). Note: the emphasis here is on dialectical and not unidirectional causality. That is (taking the higher education side of the equation) these countries had expended a great deal of resources (both private and public) in providing education and training in two main areas: science and technology and the entrepreneurial/vocational arts (business, accounting, management, etc.). (For more on the experiences of these countries see, for example, Ashton, Green, James, and Sung [1999]; Dasgupta [1998]; and endnote 21 in Chapter 8. For a general discussion of universities and their role in economic growth see Gray [1999].) Notice also that an important difference, which somehow completely escapes the experts at the World Bank, is that in much of Africa, capital is foreign owned. In Asia, in relative terms, this has not been the case; there for a long time much of capital was locally owned and only later did they begin to allow foreign capital to come in and form partnerships with local capital. What the East Asian economic "miracle" appears to suggest is that in terms of successful economic growth (not necessarily development—for the jury is still out on whether all in those countries have benefited from the miracle) three conjunctural factors (the key word here is conjunctural) are essential: political stability (though not necessarily accompanied by democracy one must admit—how else can one account for the growth-friendly wage/productivity ratios ["slave labor"?]), local ownership of capital and judicious intervention by the state in the economy (which includes production of human capital, meaning development of the higher education sector—but beyond just the universities). With respect to all these three factors the World Bank has traditionally been out of tune with reality in terms of its policy prescriptions and practice. Two other points need to be noted here: as the recent financial crisis in East Asia has demonstrated there are limits to the economic miracle; however, what is even worse for them is that the policy prescriptions of the IMF and the World Bank are likely to place their economies in even greater jeopardy over the long-run if they pursue them (see, for example, the discussion by Medley and Caroll [2003]). Notice also that in the absence of this tri-partite conjuncture, a strategy of structural adjustment could only be a policy prescription for economic disaster, as country after country in Africa has found out over the past decade and a half.

33. The self-confessed father of the phrase "Washington Consensus" is one John Williamson, a senior fellow at the conservative (neoliberal) Washington-based think-tank, the Institute for International Economics. See his summary and discussion of the term as he defined it, together with a critique by others in the work edited by Auty and Toye (1996). See also Stiglitz (2002), and Kuczynski and Williamson (2003).

34. Of course, in the typical Eurocentrist fashion it lays the blame for this circum-

stance squarely on Africa itself: "Why is Africa so poor?" it asks. "The short answer… is 'bad government'" (2004: 4). It conveniently forgets that good government while highly desirable for its own sake, in of itself it can do little in a structurally inequitable global economic environment dominated by Western corporate capitalist interests.

35. As can be gathered from the foregoing, the crux of the structural adjustment thinking is that those who are deemed to need it are responsible for their economic predicament. It is, in other words, a classic blame-the-victim strategy much beloved by the West whenever issues of global economic injustice are raised by PQD countries. Schultheis, writing two decades ago (1984) described this approach, which has been a central theme of the numerous World Bank reports and documents on Africa, well: "Scapegoating the victims seems to be a popular pastime in the drawing rooms of the wealthy. These World Bank reports, supported by country and sectoral studies, of many African nations, manifest this same tendency of 'blaming the victims.' They are classical expositions of 'horse and sparrow economics,' patronizingly instructing the sparrows to improve their techniques so that they might more completely pick out the oats in the horses droppings. But they are deadly serious, as the geography of hunger and hunger-related deaths again expands" (p. 9). One must also note that the structural adjustment approach smacked of a considerable degree of blatant hypocrisy: social expenditures were legitimate for Western countries in order to provide their citizenries with economic "safety-nets" (measures ranging from health insurance to unemployment insurance to food-stamps), but they were deemed illegitimate for the PQD countries. For more on the structural adjustment strategy in Africa see also Enos (1995), Mkandawire and Soludo (2003), Mosely, Subasat, and Weeks (1995); Schatz (1994); Sender (2002); and Van de Walle, Ball, and Ramachandran (2003). Biersteker (1990), Hutchful (1995); and Schatz (1996) are also relevant here because they demonstrate the weakness of the strategy on its own conceptual merits. For structural adjustment from a global comparative perspective see SAPRIN (2004)—a visit to their website, www.saprin.org, is also helpful. For a more sympathetic view of the bank's role in Africa see Kapur, Lewis, and Webb (1997). For structural adjustment and its consequences that focuses exclusively on higher education in Africa see Federici, Caffentzis, and Alidou (2000).

36. The fact that economic growth could occur without development never occurred to them (nor for that matter were they in a position, such were their theoretical premises, to contemplate the possibility that the very relations that they championed between the developed and the newly PQD countries could be the basis of the underdevelopment of the latter.) So, what is the difference between economic growth and economic development? The answer is that the former does not necessarily presuppose structural change, whereas the latter does. In other words, under an economic growth model the present configuration of factor inputs, existing institutions and the current social structure remain a constant; whereas under an economic development model all of these are to be transformed on the basis of innovation, new technologies, and so on. Economic development is both a quantitative and a qualitative phenomenon. Consider this fact as well: economic development also implies poverty reduction, but economic growth may or may not lead to poverty reduction (see also endnote 20 in Chapter 8).

37. Of course, as Vaizey (1972) reminds us, the theory of human capital was not an original idea. The concept has a long pedigree in that it is implicitly threaded through some of the work of such classical and neoclassical economists as Sir William Petty (seventeenth-century political economist with interests in the economic role of the state

and the labor theory of value); Adam Smith (eighteenth-century social philosopher and political economist who was a strong proponent of laissez-faire economics and free market competition); and Alfred Marshall (nineteenth-century political economist whose accomplishments included the introduction of such new economic concepts as the representative firm, consumer's surplus, and elasticity of demand). However, the difference is that Schultz's formulation was far more explicit in imputing economic growth to education, by likening it to physical capital. More important than that, however, was that this explicit formulation occurred at an opportune time, from the perspective of development planning. For, not only was the notion of catapulting the PQD countries on to the Rostowian "take-off" trajectory gaining currency, but just about the time that Schultz's formulation appeared, the United Nations had inaugurated (in 1960) the First Development Decade in the wake of a dramatic shift in the numerical balance in the General Assembly with the entry of a host of newly independent African countries. Thus the call was sounded for large and rapid increases in the growth rate of the per capita GNP of the developing nations. That education would do the trick, many development experts thought, was also given credence by the fact that previous experiences with development efforts among the Asian nations in the preceding decade had shown that large infusions of capital—along the lines of the Marshall Plan in the postwar years in Europe and Japan—had not had the same effect (of producing rapid economic growth). The view quickly took hold that it was the absence of adequate human capital that was to blame for this outcome. Thus in drawing the policy implications of his theory, Schultz (1961b) strongly advocated investment in human capital as the best means of achieving economic growth. Clearly then, if the missing variable in the development effort among the newly independent Asian nations in the 1950s had been deemed to be physical capital, then in the succeeding decade the missing variable was seen to be human capital.

38. For a comprehensive overview of the field see the reference work for Pergamon edited by Psacharopoulos (1987).

39. Consider this major flaw, well described by Rado (1966): "If the purpose [is] to test, however, crudely, whether education contributes to economic growth, then what had to be correlated with GNP per capita was the educational level of the employed labor force who produced the national income which was being measured. Current enrollment ratios of students are irrelevant to current GNP. For, their education, if it contributes to anything, will contribute to the income levels of future decades, and not at all to that of today." This is not all, there other equally serious weaknesses that afflict any attempt to economically quantify the role of education in promoting economic growth; they include:

(a) The issue of causality: positive correlation, however strong, does not ipso facto imply causation; one factor could very easily be the cause of the other. It is quite possible, theoretically, that increases in economic growth may lead to increases in educational development, and not necessarily vice versa. In practice, however, it is more likely the case that the relationship between educational development and economic growth is a *dialectical* one (see Chapter 1 for the definition of dialectical).
(b) The assumption that education is a homogenous input and yet, as Streeten (1972) points out, this is clearly not so. Thus, even if one were to accept that education predicated economic growth, it would be necessary to state what kinds of education would be appropriate. The teaching of Latin has different results from the teaching of agronomy.
(c) Education, in the final analysis, is a matter of personal choice. What this implies is that for

many, education has a dual function: it is a means to an end and it is an end in itself (Rado 1966). Consider this thought experiment: If education was freely available, but there were no direct economic benefits attached to it, would education simply whither away altogether? History tells us that the answer is no; for, in many societies being a learned person carried benefits that were other than economic.

(d) The role of education in economic growth cannot be ascertained simply on the basis of a single statistic of aggregate growth. Structure, pattern, social distribution, etc., are all variables of economic growth that demand attention in any calculation that purports to examine the relationship between economic growth and education (Todaro 1977).

(e) Education in isolation may have very little use in promoting economic growth. In other words, it is erroneous to treat education in isolation from other factors, just as it was erroneous to do the same with respect to capital when considering its role in inducing economic growth in PQD countries in the 1950s (Streeten 1972).

(f) The quality of education is an important variable in the education-economy nexus and yet it is completely ignored in the calculations of economists (albeit not deliberately since no method yet exists of quantifying quality). (Georgescu-Roegen 1976) .

40. It goes without saying that even on its own methodological grounds, the rates-of-return approach to educational planning is ridden with serious fallacies and weaknesses. A few of the more critical ones may be spelled out here:

(a) Perhaps one of the chief weaknesses of rates-of-return studies is that they fail to take an adequate account of institutional traits that affect the system of remuneration. To assume that increases in remuneration are a sole or the main function of increases in productivity that ostensibly comes with increases in the level of education is highly erroneous. Thus, for example, Georgescu-Roegen (1976) draws attention to the fact that calculations made by John C. Hause and others indicate that as a consequence of the social bias toward academic diplomas and certifications, employers tend to more or less ignore ability altogether. Hence, whereas a very significant difference in ability (represented by as much as ten I.Q. points) will yield only a 1% increase in income, an increase in one-year of schooling will result in a 4.6% increase. Among the PQD nations this constitutes a very serious problem where high returns to education is not a function of, in the words of Balogh (1964), "the relative actual productivity, usefulness, experience or knowledge of the individual but the injustice of the system." In other words, in many of these countries the emerging elite has managed to retain the old colonial wage structures that were developed without regard to the national averages of wages and salaries (see also Dore 1976).

(b) The rates-of-return studies pay considerable attention to income foregone by students while engaged in studying, but they tend to ignore income foregone by other groups in society such as housewives, voluntary workers, and those who due to other benefits accept lower incomes (e.g., university teachers). Similarly, they also tend to ignore non-financial benefits that accrue to students while in school—especially those going to universities in developed countries. In PQD countries too, this point may be significant where government paid university education entails such benefits for the student as three full meals a day and an escape from the drudgery of back-breaking domestic chores (especially for girls).

(c) Rates-of-return have to be calculated over the lifetime of the individual, and therefore the present differentials in income (assuming that they can be attributed to different levels of education) must be seen in terms of the educational situation in the 1950s and 1960s. Yet, among many African countries educational provision was at a very low level of development at that time. Therefore, it is illegitimate to assume that the present levels of educational provision (which in many cases has expanded a hundred-fold since independence) will yield the same pattern of output in the future as in the past. In fact, within two decades or so of independence

it had become clear to the observant that as more and more graduates poured out of the educational systems on to a super saturated labor market, the same job and income was demanding an ever-increasing level of education. (See Dore [1976] for more on this phenomenon of *qualification escalation*.)

(d) Rates-of-return to investment in education can serve as a very poor basis for policy decisions because too often there is the danger of falling into the trap of linear thinking. Thus because an X% of income spent on education will yield (for example) X times 5% income, then it is quickly assumed that X times 10% spent on education will result in X time 50% income. Yet, of course, this is not true because income does not grow exponentially as a result of ever-increasing expenditures on education (Reubens 1977).

(e) Dependence on consideration of formal schooling as a data base for the rates-of-return calculations implies another serious defect of such kinds of studies: they overlook the importance of nonformal education, such as on-the-job training, training in the armed forces, training through correspondence colleges, etc.; In other words, the rates-of-return calculations tend to ignore the benefits to the efficiency of schooling derived from concealed transfers of efficiency from nonformal sources of education and training (Georgescu-Roegen 1976).

(f) The input-output neoclassical economics modeling approach that undergird these studies is an inappropriate model since education for the most part constitutes a nonmarket sector. As Marginson (1999) explains: "unless educational services are sold in a market there can be no conclusive measure of output, or of value added in the course of production, or of efficiency and productivity. The economics of education literally cannot contemplate nonmarket production and has failed to develop analytical tools with which to deal with it" (p. 207).

41. Similarly, in a report published in 2000 by the bank and prepared by a task force (Task Force on Higher Education and Society) that the bank and UNESCO convened together, there is this enlightened passage:

We have not asked whether higher education matters more than other key sectors such as agriculture, health, transportation, and basic education. But we are absolutely confident that it is much more important to development than one would surmise from the comparative neglect it has received in most quarters of the international development community in recent decades. Higher education's benefits must now be recognized more widely so it can take its place in the mainstream of the international development agenda. The information revolution that is driving the new economy is dependent on educated and literate workers; and more than ever, the new ideas fueling this expansion have come from people with tertiary degrees (World Bank 2000c: 92).

42. The 2002 report, of course, is the much touted, Constructing Knowledge Societies (World Bank 2002). While there is much in the report to commend it, not least the fact that it expands on the sentiments expressed in World Bank 2000 (see preceding note), it is important not to get carried away by the report. Yes, there is now acknowledgement of the importance of higher education for the development of PQD countries—especially in an age of exploding information and communication technologies. However, note that the publication disingenuously observes that "reexamining the World Bank's policies and experiences in tertiary education has become a matter of urgency," because "there is a perception that the Bank has not been fully responsive to the growing demand by clients for tertiary education interventions and that, especially in the poorest countries, lending for the subsector has not matched the importance of tertiary education systems for economic and social development" (p. xviii, emphasis added). Years of relative neglect and policy denigration of the importance of higher education

for PQD countries is nonchalantly swept aside with a wave of the word "perception." Be that as it may, one must strongly caution that the bank is not yet about to develop policies in support of the developmental university (see chapter 8). It is still fundamentally driven by the logic of structural adjustment in which its support for higher education is only to the extent that the traditional universities remain peripheral; instead it is championing the newer private forms that have emerged (largely under the globalization imperative), such as the for-profit, the corporate-sponsored, the franchise, the virtual and other similar institutions—that is, it wants the state to be marginally involved in higher education. While the foolishness of such an approach has already been noted (see the discussion on East Asia), for only the state has the capacity and the obligation to effectively harness higher education, whatever forms they take, in a rational manner for purposes of development, there is another major flaw in the bank's thinking: its failure to comprehend the critical importance of the traditional university in the task of building democratic societies. Authentic universities (possess academic freedom) are not just factories for human capital, they do more than that. Obsessed with the commodification of knowledge on a global scale—driven by the erroneous belief that capitalism ipso facto equals democracy—there is a singular failure by the bank to comprehend that the traditional university it denigrates, albeit not in so many words, is also the repository par excellence of a society's democratic impulse (see Halvorsen [2005] and Halvorsen and Skauge [2004], and endnote 110 in Chapter 3 for more on this issue).

43. For a useful overview of global trends in this aspect of university finance, see Johnstone and Shroff-Mehta (2001), Johnstone (2004), and Woodhall (2003).

44. See Swedberg (1986), who challenges the notion much espoused by the Bretton Woods institutions that their work rests entirely on economics, and politics has no part to play in it. Labelling it as the "doctrine of economic neutrality" he shows how the these institutions are used by countries such as the United States to impose their economic agendas on PQD countries (see also Bello [2001]).