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WESTERN DISCOURSE THEORY

by

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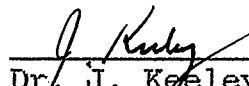
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Abstract

The lack of development in Africa in the last twenty years raises questions about both development practices and theories. This thesis focuses on the power relations, as defined by Michel Foucault, between the West and non-Western cultures in the international system and in the discipline and practice of development. The argument is that the international economic and political system is a cultural animal created by the West and that other cultures have to deal with the cultural assumptions found in it, such as capitalism, the nation-state, and development. Thus, it is argued that underdevelopment is caused by an unequal power relation between the West and Africa. The fundamental problem for Africans is that their constructions of reality, and their way of dealing with reality is being replaced by the Western constructions of reality. This psychological takeover, it is argued, causes underdevelopment in Africa.

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"For the black, there is only one destiny,
and it is white."

F. Fanon

"It's been a long long time
since they first came
and marched through the village
they taught us to forget our past
and live the future in their image.

They said
'you should've learned to speak
a little bit of English,
don't be scared of a suit and tie.
Learn to walk in the dreams of the foreigner'
I am a third world child.

They said
'you should learn to
speak a little bit of English,
Maybe practice birth control.
Keep away from controversial politics,
So to save my third world soul'".

'Third World Child', by Johny Clegg.

Introduction

The 19th century saw the dawn of the globalization of the economy through colonialism. This was then followed by the globalization of science, technology, communications, and politics. This globalization, having been born in Europe, is Western in nature. Economically, we saw the emergence of a world Western capitalist system. Politically, there was the disappearance of all forms of large-scale political aggregation, except for one, the Western-style nation-state. Underlying the globalization of these factors is an undercurrent of cultural globalization by the West, called westernization.

Embedded in this Western globalization are psycho-cultural and historical messages and implications about reality. The Western globalization is, of course, not too much of a problem for the West at the present, although the emergence of capitalism in the West did create much suffering for the peasants and workers, for example. But what are the effects on non-Western countries and cultures, the focus of this thesis? This thesis is an exploration into the subject of westernization as an empirical and theoretical phenomenon. For the case materials, we will look at the effects of westernization on one continent, namely Africa, and through a multi-faceted process, development.

When one looks at development in Africa, one is forced to admit that development strategies have failed miserably

since the mid-1970s. And if the strategies have failed, then one has to question the theories upon which these strategies are built. In this thesis, I will argue that the failure of development theories and practices is due to their disregard for two important factors: power and culture. The problem looked at in this paper is posed in the following way: can there be a good understanding of development and of the international political economic system when culture and power relations are not part of the analysis? I will argue no. I will show why a more sophisticated analysis of power is needed in the field of development and I will also show why the concept of culture is a necessary component of such an analysis of power for a new theory of underdevelopment. The implications of this thesis, as we will see, go much further than development. It is also a critique of Western culture as a whole and it delves into the nature of power.

To summarize my main argument, I will attempt to address the problems I see in the development literature by using a Foucauldian analysis of power relations. However, Foucault developed his view of power by looking at only one culture, the West. But at the international level, several cultures are in interaction and Foucault's analysis of power becomes unsatisfactory. In order to develop a theory of international development, I will therefore add one component to Foucault: culture. The main argument of this paper is that the interaction between cultures at the international level is also an interaction between webs of power relations.

Underdevelopment in Africa, then, is caused by the subjugation of the African web of power relation by the dominating Western web of power relations. In more familiar terms, the westernization of the world is causing underdevelopment in Africa. As we shall see, this subjugation takes many forms and we will have a look at a few of them: the nation-state, capitalism, and development itself. This will be made clear as the paper proceeds.

This question of subjugation is an important one, for there are several ways to subjugate. Obvious ones are also the least subtle ones: subjugation through force and military conquest, like colonization in Africa for example. Yet another form of subjugation exists, one where the previously physically subjugated takes an active role in his or her own subjugation, what Foucault calls the internalization of power relations. This is what westernization is essentially about: the psychic, psychological, philosophical, and cultural subjugation of non-Western cultures by the West where the non-Western takes an active role in his or her own westernization. The thesis will focus on the Western end of the process, how westernization is transmitted, forced upon, sold, and cajoled to the rest of the world, focusing on Africa. We will come to the issue of the African's role in her or his own westernization in the conclusion of this thesis, using the ideas of an African, Axelle Kabou.

In trying to analyze the impact of one culture (the West) on another (African), the thesis has both strengths and

weaknesses. Its strength is that it will analyze the impact of certain fundamental patterns of Western civilization on other certain fundamental trends of Africa. Its weakness is also precisely that: it will be possible to find exceptions to each example given, exceptions that will not fit the hypothesis proposed by this author. What is important, however, is to study the impact of westernization on the general patterns of African cultures and their own patterns of change. As a case study, we will focus on the Asante in the 19th and 20th century.

This sort of analysis has several implications for this thesis. For example, it means that certain African and Western basic cultural structures will have to be understood. This research is an exploration into the subject of the imposition and penetration of Western civilization in a non-western culture and its consequences. Thus, the African responses to the intrusion of Western reality is also part of the process of westernization. This sort of research has practically not been done. Western civilization has been studied in Western terms but only very rarely have the basic structures of Western culture been analyzed in a comparative way. This is another implication of this thesis: instead of comparing Africa to the West, the West and its impact will be analyzed from an African point of view, as much as this is possible for a non-African.

As for the impact of westernization on Africa, it was very profound. The impact went beyond slavery, political and

economic change. It is attempting to change the African psychology and psyche. One of the most important themes underlying the thesis is that westernization is a new form of colonization, a colonization of reality by the imposition of one culture's construction of reality over another.

The thesis will be divided into 4 sections. In the first section, I will explain Foucault's most important concepts, add culture to his framework of power/knowledge, and develop the theory used in this thesis. We will also analyze the concept of westernization and its process.

The second section of the thesis will look at the discourse of development, reviewing and criticizing some of the main trends in the development literature. The critique of the literature will be based on the framework developed here and will give the reader a flavour of the theory's analytical potential. The critique will somewhat parallel Wiarda's point that the concept and the practice of development are Western and therefore inappropriate for certain non-Western cultures, like Africa. Wiarda writes that

the models of development most familiar in the literature are all derived from the Western experience of a particular time and place, and therefore have but limited relevance to today's 3rd world nations (Wiarda, p.23).

Wiarda goes as far as to suggest that taken together, Western assumptions form a socio-political pathology, a disease, of the study and practice of development. These western assumptions about the theory and practice of development seem to actually contribute to underdevelopment in Africa. The

example of Japan will be useful in providing an example of a non-Western culture that has developed along Western lines without becoming Western. This exception will also be explained in terms of the framework developed here. In the same section, we will then offer an alternative theory which will be followed by some empirical considerations.

In the third section, we will look at the role of the nation-state, as a particular component of the Western cultural and historical experience, in the issue of development. The argument will be that the nation-state is part of the Western discourse and that it is not compatible with the African culture, and as such, it may well prevent development from occurring in Africa.

In the fourth section, we will see how capitalism acts internationally and locally to prevent development in Africa. This argument has been taken by other authors in the past, such as Andre Gunder Frank and Paul Baran who concentrated on South America, but the argument of this thesis, as we will see in the next chapter, will be different in that it is based on cultural-power analysis. We will also have a brief look at how the analysis used in the thesis may bring new insights into the nature of the relationship between capitalism and the nation-state.

Finally, I will look at Africa's responsibility for its own 'lack of development', using Axelle Kabou's main arguments which appeared in her controversial book, Et si l'Afrique Refusait le Developpement? From there, we will

shortly look at Africa's possibilities for development in both theoretical and practical terms, in light of the analytical framework developed here. I will provide suggestions on how development could occur in Africa, if certain things were changed. The breadth of the changes suggested will only highlight the strength of the hold the Western discourse has over the African discourse and thus, the difficulty in having development occur in Africa.

Chapter 1. Theoretical Background.

"It is the theory which decides what can be observed."
A. Einstein.

In 1848, Marx and Engels, in The Communist Manifesto, made the point that the people of the world were being incorporated in the world capitalist economy (Marx and Engels, 1955, (1848), p.13-14). Then, in 1964, M. McLuhan's book, Understanding Media, popularized the term 'global village'. These books partially took culture and people's mental life and construction of reality into consideration, and in several ways were ground-breaking works. But neither works are the final word on the problem of globalization; I wish to shed light on this phenomenon by focusing my analysis differently, namely, by looking at the nature of westernization. In this thesis, and more precisely in this section, I attempt to lay the ground for a cultural analysis of underdevelopment and of the international system.

McLuhan's concept of the 'global village' carries the imagery of a world in which the boundaries of culture, religion, race, gender, language, and physical space have shrunk to the point where they are no longer significant causes for distrust. As a result, societies which lived in relative ignorance of each other up to a few decades ago, are now in increasing contact, and at 'electric speed, as McLuhan puts it (McLuhan, 1964, p.15-16). Reciprocal influences and interdependence are becoming commonplace.

The idea of the global village implies the idea of

globalization, or the homogenization of cultures from all over the earth to the point where an international super-culture would emerge. This could increase comprehension between peoples of the earth and maybe decrease the potential for war. It could also have beneficial effects on the ecology as a more global thinking and world view would come into being. But that would occur only if cultures were of relatively equal strength and health, or if an enlightened powerful nation were to become leader in these areas. I do not believe either scenario is likely. Some cultures are under attack from other more expansionist and more aggressive, but not necessarily better, cultures. If globalization occurs with the present trends, one would not have a mix of cultures but rather a westernization of the world, as will be demonstrated in this thesis.

A1. Hypothesis and definition of main concepts.

My hypothesis is that westernization and Western development leads to underdevelopment in Africa. This thesis is a first step at understanding the impact of westernization on the non-Western world, focusing on Africa. I will use Japan as a case study of how a non-Western country can be developed in a Western international system. This thesis is also a step at developing cultural tools of analysis to understand politico-economic issues, such as development and under-development.

In this thesis, 'culture' will be seen in the wide sense

of the term. It will not simply mean musical styles or different ways of dressing. These are only external expressions of the cultural self in people.

By culture is meant, therefore, every aspect of life: know-how, technical knowledge, customs, (...) religion, mentality, values, language, symbols, socio-political and economic behaviour, indigenous methods of taking decisions and exercising power, method of production and economic relations, and so on (Verhelst, 1987, p.17).

All these find their source in the history of a culture, its relation, or lack thereof, with other cultures, etc. Culture, therefore is not a luxury or a sense of esthetic, but "the sum total of the solutions supplied by human beings to the problems the natural and social environment sets them"* (Garaudy, 1977, p.195, all quotes followed by a '*' translated by this author).

In this 'global village', as in every other village or society, we tend to organize ourselves on the basis of knowledge for the purpose of control, organization, and development. The specific uses and definitions of knowledge vary from society to society. Today, in the 'global village', this knowledge comes from first world countries, mainly those of the West. This situation would be acceptable if a society or nation felt trust and comfort in the source of knowledge. In addition, if there were enough time to assess and adapt to this knowledge, or adapt the knowledge to the culture, then the changes would not be overly problematic. But this is not the case. The third world does not have the capital nor, sometimes even the know-how, to adapt Western knowledge to

local cultures. Technology could be translatable but this needs funds and know-how, which Africa does not have, and so right now, in practice, technology is not transferable. To be able to translate, one must understand Western knowledge and reality, realize that they may not be appropriate to non-Western cultures, and then understand how Western and African views of knowledge do not fit. Thus, the study of westernization is the study of the overwhelming transfer of Western knowledge and reality to other cultures and what the resulting impact implies for the recipient.

What we now have in Africa is a change in the type of knowledge that is considered important. In an industrial age, knowledge of the workings of machines is considered paramount. In the post-industrial age, the West is changing its knowledge base according to changes in certain modes of production. African knowledge and culture are being changed by another culture. And, because of the role of knowledge in one's perception -and therefore view- of reality, Africa's reality is actively being changed by another culture's reality, i.e. the Western (See Endnote #1). The point to understand here is that knowledge is not absolute, not even scientific knowledge: it is culturally and historically dependent. If so, what is knowledge then?

Knowledge can be a difficult term to define, because the definition will vary with the cognitive framework, needs and abilities of the individual preparing the definition. For example, Bell defines knowledge as:

a set of organized statements of facts or ideas, presenting a reasoned judgement or an experimental result, which is transmitted to others through some communication medium in some systematic form... knowledge consists of new judgements (research and scholarship) or new presentations of older judgements (textbooks and teaching) (Bell, 1972, p.175).

Max Scheler identifies three classes of knowledge:

knowledge for the sake of action and or control, knowledge for the sake of non-material culture (intellectual knowledge) and knowledge required for the salvation of the soul (Scheler in Bell, 1972, p.175).

The preceding definitions of knowledge are neither wrong nor right. Different views of knowledge are proper to their own cultural setting (including location in the historical process) and are only imperfectly applied to other cultures. They are, at best, regional in nature. That is, only those people who have the same insights and who share common experiences can relate to a particular knowledge in a similar manner. Whatever definition of knowledge is used, those who have access to and are able to interpret that knowledge are held in high esteem by the members of their societies. Even when the purpose of knowledge is to control or influence others (as, it can be argued, it usually is), one must be able to indicate to others that one has access to that knowledge others hold in high regard and that one understands it (and therefore controls it in the eyes of the others). The Egyptian priests, for example, knew the proper time for harvesting and planting of crops but as far as the general population was concerned, the priests, at the very least, had

a direct connection with the God Nile. What is important and common to the knowledge-owners is that they preserve(d) their power and influence by not sharing their knowledge. Today, the 'owners' of knowledge, the scientists, engineers, economists, and supposedly, politicians, are the priests.

Implied in the discussion above is a relation between knowledge and power, a relationship not developed enough in the preceding definitions of knowledge. More importantly, it is felt that there is an implication that knowledge is a necessarily liberating force, a view not shared by this author, nor by Michel Foucault. For Foucault, as he says in an interview reproduced in Power/Knowledge, power and knowledge are intimately related and therefore, knowledge can be enslaving.

Foucault does not see power merely as repressive or from the top down. "In reality, power means relations, a more or less organized, hierarchical, co-ordinated cluster of relations" (Foucault, 1980, p.198). Foucault sees power relations not merely as dichotomic, as having power-haves and power have-nots, but rather as a web of relations in which certain units (be they individuals, states, etc) are better located than other units within those relations. For Foucault, people are both subjects and objects of power, they are both oppressors and oppressed, not simply one or the other. People internalize these power relations at the family and psychological levels, and this helps to sustain the power relations. In fact, the regime of discourse needs the

internalization of its power relations at the individual level, as well as at the national level, to survive as a regime. Foucault writes that "the great strategies of power (...) depend for their conditions of exercise on the level of the micro-relations of power" (Foucault, 1980, p.200), that is, on the very bodies and psyche of the people within the web of power. If it were not, there would be no impact on the lives of real people and this essay would only be a mental exercise in power analysis.

Power, then, does not only say "no", it also produces ways of thinking, structures, truths, and oppression. The relationship between truth, knowledge, and power is intimate, even incestuous:

Knowledge and power are integrated with one another (...) It is not possible for power to be exercised without knowledge, it is impossible for knowledge not to engender power (Foucault, 1980, p.52).

In fact, knowledge is a form of power which transmits and disseminates the effects of power (Foucault, 1980, p.69). His view of the relationship between knowledge and power parallels the relationship between truth and power. Truth is made up by the power relations and in turn sustains them.

'Truth' is to be understood as a system of ordered procedures (...). 'Truth' is linked in a circular relation with systems of power which produce and sustain it (...). 'A regime of truth' (Foucault, 1980, p.133).

The same kind of relationship exists between truth and knowledge, since truth, as a regime of discourse, gives rise to knowledges, which reinforce the regime of discourse of truth. The relation between truth/knowledge/power explains

why power is not only what says "no". Power produces knowledge and truth which produce power relations that will sustain truth/power/knowledge. But since there is a production of truth, by definition this means that not all truths or knowledges are permitted. This is what he calls a regime of discourse.

A regime of discourse is an expression of the power relations that limits what is un/thinkable, un/doable, etc. It is the dominating social construction of reality. It, like power, produces and allows acceptable modes of thinking, behavior, etc (in fact, regimes of discourse have been used for a long time in the West. One of the ten Commandments says it very well: Thou shall have only one God). The knowledges and truths that are outside the limits of the regime are called subjugated knowledges. Foucault defines a subjugated knowledge in the following way:

By subjugated knowledge, I mean two things: on the one hand, (...) subjugated knowledges are those blocs of historical knowledge which (are) present but disguised and which criticism -which obviously draws upon scholarship- has been able to reveal (Foucault, 1980, p.81-82).

But a subjugated knowledge is also a popular knowledge. These knowledges are local, discontinuous, and disqualified as inadequate to their task by the regime of discourse: "it is through the reappearance of this knowledge [based on scholarship] and these local popular knowledges that criticism performs its work" (Foucault, 1980, p.82). Subjugated knowledges are the non-accepted knowledges. For our purpose, the following similarity between subjugated

knowledge based on scholarship and popular knowledge is most important: both are concerned with a historical knowledge of struggles against repression. Relating to this is Foucault's concept of a genealogy which attempts to

emancipate historical knowledges from that subjection, to render them, that is, capable of opposition and of struggle against the coercion of a theoretical, unitary, formal, scientific discourse (Foucault, 1980, p.89).

But how is this supposed to lead to a Foucauldian cultural analysis of political and economic issues? Foucault gives clues, although I do not believe he was aware of it.

Foucault writes that

Each society has its regimes of truth, its 'general politics' of truth: that is, the types of discourse which accepts and makes knowledge as true; (...) the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true (Foucault, 1980, p.131, emphasis added).

Foucault also believes that in "our society, the relationship between power, right, and truth is organized in a highly specific fashion" (Foucault, 1980, p.93, emphasis added). The emphasis was added because Foucault seems to think that there is a social or a cultural component to the way the relationship is arranged. I would argue that the arrangement is highly specific in every society. That is, all societies have their own specific arrangements, their own relationships between truth, power, and knowledge, and therefore, every society has a different regime of discourse. Foucault does not touch on this, but herein lies the role of culture in power/truth/knowledge: not only is the arrangement, the web of power relations, culturally specific, but in inter-

cultural relations, a specific web can be imposed on other webs.

A2. Foucault and culture: basic argument and expansion of the hypothesis.

Something which Foucault did not see occurs in the interaction between webs and that is the creation of a new web of power relations which ties the webs together. In the case of two power webs with an unequal power relation, these power relations will be structured in such a way as to maintain the 'stronger' web (the West) over the 'weaker' (Africa). In Foucauldian terms, since the power of a unit within a power relation depends on its location within that web, the newly created power relations will maintain that advantage of location. The other web becomes the subjugated knowledge.

I would argue that, like regimes of discourse, subjugated knowledges have corresponding subjugated practices and therefore, subjugated beliefs, institutions, theories, etc. A subjugation at the discourse level also has a subjugation at the empirical level. Africa, for example, is subjugated in two senses. The first is in the Foucauldian sense where the African discourse is subjugated by the Western discourse. The second is that the subjugation of the African discourse translates into a subjugation of African practices by Western ones, a subjugation of African ways of doing, politics, culture, being, economics, and psyche.

The struggle between the Western regime of discourse and Africa as subjugated discourse can be seen at both the macro and the micro level. The Western regime of discourse links the micro and the macro levels through the internalization of the regime of discourse. And, as the theory proposed here would argue, as long as the regime of discourse is not African, or compatible with it, development is most likely to be hindered, if not prevented.

One of the basic arguments of this thesis is that there exists, at the international level, an over-arching regime of discourse that all states and cultures have to engage in. This international regime of discourse was born during the colonial period and has been spreading and deepening ever since. The main argument of this thesis is that this regime of discourse rests on a cultural bed, the Western culture, and that the differences between the two discourses leads to under-development, and other first world-third world issues. But it also shows how the cultural bed determined (and still determines) the nature of the present international system (abbreviated as I.S. from here on). Thus, in this thesis, the I.S. is not taken as a given but its very nature is put into question.

This mix of Foucault and culture is thus a cultural analysis that takes power relations and discourses as basic to the way the I.S. system is shaped and as basic to our understanding of that system. This cultural theory attempts to explain the process by which Western culture is forced

upon, transmitted to, and adapted by non-Western cultures- the process of westernization. In fact, westernization is the conveyor belt by which the Western regime of discourse is translated into real life structures. It is an expression, like truth and the international regime of discourse are, of the Western regime of discourse. Western discourse theory, as the theory developed here is called (see endnote #2), attempts to describe this process of acculturation, the way the Western regime of discourse takes over, and its impact on, non-Western people. Westernization is therefore a form of colonialism but not the simple economic and political takeover of the 18th and 19th centuries. Westernization is much more insidious, much more dangerous and encompassing: westernization is the colonialism of the psyche. This means that it attempts to change the world not by changing institutions but by changing non-Western people's minds and cultures into the Western form. If this happens, then there will be no alternatives, no opposition to capitalism, to the nation-state, to Western science, to the Western way of looking and dealing with the world (See endnote #3).

The theory proposed here argues that it is westernization and reactions to it that may lead to underdevelopment. The theory also pushes Foucault's analysis to a cultural interaction between different regimes of discourse: the westernization of the world is the displacement of non-Western webs of power relations by the Western web, a displacement caused by the very nature of the

arrangement of specific webs which gave and still give an advantage to the West over Africa, for example.

An important theoretical question emerges from this: is culture equal to power relations? Within one single web of power relations, within a specific culture, one could answer the question in the negative, even though culture and power relations are strongly related. For example, in the West, power relations changed radically during the Enlightenment, yet, no one can deny that it was the same Western culture before and after the Enlightenment, although along different lines. Politically, we went from kings to states, and economically, capitalism replaced the feudal system. It seems power relations are included **within** culture, as defined in this essay.

Power relations and culture are certainly not the same if one looks at the global level where a Western power relations dominates but where hundreds of different cultures exist, which is, as argued here, part of the problem of underdevelopment. But here too, the two are related. On the level of intercultural relations, of interaction between different power webs, being Western or westernized means being better located within the dominating power web. The only way for non-Western cultures to have some power is to accept the Western rules of the game, as well as the Western game itself, and try to adapt to it. But this is only because we are in a historical phase where the Western web of power relations is the dominant one.

It should be added that I do not assume, when I use the word discourse in 'African or Western discourse' that there are no conflicts, paradoxes, and exceptions within each. Rather I mean that the Western discourse has different paradoxes and conflicts from the African discourse, paradoxes which are added to the African discourse, including both its constants and paradoxes.

It should also be said that Western discourse theory does not try to explain all of history. There was a period where the West was highly influenced by the Arabs, who were influenced by the Indians, who influenced and were influenced by the Chinese (New Internationalist, 1989, p.15-17). This theory only goes back to the 16th century, with the rise of the nation-state and capitalism. But there is a great difference between this period of acculturation by the West of other cultures and any other period of history: the extent of it, both vertically and horizontally. More cultures than ever before are being acculturated by one single culture and more deeply so. This is due to several factors: the extent of the colonization process; the capitalization of the world economy; and the 'nation-statization' of the world. It may well be that the extent is due to technology, especially weapons, which gave the West its superiority in warfare and empire-building. But even more fundamental than technology is culture, the way technology is used, and the ways in which colonization was undertaken, its effects, extent, etc.

Today, the Western world is the owner and creator of

knowledge, the High Priest of Knowledge/Power, and it attempts to control the world through the production, control, and ownership of that knowledge. Through this, it ensures that it remains better located in the power relations. But this knowledge is Western and as the third world attempts to develop, it has to deal with Western reality itself. From an International Relations point of view, then, the problem is, for non-Westerners, that the I.S. is a Western system. To be able to be part of this system, non-Westerners have to change their knowledge framework, and by doing so, they must change their own cultural background and thereby lose some of their culture. The change is a change in world view, in one's reality perception. The greater the westernization of the world, the greater the loss of cultural identity for non-Western cultures because of the unequal power relations between the West and the non-Western world. At this point, then, we should refine the definition of westernization.

If westernization is a change in knowledge, if one follows Foucault's argument, it is also a change in truth and power relations and this on several levels: the macro level which include politics and economics, and the micro level, the psychology and the world view of the non-Western individual. The Western elements on both levels clash with the non-Western elements and result in a schizophrenia on both levels. This schizophrenia and the process that created it are at the core of under-development in Africa.

Westernization is therefore the internalization of Western power relations by non-Western people and cultures who already have their own power relations to contend with.

A3. Westernization as second language acquisition.

One way to understand this internalization of power relations is to see westernization as a process, in the same way second language acquisition is a process. The changes are both conscious and unconscious and thus affect the learner in ways (s)he cannot even be aware of. The very thought patterns and perception of reality are affected.

When one learns a second language, depending on the setting, one can become bilingual, a synthesis of two cultures where only minor de-culturation and loss of the mother tongue occurs. The minor loss is more than compensated for by the acquisition of the second language. But if the process of acculturation occurs without any continued exposure to the mother tongue, that tongue eventually may disappear or at least diminish to the point of becoming barely functional (see endnote #4). The second language replaces the first as the primary mode of thinking. But the loss of the first language involves a partial loss of identity that cannot be fully compensated for by the acquisition of a new language. In addition, social forces come in, where the bilingual person may not be accepted in either of the two cultures, always being considered one of

the other group, never quite part of either.

The cultural component in words becomes important when one attempts to translate words. A word can only be fully translated if it represents something common to both cultures and which is represented by both languages in a word or expression. This difficulty is compounded by how abstract the word becomes, and how dependent culturally it is. If one takes the word 'sushi' from Japanese, most Westerners think of raw fish. But sushi is actually a 'snack-made-with-a-special-sweet-sticky-rice-generally-wrapped-with-seaweed-and-which-sometimes-contains-pickles', in short, sushi. Raw fish is sashimi, and it, too, is eaten in a special manner. Thus, the word sushi was incorporated and changed when it became adopted in English and in French. If one looked at several African languages and took the words for cattle, one would get very different cattle from the Western cattle. Instead of an animal that is to be eaten, it is an animal that denotes status, and often leadership and power. It is not necessarily something to be eaten, except on the greatest occasions. In India, of course, cows are sacred and fulfill a series of social functions (the dung is used as fuel, to put over walls as insulation, and as fertilizers. Milk offers often the only protein source). Not all words are heavy with cultural baggage but the importance of the message depends on the culture too: are political overtones more important than cultural or religious messages? In the West, the answer would probably be yes. In Islamic countries, the religious

underpinnings of words are likely to be given more attention. We will now apply the analysis on language we have just covered to the subject of this thesis, the coming into contact of different cultures and its effects.

At the cultural level, and more precisely westernization in Africa, some concepts are not translatable into cultural realities, just as sushi or African words for cattle were not adequately translatable. Western concepts and ideas about politics (the nation-state), economics (capitalism), and even perception of reality, were and still are dependent on the Western culture, and thus are only imperfectly translatable into African cultural realities. The problem is that they nevertheless were incorporated in African cultures by their imposition by colonial forces. And since we are talking about much more than just words (knowledge/power/truth), the effects on Africa were greater than the effect of a foreign word being incorporated in another language, or the learning of a second language on an individual. In fact, the change in and impact on Africa were shattering, shaking cultures deeply and greatly hindering the process of development. The schizophrenic effects were felt at the micro level, with people suffering from hunger, poverty, having a lack of legitimate leadership, and for many, not knowing exactly which culture they belong to (especially the educated, urban, and westernized elites). The effects are caused not only because of the nature of the West's involvement in Africa (dependency, lop-sided economies, etc.) but also because of

the differences between the two cultural groups in contact. There may be differences but these may be compatible, that is the differences between the two cultures allow the cultures to interact without much conflict or hardship. But in other cases, there is a lack of compatibility and this lack may be deadly.

A4. The compatibility factor.

The concept of compatibility may be explained by looking at the Lock and Key theory from the biological sciences. When a virus invades the body, it is received by an antibody that attempts to mold itself to it. Once the configuration of the invader has been found by the antibody, it sends a message to the body for it to increase the number of antibodies that fit the virus. The immune system has kicked in, and the body is now able to protect itself. Without the proper configuration, however, there can be no resistance from the body, and depending on the effects of the virus, the organism may not survive (Cunningham, 1983, p.203). Thus, the AIDS virus would not be a problem if there were an antibody to it. This is where vaccination becomes so important, if a vaccine can be found. In the context of this thesis, the intruder, the Western culture, has no corresponding effective antibody in Africa, and unless a response is found, the reaction could be very serious to Africa, as can already be seen today in poverty and socio-cultural stresses in general. This thesis is an effort at creating a vaccine. It is

equivalent to the preliminary research needed in the development of a vaccine where the structures and invasion strategies of the virus are researched.

Another important about this last discussion is that it is not the push of westernization that is the only factor. The receptor itself is active, and the receptor's response to cultural take-over is complex. Some members will resist deculturation, many will accept parts and reject others, and others will accept wholeheartedly, a response often followed by reculturation, as we have seen when an individual has assimilated in the foreign culture and has lost his or her first language.

This complexity at the individual level is made even worse at the cultural level where de-culturation has not been completed, where reculturation is already taking place, and where reculturation may help individuals in their competition for power. In Africa, this is made even worse in that the reculturation is fast and forced, where Africans do not have a say about the speed of the change, even less whether they want that change at all. Thus, there is high resistance to change. The sections on development and the nation-state will deal more deeply with this issue of resistance and acceptance of the Western regime of discourse in Africa. It is important to keep sight as to who is the invader and who is being invaded, however. In the next section, we will look at how westernization acts on the international level and on African cultures.

Part B:
Westernization as the language of the regime of discourse

Today, westernization has spread into every nook and cranny in the third world and because of the discrimination practiced against the non-Westernized, it is proceeding with accelerating pace. It creeps down key arteries of indigenous society, poisoning it from within.

P. Harrison.

We have argued that westernization is similar to a language but how does it act as THE language of development and of the international system? To answer this question, we have to go into some of the functional characteristics of westernization, and thus, of the Western culture itself. This section of the theoretical background will first deal with the characteristics and the process of westernization at the empirical level. Then, we will look at the historical development of westernization in its relation to Africa.

B1. Characteristics of the Western discourse.

This section will highlight some of the themes to watch for in the rest of the thesis. It will not be possible to go deeply into an analysis of the Western culture because that is not quite the subject of this thesis. As westernization and the Western regime of discourse are about the Western culture, it is important to look at some of its characteristics. This section will not attempt to prove the following argument but will simply raise the issue. It is

hoped that the implications in the rest of the thesis will bring enough evidence to convince the reader that this is worth considering. My argument is that the core of Western culture consists of the following tendencies: homogenization and dualist or dichotomic thinking.

Too often the West is blind to differences between cultures. Westerners tend to ignore the fact that Africa is not a monolithic culture. It is a culturally pluralistic continent. And it seems that one of the characteristics of westernization is that other cultures are homogenized relative to each other in the minds of Westerners. It makes dealings with these societies easier for Westerners who have to deal with a different reality. In addition to this form of homogenization, it also seems that other cultures are also homogenized relative to the West. Other cultures take on characteristics they do not have. They are not looked at in their own terms but in Western terms. All cultures do this, this is a question of ethno-centrism, but the important point to remember is that the West is in power, not Africa.

Thus, the tendency in the Western political-economic discourse is to put different groups together as if they were all alike. But when difference expresses itself, the Western culture seems to attempt to exclude it. Western culture seems to have difficulties living with difference. The excluding tendency might come from either-or thinking (dichotomic thinking), what Korzybski has called, in his Science and Sanity, the Law of the Excluded Third, and which has its

roots in Aristotle and more recently, Descartes. The exclusion of the other leads to its rejection and to a highly hierarchical form of thinking. Dichotomization and homogeneity also lead to a great centralization of and within institutions. This dichotomic thinking seems to be at the basis of the Western 'code': the individual versus the group; good/evil; nature/nurture; society/nature; science/religion; tradition/modernism; truth/superstition; oppressed/oppressor; knowledge/beliefs; mind/body; matter/spirit; me/others, etc. This view is also at its very core an exclusivist view. One excludes the other.

This exclusivity factor leads to a lack of understanding, for example, that modernity arises from tradition and includes tradition within it. That is, there seems to be the tendency to see modernity as if it were totally new, totally original, as if it did not come from a past which was supposedly very different from the present. There also seems to be a lack of understanding that science is a belief and that science too can be a religion: the veneration of science as the holder of the Ultimate Truth, just like religion was for a long time in the West, the holder of Divine Truth. This exclusivity and dualism are central to the nation-state and capitalism, to westernization and colonialism: anything not 'I', or by extension, not 'us', becomes colonizable, convertible, exploitable. Development is thus seen as a movement from the wrong side (their, the other) to the good (our, Western) side. The 'and' is not

inclusive but exclusive: 'us and them' is not 'us with them' but 'us versus them'. These themes of homogenization, exclusion, dichotomy, hierarchy, and centralization will come back throughout the thesis but will be especially important in our discussions of the nation-state and capitalism as discourses. It may be that the West has taken the concept of 'divide and conquer' to heights never seen before.

Homogeneity, especially in capitalism as we shall see later, is the essence of the global village. This demand for homogeneity is internalized by the non-Western, one of the roles the non-Western plays in his/ her own westernization. Young people throughout the world refuse to wear their traditional dress or adhere to traditional ways of life. Instead, they prefer denims, T-shirts, Rock n' Roll and Walkmans. This preference is endemic in all areas of life, from housing to health care, architecture to philosophy, music to social science. Every capital city is starting to look like every other capital city of the world. In 1853, Japan was forced to open its doors and trade with the West. By 1867, the Japanese were sporting watches. Ballroom dancing was considered fashionable, as were morning coats and high collars (Whitney-Hall, 1968, p.289). Today, only a few Japanese wear kimono every day. This is not particular to Japan. All over the world, cultures have two ways of dressing, their own and the West's. Politicians and businesspeople all wear Western suits in public. At home, they will wear the indigenous clothes. T-shirts are barely

considered Western in most countries. This, of course, goes beyond clothing. In Africa, it is represented by the desire to ride a scooter and at least have a radio, or even better, a T.V. set. This is even more true of young people:

the youth scorns traditional dress and sport denim and t-shirt. Says a young man: "we don't like (traditional Singaporean) operas. They are too old-fashioned. We would prefer to see high-quality Western variety shows, something like that" (Harrison, 1981, p.47).

Michael Jackson is known in every part of the world, so are the Beatles and scooters. It is interesting to note that the Western suit is still considered Western, while the t-shirt has near universal acceptance: the t-shirt is a poor person's clothes whereas the suit is the garment of the middle and upper class. The message of class, Western fashion, is transmitted from the West and adopted by non-Westerners through simple things such as clothing. An economic concept, class, is carried by a cultural process. Westernization does mean power to non-Westerners.

Yes, it is McLuhan's global village, but it is a Western village, and the non-Western elements of the village are being imposed upon by the Western view of reality and they are suffering from it (it is also interesting to note that the language use here is dichotomic, Westerners and the non-Westerners, and that even when one tries to analyze and get out of the regime of discourse, one has to use it). But how is this happening?

Gadamer writes that

as a language is learned, it creates a view of the world

which conforms to the character of the speech conventions that have been established in the language. A thing is defined by the words one uses (Gadamer, in Blasius, 1984, p.244).

And Westernization is the only or by far the most dominant language of discourse in the international realm. This makes it very difficult to analyze the international system in terms of its cultural biases because the only available analysis, or language of discourse, is Western. It is a self-reinforcing mechanism. In power analysis, westernization is a universal language in the sense that there are no other alternative discourses. Westernization, in fact, is a language of imposition of the Western reality over the rest of the world.

Because it is seen as universal, the West is not seen as a culturally dependent civilization but as something beyond that. The Western culture has become the fundamental premise defining the discourse of theory and practice of economics, politics, and their study (i.e. social sciences). But this is a problem because the world is not Western, even though it is highly westernized. A problem arises because

language exercises its own controls on cognition and one's experience. A universal language acts as a system of exclusion, defining what constitutes objects for cognition and experience and how "truth" is to be obtained and by whom, who may speak, under what conditions and so on (Blasius, 1984, p.244-245).

Therefore, to really understand the international system, one has to invent a language of discourse that is not within the confines of, not bound by, the Western discourse. This essay is an attempt at developing such a discourse.

The international system acts as a regime of discourse, which is "a colonization of our understanding by the society in which we live and (which), because of its constitutive relation to social practices, implies a uniformization of our lives" (Blasius, 1984, p.246). When one regime of discourse takes over another, what we have is a colonization of the mind, of people's reality and how they cope with it. Such a profound change cannot go on without stresses and resistance. Africans have thousands of years of history and cultures, and the 'ancestors' are resisting the change. I argue that the resistance to the forced change and the impact of westernization on Africa shook cultures deeply and are still greatly hindering the process of 'development'.

The West's power and its view of its power relative to the rest of the world, coupled with its view as being superior (which is probably a parallel with being the most powerful) are central in explaining the political economic dynamics of the West vis-a-vis the non-Western world and toward the international system as a whole. Walker argues that the West, being the dominant power, has a very selective view, ideologically, philosophically and culturally, of the world. Again, all cultures have a selective view of the world but only the West is at the top of the power structure. This Western

selectivity is itself part of the basic structures of the modern state system. Within states, it is possible to envisage a perfect social order. Being perfect, the vision is easily assumed to be exportable to all other states -with a little persuasion from economic or military forces if necessary. The possession of

"civilization" justifies the conquest of "barbarism"
(Walker, 'East Wind, West Wind', 1984, p.8-9).

But the vision of perfection, or at least the vision that all is best in the best of all possible (first/Western) worlds, exists mainly in the dominant states for obvious reasons. They are dominant because they are powerful and wealthy. The vision of Western perfection and superiority is far from shared by the non-dominant countries in Africa, where the legitimacy of the state is under attack. This means that the vision of perfection is exportable but not importable. That is, because Westerners believe in their superiority and perfection, it becomes not only legitimate but moral to export one's perfection to less fortunate cultures (a forced ideological consumption of another's culture, or reality). But that does not mean the vision is importable, that other cultures want that vision of superiority and perfection. As we shall see in the other chapters, the forced consumption of Western reality has been carried not only in the views of progress, history, the nation-state and capitalism, but also in development theories and practices.

In the dominant cultures of the West, history has always been the unfolding of a theory of progress (which) by definition cannot be shared by the communities placed on the lower rungs of the ladder of history or even outside (of it) (Nandy, 1988, p.169).

What is important to understand about the West's power is that the West has provided the limits within which peoples of the earth can act and form institutions. It has also given the structures, and the shape those institutions can take to be legitimate. And before that, during the colonial period,

it had already engaged in wiping out any possible alternative players or even alternatives games. By the time Africans had gone through colonization and were entering the international scene, they had only one choice left, psychologically and structurally: integration into the international system. Interestingly, to justify the decolonization process, Africans used Western ideas and tools, like Western weapons, nationalism, and sovereignty. But the very use of these ideas probably helped to bind the Africans into the Western international system and into the Western reality. The introduction and the use of westernization for the independence movement and the subsequent nation-building was done in a very critical moment of Africa's history, at a time where indigenous institutions had been shaken by colonialism, and a time where the development of economic infrastructures became important. Unfortunately, because of colonialism and incompatible differences, Africa was not able to develop its own forms of institutions. We will go into this in greater depth in the section on the nation-state. For the moment, the point is that Africa is now tied into Western international political and economic institutions. On several levels, then, the West is acting like a supra-meta-power of the international environment and its domestic components, in addition to the psychology of the non-Western.

Thus, another way to see westernization is to see it as a process by which the West becomes a super-hegemon of the world, and which allows smaller scale Western hegemony to

change place as leader of the system. In the 20th century, the U.S. replaced the U.K. as the hegemon of the international system, a leadership which the U.S. now shares with Germany and Japan (which is a highly westernized and culturally compatible non-Western state). One should add that the role of the West as the supra-meta-power is not new. In fact, the foundations of the Western international hegemony, and therefore the foundations for the (Western) international system can be traced back to the colonial period.

But how does this translate in the real world? This is what the rest of the thesis is about but I will give an overview of the process so as to give some background to the reader.

B2. A brief overview of westernization as a historical process.

The process of incorporation and homogeneity started in the colonial period with the religious indoctrination and co-opting of the local elites (see below in the chapter on the nation-state). Educational facilities trained local people as bureaucrats and junior rank officers. Local people were made to feel ashamed of their color and culture, they tended to strive to prove that they were equals of the white man. The white man, like things Western, became a lingua franca of comparison. This process of comparison is known as reference group behavior. The process occurs when someone

copies the habits and activities of a social group that they wish to belong to, or wish to be classed with (Scott, 1970, p.420), another facet of the internalization of the Western power relations and of the role played by the non-Western in the westernization process. In Africa, the new and budding westernized individual or class wants to become even more westernized. The fundamental reason is simple: **westernization equals power**. This is true in the international system and in Africa, where the westernized class is either the growing middle class or even the upper class.

Paul Harrison quotes a Chinese official of the early 20th century:

Since we were knocked out by cannon balls, wrote Mr. Chiang, naturally, we became interested in them (so we) could strike back. From studying cannon balls we came to mechanical inventions which in turn lead to political reforms, which lead us again to the political philosophies of the West (Harrison, 1981, p.51).

The study of the colonizer as a way to counteract its penetration was the beginning of the westernization process. The pattern was similar in Africa, where many of the independence leaders had been educated in the West (Nyerere, Nkrumah, and Senghor, for example). In fact, this active learning of things Western by Africans began much earlier than the independence period.

During the 19th century, the Asante (a West African empire located in present day Ghana), underwent a series of political and economic changes, changes that provided a continuity in culture, in discourse. But the British pressure from the coast forced the changes in a certain direction. And

of course, the conquest of Asante by Great Britain brought something fundamentally different to Asante culture, change without continuity. Another theme to be noticed here is that westernization is similar to brain-washing: torture is needed to break the resistance of the subject before change in ideology and beliefs can occur. This was the function of colonialism. But before this, in order to find a foothold in the African culture, the West must find an African who will begin the process of westernization, the westernized non-Western.

The British invasion of Asante in 1874 had revealed not only the Asante inferiority in weapon technology, which no one had doubted, but also much more generally, the inadequacies of the government's decision-making process vis-a-vis those of the British... It had lacked adequate insight into the nature of British policy; had employed familiar diplomatic strategies which were no longer effective; and had failed to maintain an appropriate level of informational inputs on the constantly changing political and military situation (Wilks, 1975, p.663).

To deal with this, a rapprochement with Western culture became necessary, through the Western education of senior officials, the use of Europeans in the administration, and the giving of high power positions to the Westernized Asantes. Then,

from 1888-1896, the major issue in Asante politics was, quite unambiguously, that of its external relations with the British... The only way to retain the political independence of Asante was to push through a programme of [modernization] (Wilks, 1975, p.665).

The British invaded Kumasi, the Asante capital, in 1896.

Interestingly, the greater the stresses on the Asante kingdom, the more power was given to westernized Asantis in the administration, culminating in 1894 with the conferring

"of sweeping powers upon John Owusu Ansa (...) to enable him to enter into agreements with European governments and concessionaires on whatever terms he judged conducive to the national interest" (Wilks, 1975, p.665). Ansa had been educated as a missionary, and was by any definition highly westernized, but he was not able to prevent the British conquest.

During the 19th century, Asante changes and reforms had increasingly become reforms geared toward the West, and finally outright westernization. There was more Western education of senior officials, greater use of Europeans in the administration, and more positions of high power given to the westernized Asantes than ever before (Wilks, idem). What is most significant was that, although there were relatively few Westernized Asanti compared to non-Westernized Asanti, it was people like Ansa who had the greatest influence on the Asante government during those years. Historically, at first, the Western discourse was relatively equal in terms of power. But as time went by, it gained power relative to the Asante. The Asante attempted to deal with their relative loss of power by imitating the Western discourse. By the time the Asante were defeated, the Western discourse had become the regime of discourse.

The attempt at modernization, already in the end of the 19th century defined as becoming Western, was probably an attempt at adapting to, and perhaps at emulating, the more centralized power relations of the West. Even though the

British only had a few forts on the coast, they were seen as more powerful. Numbers and size were on the Asante side, yet there seemed to be a feeling by the Asante leaders that the British had the advantage, that they, the Asante, had to adapt to the British and not the opposite. And this view of Western superiority applies to the other British, French, Belgian, etc, colonies as well. The point is that non-Western cultures felt obliged to adapt to the West and not the opposite. Even countries that were never colonies had to, and still have to, adapt to the Western rules of the game. The exclusivity/dichotomy equation, with the West being on the 'good' side of the equation, led to the West seeing itself as the standard against which other cultures had to be measured. This automatically puts 'the other' on a lower echelon, and therefore forces the other to adapt to the West rather than the opposite.

The rest of the thesis will look at three ways in which westernization is spread: development, the nation-state, and capitalism. We will see how these act as discourses on their own, how they are not only channels of westernization but also actively westernizing the non-Western. In fact, one could say that the nation-state and capitalism are sub-regimes of discourses of the more general Western regime of discourse. Each acts within its sphere: the nation-state acts in the political sphere, forcing non-nation-state political forms of aggregation to become nation-states while capitalism acts in the economic sphere, changing non-capitalist systems

into systems that it can incorporate. And as we will see in the next chapter, development practices and theories also act as a regime of discourse of development, as a child of the Western regime of discourse.

Chapter 2. Westernization and Development.

Today, poverty and malnutrition are more prevalent than they were twenty-five years ago. (...) In Africa, food production goes down each year by one percent. In fact, at the present moment, there are no valid development models (Verhelst, 1987, p.9-10).

Both the concept and the practice of development offer interesting problems for this thesis. Since the first world has wealth, and certain other economic and political characteristics, it is seen as developed. The third world is called exactly that because it is not as wealthy, nor does it have the characteristics that define 'developed'. Yet development as an issue of poverty, famine and so on (not its discourse) is where the role of Western discourse theory as a genealogy, as an attempt to bring forth subjugated knowledges, becomes most obvious. Development is where the conflict between the Western regime of discourse and the African discourse expresses itself at its strongest, in the famine, the starvation, and the displacement. This expression forces us to realize that power relations in the international system are anything but equal.

The 'first' world defined what the 'first', 'second' and 'third' worlds would be. By definition, the 'first' world has something the 'third' world does not have. 'Developed' and 'underdeveloped' were also defined that way, developed being seen as better, more advanced, and so on. Therefore, this logic goes, development should flow from the first to the

third world. But what are the assumptions underlying development as it is seen in the West? What is development and how should it be done? An added difficulty, as we will see, is that development itself is a channel of westernization; it, like the nation-state and capitalism, acts as a discourse. The basic argument of this section is that the differences between the Western and the African discourses, their lack of compatibility, and their different view of what constitutes development prevent development in Africa. In fact, Western development means African underdevelopment.

I will first go into some of the conceptual issues found in the concept of development, focusing on the cultural biases in the term. One should remember that the idea and the theories of development and modernization originated in the West and that they are heavy with Western cultural messages and assumptions. I will then offer a critique of development and underdevelopment theories, a critique based on the framework developed here. Thirdly, I will explain how Western Discourse theory can address some of the problems mentioned in the literature review and offer it as a new theory of underdevelopment. Finally, we will look at how westernization affects development at the empirical level.

A. Development: definition and some conceptual issues.

Most people, academic and public alike, believe there is only one way to develop and only one right way of defining

'development'. For many, terms like 'development' and 'modernization' have provided "a culturally neutral conceptual framework for liberation from dependence and ignominy" (Von Laue, 1987, p.305). But, as we have seen in the theoretical background, words, concepts, and even political and economic structures are loaded with psycho-cultural, historical, and power connotations, and therefore many are not translatable. Development is also one of these. It is important to realize, however, that the following analysis and criticism of the role of westernization in the practice and theories of development are ultimately based on this author's view of development. We will see that this view addresses some of the problems associated in using a culturally inappropriate definition of development.

The question, then, is: how can one talk about development without using the Western concept? One could use a locally suitable term but there is a problem with this as well: one has to find a suitable term which is also viable. By this, I mean a term that can actually be put in practice by people. This is difficult as Western development is the only form of development now possible or, worse, even 'thinkable'. Obviously a new definition of development suitable to non-Western cultures is needed. So, development will be defined here on as: increase in the material well-being of individuals; increased choice for people within their society; increased freedom from the search for the necessities of life; and better opportunity for one's

personal and psychic growth. Moreover, development is

the complexification of the socio-cultural body. In order for it to be harmonious, this complexification must take into account the full elements of the ethno-national nest and its practical foundations. Development is thus seen as an accepted and well-lived diversification of thinking, living, and being modes. This includes respect of the other and social justice in addition to the economic and political criteria (Labou Tansi, 1991, p.90, emphasis added)*.

This definition is quite different from the usual economic definition one finds in the field of development. The emphasis was added because the idea of diversification goes against some of the themes of westernization, that of homogenization and exclusivity. Thus a different definition of development such as the one proposed here goes against the regime of discourse and could be considered a genealogy. Thus, from here on in this essay, this is the definition of development that will be used, unless I am talking about Western development, which be made clear. By underdevelopment therefore will be meant: a decrease in the material well-being of individuals; decreased choice for people within their society; decreased freedom from the search for the necessities of life; and lesser opportunity for one's personal and psychic growth. It will also be the homogenization of thinking, living, and being, a homogenization which in the present international context takes the form of westernization.

The cultural assumptions of development must be understood if one is to understand the whole issue and discourse of development in its interaction with non-Western

discourses. For example, Verhelst mentions that

for certain African ethnic groups, 'development' is totally untranslatable in their language. In fact, for some, it evokes pejorative notions such as 'chaos' and 'regression' (Verhelst, 1987, p.60).

It may well be that the cultural assumptions of the concept and idea of 'development' work against it in some non-Western cultures. Other cultures define development differently:

for a black African, the good life consists of being in communion with community (...), assuring continuity of the community through procreation and through making a contribution which is durable for generations to come (like planting a tree), assuming one's role (like the role of the eldest in the family) and finally following the instructions of the ancestors and performing rituals to them. Whereas in the Hindu context of India, there are four ends of life: Artha or wealth, kama or pleasure, dharma or right conduct, and moksha or spiritual freedom... The good life consists in pursuing artha and kama through dharma in order to arrive at the state of moksha (Das, 1983, p.10).

The Western origins of the concept affect both the theory and the practice of development.

One of the basic problems with Western development is that it "has made humans slaves of their own activities (...) rather than making humans the promoters, agents, and objective to be reached" (UNESCO, 1983, p.19). Thus, development has become an end and humans, goals toward that end rather than the opposite. This focus on the end with a disregard for the means often leads to means and ends becoming mixed up. Yet the view that development and modernization are ends rather than means is cultural, something the West does. Not all cultures put the same emphasis on the end as we do in the West. In many, the means and processes are more important because it is where the

learning and wisdom are acquired. There is also the realization that it is the means and process that eventually determine the end. Thus, the nature of the process of development itself is at question. The basic questions are, what is development and how is it a Western concept?

"The idea of development made its first appearance in the eighteenth century under the guise of the enlightenment doctrine of progress" (Parel, 1988, p.2). The idea was subsequently adopted by Western social scientists and politicians. The use of the word and the practice of development, and its embedded idea of progress, really took off in the post-WWII era, with the Marshall plan to rebuild and redevelop Europe. At the same time, colonial empires were losing their grips on Africa, and the wave of independence was beginning to rise in the colonies, especially in Africa. After the reconstruction of Europe, it was thought the Plan could be implemented in the colonies. In the Marshall Plan,

development was viewed as a transfer of methods of productivity -institutions, technology, cultural skills- (...) based on the assumptions that the recipients were prepared (like the beneficiaries of the Marshall plan were) to continue on their own (Von Laue, 1987, p.311).

This was then applied to the third world, including third world agrarian reforms which should be looked at "in the broader context of the United States' effort to fashion a Marshall Plan-like assistance program for the third world" (Wiarda, 1989, p.24). But the 'beneficiaries of the Marshall Plan' were European, and the psycho-cultural, technological, economic and political bed in which the Plan was implemented

was compatible with the cultural assumptions of the plan.

The plan could not fit Africa, not because Africa was 'primitive' or 'backward' (which are racist terms to justify colonization and only hide one message: 'be more like me or go away', the homogenization-exclusivity message) but 'simply' because Western and African cultures were not, and to this day are still not, compatible. However, Westerners, confident from their success in winning the war and in redeveloping Europe, were imbued with ideas of superiority (Hitler's ideas of racial superiority may have been an extreme, maybe just because it applied to other whites, but it was nevertheless part of a larger historical context of ideas about culture, race, evolution and history -colonialism and social Darwinism, for example). They thus believed the plan was applicable to all and everyone would eventually have a standard and a style of living comparable to the West. However, this liberal interpretation of development, the view that the West really wants the third world to develop, came under attack from the left. Left-wing thinkers were also analyzing development and under-development on their own terms, criticizing the right, and arriving at somewhat different conclusions, by using a somewhat different analysis. For example, they pointed out that it may be that the third world is underdeveloped because the first is developed and vice-versa. And if one follows a Foucauldian analysis of power relations where both rich and poor are part of the same dynamic, then the left may be more accurate in

its description of the situation. However, the left is not off the hook: they too, have some weaknesses which will be looked at shortly. The following part will analyze modernization and dependency theories from a Western discourse analysis. We will be looking at both theories individually and at some common ground between the two, namely their beliefs about nature, about the state, and about the relationship between growth and development.

B. Review and critique of the two main approaches.

To begin our critique, it seems that both ends of the political spectrum have a similar view of nature. Parel looks at both left and right, for whom "development means a capacity to dominate nature through science and technology" (Parel, 1988, p.3). According to Parel, this goes back to Bacon and Descartes for whom "science (...) was to make us masters and possessors of nature" (idem). The liberal assumptions about human nature are that humans are basically greedy, egoistical, economic, and resource maximizing (which 'helps' to explain and justify both capitalism and the nation-state). But these assumptions also seem to be partly shared by some left-wing theories. R.M. Young writes that for some Marxists (Bukharin, the early Lukacs, Gramsci and the Frankfurt school),

nature is, for humankind, a matter of utility, not a power for itself. The purpose in trying to discover nature's autonomous laws is to subjugate nature to human needs, as an object of consumption or means of production (Young, in Bottomore, 1983, p.351).

Here, the key assumption is that humans are possessive, domineering, and primarily economic beings. Our instinct toward domination forces us to try to subjugate nature so that accumulation can occur.

Interestingly, it seems that the link between nature and human nature is paralleled by a link between natural evolution and social evolution which surfaces as a tendency toward historical determinism, the belief that history has a specific direction, and that it can only go in that direction. Parel writes that, as a whole, the concept of development "is tied to the various stages of social evolution" (Parel, 1988, p.9). On the left, Lenin wrote:

We have seen that the economic quintessence of imperialism is monopoly capitalism. This very fact determines its place in history, for monopoly that grew up on the basis of free competition, and out of (it), is the transition from the capitalist system to a higher social economic order (Lenin, 1965 (1917), p.123).

The words 'stages', 'higher', are used repeatedly through Lenin's Imperialism (see especially also p.88 where Lenin almost repeats the point quoted above). Other left-wing authors seemed to have followed Lenin's path. Chilcote explains that W. Rodney's

thesis that all societies will experience some development, even though it may be uneven, suggests that there will be a progressive evolution through capitalism to socialism (...). Both [Frank and Rodney] assume that contradictions in the world capitalist system will produce struggles between ruling and exploited classes and that, eventually socialism will emerge" (Chilcote, 1984, p.96).

As for Marxist history, it does not deal with what is to come after communism, and one is left with the impression that

this may be the end of history. At the very least, communism is seen as the apex of some far future. Thus, development might be seen in terms of where societies are on the Marxist ladder of stages. This idea in Marxian thinking probably comes from Hegel's influence (his dialectic and his idea of the end of history).

For modernization theory, capitalism is at the apex. Here, too, development has a series of stages. Rostow, who probably epitomizes modernization right-wing theories of development, described the stages of modernization and development as follows:

it is possible to identify all societies, in their economic dimensions, as lying within one of five categories: the traditional society, the pre-conditions for take-off into self-sustaining growth, the drive to maturity, and the age of mass consumption (Rostow, 1960, p.4).

But to Rostow these stages are not incidental, nor are they proper to any particular culture; they are part of history itself:

these stages are not merely descriptive ... they constitute, in the end, a theory about economic growth and a more general, if still highly partial, theory about modern history as-a-whole (Rostow, 1960 p.1).

This determinism was criticized by Wiarda:

Rostow argued that the stages of the economic growth (such as "preconditions for take-off and take-off") outlined in his book were universal, that all societies (including those of the third world) went through the same processes, that the United States was the most advanced nation and therefore provided the model for others... (Wiarda, 1989, p.24).

As for Todaro, he criticizes Rostow's model in that it assumes that the third world is isolated from the rest of the

world. Rostow assumes that the third world is not tied into the international system and that thus, any internal effort at development "can be nullified by external forces beyond the countries' control" (Todaro, 1989, p.68), and that therefore removing internal obstacles and following a series of steps undertaken in another part of the world in another international situation (the determinism in Rostow's model) are not sufficient conditions for third world development. In the terms used in this thesis, Rostow does not realize that the third world is stuck in a set of power relations that keeps it in a subjugated position relative to the first world.

This determinism implies that Western capitalism and democracy are superior, or at least, at a more advanced stage of history. With such absolute direction in history, "the end is so necessary that the means are justified" (Parel, 1988, p.10), including the old and new colonialism, slavery, and the destruction of cultures. Moreover, "the Deterministic Theory of social development, on closer examination, appears to be a Western view of the matter" (Parel, 1988, p.14), a view that seems to have blossomed with Hegel. Other cultures may not see social history as being set on two rails, even different sets of rails. That is, they may not see their own social history and development as going in a certain direction, or what is called in the West, 'progress'. The Buddhist view of history is tied to their view of nature, made of eternal cycles, where individuals can accede to a

higher stage of spiritual (but not social) evolution if they are able to find out their own individual karma (a destiny one has the choice to fulfill), and if they have the courage to fulfill that karma. If the courage is missing, or if the wisdom to discover one's karma is missing, one has to return in another life and fulfill that life's karma. Meanwhile, history can go any way, the direction being determined by the social and natural environment. The point is not that a deterministic view of history is wrong but that the imposition of one's view of history over another can cause some psychological stresses on the people being imposed. Theoretically, it means imposing one's culture on another, an imposition which, as is argued here, can lead to underdevelopment.

Interestingly, modernization theory goes much further in its determinism because it also implies political development, with Western-style democracy being at the top of the ladder. Modernization theory is

biased in favor of (an ideological path) in [its] Western assumptions of pluralistic politics, and dogmatic in their insistence upon a continuous progression through historical stages (Chilcote, 1987, p.11).

Pluralistic, Western-style representative democracy and liberal capitalism are the only right way: development is impossible without them. The logic behind this is easy to see. Since the first world is 'developed', and more 'developed' than the second, economics being the effective basis for determining how 'developed' a country is, all the

third world has to do is to follow the first world's general pattern: industrialize, urbanize, increase its use of forever-improving technology in agriculture and industry, and especially use large-scale production in all sectors so that low production costs can be attained. The message that westernization is power is believed first and foremost by Westerners. This belief by the Westerner is an essential part of the propagation of westernization.

Modernization then means becoming like the West: "modernization will bring about the universalization of the culture peculiar to modern industrial society. Thus, modernization simply means westernization" (Verhelst, 1987, p.11). Implied in modernization is the view that any society that is not on a par with the U.S. and the West is traditional. Thus, modernization is the overthrow of traditional ways for modern Western ways (Wiarda, 1989, p.24), the exclusivity factor where only one can exist at a time. Thus, modern ways can only exist without traditions being present. Development will be reached when the third world has fulfilled the conditions of the pattern, using Western tools, ways, technology, and ideas, the homogenization factor, where the 'other' is made to be like 'me'. Meanwhile, African reality is slowly being replaced by Western reality.

One can see strong elements of Social Darwinism in this view of political development. Darwin's theory of evolution, where evolution is a response to changes in the environment,

not a victory over the environment or over other species, is absent from this kind of thinking. The racist implications of Social Darwinism and feelings of cultural superiority, as seen earlier, are evident in modernization theory: it is the only answer possible because it is the superior system, the wealthiest, or the only possible one, by historical processes outside of human control (possibly another cultural bias). Societies evolve from lower to higher forms and cultural differences are merely a question of backwardness on the historical stage (Verhelst, 1987, p.11). Individuals are seen to have no influence on history, as merely being swept along by it. At best, they can change society, but this change is determined by the inexorable flow of history.

In modernization theory, the nation-state is part of being 'modern', as is having a fully developed bureaucracy and a Western-style government. Modernization theorists take the fact that it is the dominant form of political aggregation on the planet as proof of its inevitability, as proof of the theory of historical determinism. But the nation-state as it exists in the world today is a child of the European historical and cultural experience (see the chapter on the nation-state). Moreover, the concept and practice were transferred outside Europe during colonization, along with the international capitalist system. Within one hundred years from the beginning of colonialism, Africa had been conquered, its forms of aggregation (African empires, 'tribes', etc) replaced by the Western nation-state. And as

we will see in the next chapter, the introduction of the Western nation-state in Africa is a major force acting against its development.

In Rostow's statement, we also saw the economic element of modernization theory with, one should note, the final stage being mass consumption, a stage even the first world has not quite attained yet. The well known obsession with growth or economics in development is not limited to modernization. Several left-wing theorists also share that over-emphasis on economics in their view of development. Many Marxian theories provide good tools of analysis for economic factors in society, but they do not seem to be so strong in **cultural** or power relations analyses of certain political-economic problems. Parel argues that, for both left and right,

development means a capacity to consume an ever increasing volume of goods and services, normally measured in terms of money... Where they disagree are the conditions under which consumption should take place, the one arguing for individual liberty, and the other for social equality (Parel, 1988, p.3).

This is especially true of capitalism and modernization theory. Yet, in modernization and many left wing theorists, lack of growth is seen as causing a lack of development (Chilcote, 1984, p.121). For Baran, underdevelopment is due to a lack of effective demand which leads to a lack of growth. Surplus is all-important:

whereas the problem for the industrialized economy is one of over-production of economic surpluses, for post-colonial societies the problem thus lies in their lack of access to surplus for their own economic development (Taylor, in Bottomore, 1983, p.498).

The over-emphasis on economics is shared by other authors on the left. Chilcote analyzes Furtado in the following way:

(...) import substitution may stimulate some internal development but only temporarily. Ultimately, full industrialization might solve the problem [of underdevelopment], but here, too, underdevelopment has tended to perpetuate itself under peripheral capitalism... (Chilcote, 1984, p.33, underline added).

The emphasis was added because, like modernization theory, these left wing theorists also see full industrialization as being necessary for development. Chilcote also mentions that "A.G. Frank emphasizes economic surplus in the process of development and underdevelopment" (Chilcote, 1984, p.87) and that R. Prebisch was "emphatic that his reforms would counter the underconsumption that had caused backwardness and underdevelopment" (Chilcote, 1984, p.114). Lack of consumption causes underdevelopment for Baran, yet, the environmental movement warns us that reducing consumption may be the only way to achieve global sustainable development. The point of the criticism is not that it is wrong to be looking at economics as a cause of underdevelopment. The point is that an over-emphasis on economics, be it through concepts such as growth or underconsumption, can only leave other important components of development out of the picture. The argument of the thesis is that only by looking at culture, in addition to politics and economics, can one have development as defined in the thesis.

From a cultural and power point of view, most theories over-stress the economic factors of development and under-emphasize the role of culture as a force affecting

development. But this goes further than just development theories; it seems to be a broader Western tendency:

the modern west is economistic if anything. It perceives the full round of life through the economic -or if you prefer, the economic-political optic. (...) The third world differs from the West specifically by the lack of a particular economistic achievement (Van Nieuwenhuijze, 1983, p.17-18).

The third world is measured by the West and defined as third exactly because of the Western regime of discourse which sees power in an economistic fashion. This leads to a subjugation of culture as a factor and therefore, as a possible tool of analysis. In international theories and politics "hardly ever is it realized that international transactions are intercultural transactions" (Van Nieuwenhuijze, 1983, p.3).

Foucault also sees an economism in the prevailing views of power:

I consider there to be a certain point in common between the (...) liberal conception of political power and the Marxist conception, or at any rate a certain conception currently held to be Marxist. I would call this common point an economism in the theory of power. This economic functionality is present to the extent that power is conceived primarily in terms of the role it plays in the maintenance simultaneously of the relations of production and of class domination which the development and specific forms of the forces of production have rendered possible. On this view then, the historical *raison d'être* of political power is to be found in the economy (Foucault, p.88-89).

This subjugation of culture in the West produces culture-blind individuals, blind to the individual's own cultural self. How could one be open to other cultures or to forms of cultural analyses for economic and political issues? The economism may help explain the shortcomings of left wing and right wing theories and approaches to underdevelopment and

especially their failure to provide successful strategies of third world development.

Western assumptions in developmentalism may be dangerous for Africa. Modernization and development have come to equate one another in the minds of too many developmentalists. The IMF and the World Bank are heavy with these assumptions and are living embodiment of modernization theory. Their policies of re-structuration, development, and debt repayment follow the ideals of capitalism, with minimum government involvement in the economy (i.e. cuts in social welfare but not in social control by that government). Conditions for new loans or loan repayments are well known under the famous austerity measures.

The problem is that the literature, study, and ideas on development of theorists such as Rostow and Galbraith were gradually infused into the bureaucracy and incorporated in policy making processes and implementation. Part of the problem of both the literature and the policy-making was that

it was uniquely American in that it was extremely, perhaps excessively optimistic; it derived from the American experience of development (including Lockean liberalism and pluralism); (...) and it became an integral part of American foreign policy toward the third world (Wiarda, 1989, p.24).

It is also worthwhile at this point to quote President Reagan on this:

We Americans can speak from experience on this subject. When the original settlers arrived here, they faced a wilderness where poverty was their daily lot, danger and starvation their close companions.... But through all the dangers, disappointments and setbacks, they kept their faith. They never stopped believing that with the freedom to try and try again, they could make tomorrow

a better day (Reagan, in Dorfman, 1982, p.42).

All the third world has to do is follow the U.S. example: 'be like us and you too will develop'. If it does not work at first, it is only because they have not tried hard enough. It is only because of their own laziness and lack of effort (and stupidity?) that they have not succeeded. All they have to do is try and try again. The gap between theory and practice had been bridged, but when the theory is not appropriate, how can the practice be? With this background in mind, we should now turn to the practice of development.

C. The Discourse of Development in Practice.

In the field, the main thrust has been a top-down approach up until a few years ago, when some change started occurring. But the top-down approach, or centralized decision-making, is only another expression of the Western tendency toward centralization. Aid is given from government to government in the assumption that the receiving government has the people's interest in mind. More subtly, it also assumes that the structures, the channels of development, that exist in the receiving country are suited for the kind of help being given or even that they exist at all. Energy, transportation, and communication infrastructures so vital for Western development projects are 'under-developed' in many sub-Saharan countries. There is also the assumption of organizational and institutional structures to implement and carry the help through. Finally, the help given is not always

the help being asked or needed. By some sick contradiction, the giver of help is often the one who decides which help is needed, whether it is in reality or not, and thereby what help is to be given. One should add that the giver of help often gets more back than what is given. A few examples should make the last few points clearer.

Many government-sponsored projects are large-scale. 'Big is beautiful' is still the motto of much of development, although this seems to be changing slowly, with small, more culturally- and environmentally-aware projects becoming more popular in the development world. These projects, large or small, take several forms: financial aid, educational material, technology, technical expertise, machinery and tools. The assumption of this thesis, and the point it tries to demonstrate, is that the more westernized a project is, the less successful it is likely to be. This would explain why large-scale projects have, more often than not, failed in some ways in sub-Saharan Africa in the last thirty years. The bigger the project, the more westernized it is likely to be because of the dependence on Western education, techniques, technology, materials, and most importantly silent assumptions, in the project.

A huge hydro-electric dam may be able to provide energy for a whole country or even more. It may also be able to deliver that energy cheaply to cities (less wiring and structures are needed for a concentrated population area like a city than in the rural areas where people are physically

decentralized) but in Africa, most people still live in rural areas and many have no plug-ins or have no use for electricity. As for the dam itself, the funds may be provided for its construction, but what about maintenance or the cables and the structures that deliver the energy to households?

Some proponents of Western aid argue that it has given Africans railroads, electricity, technology and, of all things, knowledge. But the electricity powers Western-owned or -operated mines and railroads to carry the minerals and other products to ports for Western ships to carry these products to Western markets, often to be sold back to Africa as finished products, all this ultimately based on Western knowledge and therefore, power. Westernization as the spread of the Western regime of discourse becomes very real and more than just an abstract issue. In the following section, it will be interesting to note that Western discourse theory somewhat parallels some of neo-colonialism and dependency theory analyses, in its analysis of Africa's resources. The differences are significant, however.

Africa has an important share of the world's resources of cobalt, chrome, gold, diamonds, and platinum. It also has one-third of the world's resources of uranium (Mazrui, 1980, p.164). The West is not only the main consumer but also the main manager of these resources, through Western multinationals. Western demand dictates African supply. If one looks at Africa's main resources, many are minerals and,

therefore, are extracted through mining operations. But the mining technology, tools, and techniques were developed in the West. The point is not that it is wrong for technology to have been developed in the West in the first place, but rather that this technology is not being adapted to African needs and cultural values, and that, moreover, Africa is dependent on culturally inappropriate Western technology for its development.

One aspect of this cultural inappropriateness is that these techniques and technology are both capital and skill intensive (and Western skill requires capital), something Africa does not have in abundance. This has led to a dependency on the West for mining tools, ways, capital, ideas and theories of mine management. This "reliance on Western expertise and Western marketing has perpetuated the Eurocentric orientation of African mining" (Mazrui, 1980, p.164). Thus, Africa is dependent on the West both for the production and the purchase of its minerals. As for benefits to Africans, one only has to look at Africa's lack of improvement in its economic situation since independence to see that benefits somehow do not end up in the hands of most Africans. And as long as technology is not an African-appropriate technology, it is likely that development will be hindered, if not prevented. The point about the parallels and the differences between Western Discourse theory is that dependence does exist but that economic, and as we will see political, dependence starts with psycho-cultural dependence:

macro-level social dependence of any kind starts with micro level dependence of the mind and psyche.

If one follows the logic used in this essay, one should arrive at the following conclusion: since both the West and Africa are linked in the same set of power relations, that they now are part of the same international discourse, and that this discourse was created by the West, then it would be safe to assume that the West benefits from development and from aid more than the aided does. And, not surprisingly, it does:

For every \$1 that the US contributes to international financial institutions that give aid, the recipients spend \$2 to buy goods and services in the US. For every \$1 paid by the US into the world bank alone, \$9.50 flows into the nation's economy in the form of procurement contracts, operations expenditures and interest payments to investors in the banks' bonds (Time, 1979).

Other benefits with giving aid include a better access to markets and raw materials, as well as added political influence. Perhaps the following warning should appear on development package: 'Warning! Foreign Aid may be Hazardous to your Health!'.

Another, smaller scale example would be the 'giving' of a Western tractor to an African peasant. The giving of a Western tractor (Japanese and Western tractors, for example, are quite different structurally and serve different purposes) or a locomotive implies that, when any mechanical problem arises, Western parts have to be purchased. The giving of the tractor will probably engender more revenue for the donor country than it engendered costs. The tractor or

locomotive are on their own packages of Western experience, knowledge, and assumptions, and they may not be suitable for an African culture or eco-system. The tractor may be too heavy and sink in soft soils or its machinery may not be able to break the hard soils of some parts of Western Africa.

Socially, it may also lack suitability. A tractor, if it were to work as it should, would replace several workers, who would be out of a job and may move to the city, in a labour-abundant continent. And, of course, the owner is now dependent on oil (the source of energy replacing the human energy) which has to be purchased. The purchasing of a tractor often also creates a pattern of imitation by other farmers who also want the most modern, the most westernized.

The tractor, usually associated with private large land ownership, means that traditional methods, such as chitimene or fallow-farming, are now impossible. Thus, the land quickly becomes poor with the use and overuse of the same area, often for the same crop, which accentuates the depletion of the soil. The farmer now has to buy fertilizers, which decreases profits. In an attempt to recuperate these profits, one has to boost production, and the farmer buys insecticides, many of which are banned in the West for health reasons, such as DDT (New Internationalist, Jan 1990). Of course, this method proves effective, but only for a few people. For the few who do succeed, they may purchase more land from not so lucky farmers, who then become landless, and poor, without an independent way of subsistence. Trying to find a job, they,

too, are thrown in the money economy. Thus, one sees the emergence of large landowners at the top, who usually grow crops for foreign markets such as cotton, cocoa or coffee, and a rise in landlessness, urbanization, slums, and urban poverty and crime, as Harrison argued in his Inside the Third World. This problem is especially acute in South America but it also exists in Africa.

So, the lesson here is that westernization leads to more westernization. The exclusion of many farmers by the purchase of one tractor leads to a centralization of wealth and of population -urbanization. Of course, the acquisition of a single tractor will not change a society. However, tractors acquired in large quantities in a given area could give these results.

The Western tendency toward centralization in aid also manifests itself in urban-biased development. The trend is to pay great attention to cities, and much less to rural areas. This could be valid, up to a point, if most people lived in cities, as they do in the West, but this is not true of Africa. But even in Africa, urbanites are better educated, healthier, wealthier, and have greater access to social programs and social welfare institutions than do the ruralites (Harrison, 1981, p.145-147). Health projects are usually geared toward the cities because they have more chance of succeeding and are cheaper, because of the high concentration of population. But this encourages further urbanization. And if one has greater urbanization, one needs

an increased agricultural output to feed the city. But if fewer people are producing in the countryside, the remaining ones must produce even more. The Western pattern of urbanization and ever bigger landholders, as well as capital and technological intensive agriculture becomes a necessity. The point is that the homogenization/exclusivity which leads to centralization and which are embedded in the Western discourse are carried through the international system and through developmentalism and are translated into empirical events through Western-style development projects.

Another form of aid is educational material. However, education may be one of the most efficient channels of westernization. More than any other form of aid, it carries assumptions about knowledge, as which knowledge is important and how it should be arranged so as to be meaningful. Education also promotes ways of teaching and more importantly, ways of learning.

For example, children and adults are now learning through their eyes (Western education is transmitted through the written form) rather than through their ears (as in oral tradition). It also means they do not have to use their long-term memory: the books can be picked up at any time. At the same time, as anyone who has opened a textbook can attest to, the emphasis is not on comprehension but on short-term memory, long enough to pass the next test. Knowledge about medicinal plants and animals was also transmitted orally for generations. Some knowledge was probably lost along the way

but new knowledge was also added.

But, when Western high school textbooks are used in Africa, Africans not only study modern Western society (be it biology, medicine, or social science) but they also acquire Western academic tools, such as Cartesian and Aristotelian thinking. These styles of thinking become tools which the students use afterwards when they look at their own society. With Western education comes a taste for Western ideals (a Western liberal view of equality and individualism, Western defined freedom, self-determination and the nation-state ideology, etc.). Schools will even

often impose Western uniform on pupils and teach syllabuses emphasizing modern urban activities... Young people emerge dazed and uprooted, despising their own culture (Harrison, 1981, p.54).

This is a remnant of the education system under colonialism. But even after independence, "the style and content of education continued along largely European lines. Education was oriented to theory and distant facts, not to the practical life of the village" (Harrison, 1981, p.324). The 'be like me' message from the West is causing hardship at the personal level which translate in social unrest, alienation and anomie. Harrison further adds that this led to graduates in the social sciences far outnumbering those in the natural sciences in almost all developing countries (Harrison, idem).

The study of French and English literature, the colonizers' literature, continues in the post-colonial period. This study of Western literature, instead of African, deepens the respect students have for things Western

('Western stories must be better than African stories, otherwise, that is what would be taught') but it also deepens their rejection of things African as well. On the other hand, Harrison saw Racine's Andromaque and Corneille's Le Cid in an Ouagadougou school, texts which even French students find hard and boring (like most Anglophone students find Shakespeare boring).

On a nearby shelf is (...) another tell-tale volume: the Practical Guide for Candidates in Administration Exams. It contains problems on such relevant topics as France's trade pattern, and essay questions (with sample answers) on quotes from Pascal or other troubles (...) such as 'what is boredom? Where does it come from? How do you fight it? (Harrison, 1981, p.325).

And all this in the language of the former colonial power, of course. The impact must be quite deep for African students, as the learning of another language is being done without much relation to their daily lives, while at the same time providing these students with a measure with which to judge that daily African life. The cultural structures being transmitted through these books probably have an impact on their thinking pattern, as was suggested in the theoretical background. At the other end of westernization, in the West itself, literature has a parallel mission, that of convincing Westerners of their superiority, their 'mission civilizatrice', of the need to develop others.

Presumably innocent figures like De Brunhoff's Babar are very effective in conveying cultural assumptions unwittingly. Dorfman, in The Empire's Old Clothes, analyzes the messages within a story like Babar and looks at how these messages are

transmitted through the story to the young and adult reader. It is worthwhile going more deeply into it.

The story of Babar starts with Babar, an orphaned baby elephant, being adopted by an old wise lady in a European city. As he grows up, Babar learns to walk on his hind legs and then starts wearing clothes, using napkins and utensils, etc. Babar also become educated and learns to read and write, and he also learns arithmetic, history and geography. "Babar (...) gradually begins to lose his savage and ignorant ways in order to become a responsible member of society" (Dorfman, 1982, p.18). But Babar is an African elephant and he eventually goes back home to the jungle. Immediately, he begins to educate the other elephants. They, too, soon start walking on two legs and wearing clothes, European clothes. Babar becomes king of a 'civilized', European-style kingdom. De Brunhoff has in mind with this story, argues Dorfman, much more than a theory on how children become adults.

It is no accident that Babar is an African elephant. The book was written in 1931. Africa was still divided into colonies, but a lot of social and political pressure was felt against colonialism, both within Europe and from Africa. In fact, what De Bruhnoff has in mind is a 'mission civilizatrice' (Dorfman, 1982, p.23). Elephantland has a urban center, the capital. To build that city, however, the elephants had to learn the proper work ethics, like working six days a week from sunrise to sunset and resting on Sundays. An increasing division of labour emerges, but for

the benefit (read growth) of all. "Urban values have not ruined nature, they have perfected it... European intervention has been a complete success" (Dorfman, 1982, p.39). The theory underlying the story is a theory of development. The parallel between a theory of development and the socialization of a child is a very important assumption on the writer's part. It is a view that cultures and societies are just like people, that they go through stages of growth, and finally grow up to be full, responsible, intelligent, educated, civilized adults (a parallel we have already seen in both left and right wing theories of development surveyed earlier). Just as children need parents to grow and guide them toward full adulthood, to become civilized, so does Africa needs the West to guide it toward civilization. Thus, we now have another justification for colonialism, the 'mission civilizatrice' of De Brunhoff.

The stages of colonial penetration, the stages in which the native assumes western norms as his models, are felt by the reader to be stages of his own socialization (Dorfman, 1982, p.44).

Social development comes to equal growing up, which is seen as being the same for all cultures. In fact, development becomes tied to a biological theory of change, and thus, offers no leeway. Development becomes an absolute, rational, objective, road that cannot be deviated from. In Babar,

there exist backward countries which, once they imitate the more 'advanced' (grown-up) countries, once they (...) begin working like they're supposed to, once they invite foreign professors and technicians to assist them, will succeed in improving their lot. It's enough if you've got internal, national collaborators (Dorfman, 1982, p.40).

De Brunhoff's view of development precedes Rostow's theory of development by about twenty years, yet the basic assumptions are the same. By implication, this sort of theory means that the over-accumulation of wealth in some countries and the poverty of others are not part of the same phenomenon, that a single web of power relations does not bind the West and Africa. All they have to do is imitate us and they, too, will develop as Reagan, Galbraith, Rostow, possibly even Lenin, and so many others would have us believe.

The examples given above illustrate the point that westernization is an active process both in the West and in Africa. Without Africans to be affected by Western theories, the internalization of the Western discourse and the practice of developmentalists, westernization would not be as strong in Africa. In fact, it would be a simple matter of cultural diffusion rather than an imposition of one reality over another.

Overall, one can see that development itself is a channel of westernization. The objects sent, the functions and structures of the development agencies, and their underlying theories, all take an active role in the westernization of the recipient. These agencies,

whatever their duties, (...) universalized Western forms of organizations and Western accomplishments, imprinting them, (...) upon the entire world, ostensibly in the service of development (Von Laue, 1987, p.324).

This means that, because the donor country uses Western infrastructure and ways, the recipient must have the corresponding Western structures to receive and implement the

development projects being sent. Thus, when a development project is successfully implemented, the impact of westernization may be even greater because it touches more people, people that are usually not affected by development (perhaps this calls into question the very standard of 'success'). But only if cultural and development success is achieved. Most often, development does not occur and it does not occur because it is Western and does not apply to Africa.

We can conclude this chapter by saying that the problems of the theory and practice of developmentalism and the relation between these two are linked to cultural biases. In theory, developmentalism is culturally ridden by ethnocentric, evolutionist, and rationalist values. Empirically, developmentalism is ridden by pan-economism, consumerism, technocracy and the nation-state. In practice, the theory translates development into westernization, and therefore, lack of development in Africa. Thus, one has to get away from defining development in terms of growth, economics and politics, and start looking for a definition that includes the culture and psyche of the people who want to develop. A cultural definition alone is not enough, some minimum economic standards must be achieved (the right to live beyond survival, for example) but the ways to go about this must be culturally determined.

Two of the most important mechanisms or vehicles of westernization are probably the nation-state and capitalism. Before turning to the role of capitalism, we will turn, in

the next section, to the nature of the nation-state, its sources and cultural baggage, its lack of cultural and historical appropriateness to Africa, and to the impact caused by the disharmony between the Western cultural messages incorporated in the nation-state and the African discourse.

Chapter 3. The Nation-State as Discourse.

H. Kissinger on Allende's election in 1969:

"I don't see why we have to stand by and watch a country go communist due to the irresponsibility of its own people".

Quoted in the New Internationalist, Jan. 1987.

The nation-state arose in Europe around the 15th century. Its origins can be traced back to the demise of the Holy Roman Empire, the increasing power struggle between the church and the nobles, as well as the rise of absolute monarchies. This increase in power by the nobility was paralleled by an increase in power of the nation-state as an institution and an ideology, through taxation and war (Perry, 1981, p.378).

In the following two centuries, the nation-state was further solidified and took the shape it now has. One of the factors affecting its structures was the imperfect regional balance of power that existed for centuries in Europe, with Spain, England, and France taking turns at being the most powerful nation of the region but never being more powerful than all other nations united. Thus, continental domination was impossible, and one had to deal with one's neighbor on a relatively equal basis.

The Western tendency to highly centralize institutions, and the individualist and egalitarian ideals propagated by the French revolution also played a role (Perry, 1981, p.486). If the other countries wanted to be able to resist to Napoleon and the ideals of the French Revolution, they too had to unify and get the population involved. They too had to

broaden their power base (to the population as a whole) even while remaining centralized. Nationalism and patriotism as we understand them today also arose during this period (Perry, 1981, p.448-450). But what is, in cultural and power terms, the nation-state and how does it interact with African cultures? In this section, we will first look at the cultural assumptions of the nation-state and explore how it works as a political regime of discourse at the local and the international levels. We will see that it also functions, like the discourse of development does, as a conveyor belt of westernization and that it acts against development in Africa.

A. Characteristics of the Nation-State as Discourse

One of the most important characteristics that differentiates the Western view from the African view of land is the idea of ownership. The concept of the nation-state is based on the sacredness of territoriality, of land belonging to someone, as is the concept of land ownership at the individual level.

Locke's idea that land ownership is sacred and that it is the ultimate check against a government, or a centralized power, is a Western idea. Land ownership, for him, was the basis for democracy (Locke, 1988 (1690), p.71). This idea is embedded within the idea of the nation-state, with the territory belonging to an abstract concept, the state, which is sovereign. Thus, the ideas of Locke, and Hobbes in the

Leviathan intermixed and led to the nation-state. In Leviathan, Hobbes describes the Leviathan in the following manner:

the subject cannot change the forme of government. The sovereign power cannot be forfeited. No man can without injustice protest against the institution of the sovereign declared by the major part. What soever the sovereign doth, is unpunishable by the subject (Hobbes, 1980 (1651), p.227-232).

One is left to wonder if Kennedy was not simply paraphrasing Hobbes centuries later when he said: 'don't ask what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country'. Thus, we now have the absolute sovereignty of the nation-state over its internal affairs, like population and natural resources, and the relationship between those nation-states as being the relationship between sovereigns.

Foucault writes that

sovereignty is the central problem of right in Western societies (...). The system of right is centered entirely upon the king, and it is designed to eliminate the fact of domination and its consequences (Foucault, 1980, p.95).

To Foucault, the legal-political system often acts as a reaction against the king, and always in reference to it. The theory of sovereignty of the nation-state may be part of a Western neurosis about monarchs. Part of the reason for the success of the theory of the nation-state is that it is a 'permanent instrument of criticism of the monarchy' (Foucault, 1980, p.105), basically by replacing that monarchy. One centralized system simply replaced another. Thus, in the last 200 years, revolutions have been made within the limits of the nation-state. In the context of this

section, 'the king plays the same role in the legal-political system of the Western nation-state that the West plays at the international level. The nation-state has acted as a regime of discourse in the West as much as it does now in the international system, as we shall soon see.

As there were many sovereigns in the world, there are now several nation-states, who interact very much as kings used to. It could be argued that this power relationship between states, as being one between sovereigns, leads to a need for a larger bureaucracy. This large bureaucracy is needed to handle the internal and external affairs of the state/leviathan as well as an army to maintain order within and protect the leviathan against other leviathans. As economic matters became more important during the colonial period, as trade increased between and within states, there resulted an increasing state involvement in the polity and economy to sustain its army and its own bureaucracy. This involvement became even greater in the 20th century with the appearance of the welfare state and the two world wars. The system soon became self-perpetuating. Education and socialization also become more important, so as to build patriotism and loyalty within enough individuals to sustain the state ideology and structures. This too needs more state involvement in the economy to raise the funds to sustain an education system, and the bureaucracy that runs it. These are all important points when one considers the impact of the nation-state on Africa, and we will come back to these

throughout this section. Suffice to say as a summary that in Africa, if the state wants to divert loyalties away from traditional authorities towards itself (a Western construct), it also has to offer goods and services such as health care, a high standard of living, sanitation, education, and security. But these all imply great costs while many African countries and people are struggling with basic necessities. Social welfare programs would help many poor, but the state may not be able to pay.

Another underlying idea in this discussion about the Western nation-state is that private property and sovereignty of the nation-state seem to have grown side-by-side. The sovereignty of individuals over their private lands parallels the sovereignty of the king and of the nation-state over their land. The culture which put fences around lands is also the culture that invented the more abstract fences of political boundaries and the ideology of the nation-state. The themes of centralization and dichotomy (leviathans versus other leviathans) also appear. But are these views and applications of sovereignty, centralization, and dichotomy applicable to African societies?

B. The Nation-State and Africa.

In pre-colonial Africa, the very basis for political legitimacy was different from that of the West. Political legitimacy was not based on land but on population. More research needs to be done on this point but some pattern

seems to exist in several African cultures. It seems that, no matter how much cattle (the basis for wealth, prestige and status in most non-nomadic cultures, and in many nomadic peoples as well) a chief had, if his decisions were not approved by his 'followers', they had the possibility of moving away. In effect, people could vote with their feet. This is not to say that people did not feel attachment to a certain piece of land or area or that there were no social restrictions on their movements, but at the very least, they had the possibility of voting with their feet. The population seemed to be more fluid than in the West, as can be witnessed by the number of nomadic and semi-nomadic cultures on the continent.

This freedom of movement seemed to be greater in pre-colonial Africa than in the West since the birth of the nation-state. This is due to several factors. In pre-nation-state Africa, many economic activities, especially the supply of food, seemed to be linked more extensively to the household than was the case in the West. For the Zulu and Ndebele of southern Africa, for example, food production and acquisition was tied to the household (Dennison & Nyeko, 1973, p.26). This meant that food had to be gathered away from the village, or that, in case of agricultural practices, fallow period had to be allowed, which meant moving from area to area for cultivation. In addition, the cattle-rearing cultures of the region needed large spaces for their herds. This also meant they had to move from pasture to pasture. But

then, during the Mfecane (a deep socio-economic upheaval and restructuring of several groups in southern Africa during the 19th century, involving a centralization of power, military conquest and large population movements), control of food production and cattle ownership shifted from the household to the Shaka's Zulu 'state' (Denoon & Nyeko, 1973, p.28).

In the West, the supply of food is linked to the nation-state apparatus and market forces, and has been so for a few centuries, when urbanization began at the end of the middle ages. How many Western households today are self-sufficient or even have a garden? Very few. The few individuals who attempt self-sufficiency are usually not seen as full members of society but rather as marginals. It seems that the African Leviathan was much less all-powerful than the Hobbesian monster. More evidence is needed to support the following argument but it seems that to remain a chief, an individual had to be sensitive to his/her people and respond to them. And people could do this because land did not belong to any one individual. The importance of large herds of cattle may have played a role in this in some cases. In any case, land belonged to the community, with the chief allocating it according to perceived need. And, as in any other political system, there were other internal checks and balances against abuses of power. The point here is that land did not play the political role that it plays in the West and that population in Africa played a political role it does not play in the West. The point is not that political authority and

power were not important in Africa but rather that their basis was different.

Other differences exist between Western and African ways of aggregating. One of these is the Western tendency to centralize. Egyptians may have invented the pyramids but it is Westerners who most fully applied the shape to their society. Western institutions are pyramid-shaped, with several layers from bottom to top. This makes it more difficult to topple the top by putting more distance between the ruling elite and the bottom population. This is even more true when the top is not one single individual but an institution, as happened when kings were replaced by the state apparatus. The state made head chopping as a way to change political regimes very difficult for people.

It seems that in Africa, most cultures had fewer layers between the top and the bottom. This could allow for a more direct form of democracy. In many African cultures, public hearings were held at regular intervals at both the village level and the Great king level, for those cultures who had kings, like the Xhosa and the Asante (Mazrui, 1980, p.147-150).

The Western tendency to centralize pervades in both the communist and capitalist worlds. One only has to look at their bureaucracies, governments and political structures (one head, helped by subalterns, supported by others lower on the ladder, all eventually elected or appointed), and the judicial system with the lower courts under the supreme

court. This is not to say that only one pyramid exists. The number of pyramids may well make the difference between a Western democracy and Soviet communism, with Soviet communism having fewer pyramids, with state control over the economy. Western religions follow a similar pyramidal pattern. The Catholic system has priests, bishops, arch-bishops, cardinals, with the Pope as the head (the protestants follow a similar pattern). In addition, the spiritual realm is also pyramidal: God, his Son, and the Holy Spirit are helped by archangels, lesser angels, etc. The economy also follows the pattern, with huge MNCs being divided into branches, divisions, and so on. Some are practically self-sufficient: McDonalds', for example, has its own lands, cattle, food processing and packaging plants, as well as distributing networks. Also important to note is that the tops of the pyramids are often linked. Michael Gross, in Friendly Fascism, shows how the political and economic tops of the pyramids are linked and mutually self-reinforcing, including the U.S. presidency (Gross, 1980, p.63-70). During the Middle Ages, this was also true of the church, where the papacy was very powerful politically and economically. Today, large corporations carry a lot of political weight in both the first and the third world.

Most African cultures did not seem to become so centralized for several reasons. First, they generally did not develop as large institutions. Second, and more importantly, as long as land did not belong to anyone, people

could move away. Even in the great empires like the Asante's, where centralization seemed to occur to a degree rarely seen in Africa (another example would be Shaka's Zulu empire), centralization appears not to have occurred to the degree it did in the West.

Even at the height of its concentration of power, the Asante empire's power structures were divided in several ways. First, two distinct systems of government existed, with the apex of both being the Asantehene, king of the Asante. Again, the point is not that there was no centralization in Africa but rather that this centralization did not go as far as it did in the West. The amantoo was one of the systems and it consisted of "the group of 'true' Asanti chiefdoms clustered around Kumasi on all sides but the West" (Wilks, 1967, p.206). It was a decentralized and segmentary power where similar powers were exercised by different levels of authority.

The amantoo (...) still preserved their semi-autonomous status and maintained independent armies, treasuries, courts, and festivals. They constituted states within states, united in their recognition of the king in Kumasi as overlord, but possessing jurisdiction from which the king's administration was constitutionally excluded (Wilks, 1967, p.232).

The second system regulated relations between Asantehene and the conquered territories, which was the main part of the empire. It was centralized and an appointed bureaucracy exercised "a high degree of social control and of organizing the [human] power and other resources of the areas under the king's authority" (Wilks, 1967, p.207). Toward its conquered

territories and protectorates, the king's policy was one of indirect rule.

It was not part of Ashantee policy (...) to alter the government of the conquered country. The chiefs of the different tribes remained in possession of what power the conqueror thought fit to leave them, with the style and rank of a captain of the king (Wilks, 1967, p.232).

Even though the apex of both systems was the Asantehene, decentralization was still high since the conquered chiefs remained chiefs, with some autonomy from the conquering culture. But the apex of power itself was further divided by the presence of a body representing the amantoo, the Asantemanhyiamu. This body was consulted as often as possible and great autonomy, even in foreign relations, was accorded to the districts (Wilks, 1975, p.585). An inner council further divided power. Interestingly, there existed within this council two parties, the peace and war parties, who most often than not held the balance of power over the king on foreign affairs matters or even determined who would become Asantehene. For example, the peace party assured the succession of a peace Asantehene after Osei Yaw Akoto's death, Kwaku Dua I who reigned for 33 years (1834-1877) (Wilks, 1970, p.7). Perhaps a better way to see the Asantehene is not as the apex of a pyramid of power but rather as the center of circle sectioned in several pieces.

There is another great difference between Western and African ways of aggregating: in the level of acceptance of minorities within a greater whole, be it a nation-state or an empire. This difference illustrates well the theme of

exclusivity and homogeneity, of dichotomic thinking.

Through European history, minorities have, for the most part, been wiped out or have left the nation in which they were not accepted anymore. This is true of cultural, religious and linguistic minorities. Names of European languages are related to the name of their respective countries: Spanish for Spain, French for France, Portuguese for Portugal, German for Germany, and English for England. This is no accident, and something that is not paralleled in Africa, and maybe even in the world to the degree it is in Europe. In fact, "more languages [are] spoken per unit of population in Africa than in any comparable portion of the world" (Smock, 1976, p.4). Ghana alone has 34 distinct languages (Smock, 1976, p.170).

Most European countries also have one dominating religion. This seems to fit with the Western logic of centralization, which is helped and, in turn, encourages homogeneity and exclusivity. Linguistic minorities have mostly disappeared in these countries, or are so small they have no weight in the political process nor in their society in general. Where larger minorities have survived, problems exist: Belgium has two main language groups; Alsace-Lorraine has been going back and forth between Germany and France, depending on who has won the last war. Switzerland is an exception but it is also perhaps a historically and geographically logical extension of the rest of Europe: the minorities had to go somewhere or disappear. Minority

problems also exist in other Western countries: Canada and Quebecois separatism, and, in the U.S., the 'race problem' is still high on the socio-political agenda. Also, the increase in immigration in Europe in the last twenty years has seen an increase in minority problems and racism. It may well be that the nation-state does not bring itself easily to multi-culturalism. In fact, it seems that the Western nation-state does not bring itself easily to accept difference (the factors of homogeneity and exclusivity, where anything or anyone not that cannot be made like 'me' is part of the 'other' group and rejected).

Africans, like all other peoples of the world, have also fought with other cultures. But the tendency toward high centralization and homogenization of cultural groups was not as great as in the West. Many African empires have been multi-cultural empires where local traditions, religions, and languages were not suppressed by the conquering culture (Mazrui, 1980, p.69), with a few exceptions like Shaka's Zulu empire, where a Zuluzation occurred (Denoon & Nyeko, 1973, p.28-29). The Asante empire is an example of a multi-cultural empire that, as a whole, did not resort to cultural genocide to keep control over its diverse cultural groups. According to Asante sources, there were 47 nations within the Asante empire (Wilks, 1975, p.127). The Western tendency to homogenize was not found to the same extent in the Asante empire as other cultures were allowed to keep their religion and even political systems, as long as some allegiance and

taxes were paid to the Asantehene.

The extent of inter-ethnic wars and conflicts as we know them since the 1950s (fighting between ethnic groups because power is linked to ethnicity) is proper to this period of African history and can be imputed to the imposition of the nation-state system on the Africans, and their cultural reactions to it. For example, Molteno writes that "political conflict on sectional lines has increased since independence" and that it is most likely to increase in the future (Molteno, 1974, p.101). Molteno further argues that this division was caused by politicians making use of ethnicity to gain votes (Molteno, 1974, p.101-103). The colonial forces put together cultures that had not dealt with each other in the past. More importantly, the nation-state brought a new ground on which these cultures had to meet: competition.

The problem is not simply that several cultures were forced to live together but rather that they live in a nation-state, which is centralizing and leaves only one avenue of power, the politico-economic realm. This realm is especially strongly linked in Africa because of the colonial period. A Western-style democracy and the inability of people to vote with their feet (the nation-state does not allow moving out of its grasp easily, and then one can only fall into the grasp of another state) mean that politicians will make use of their ethnic origins to get power through votes. At the other end, people will make use of these origins to get hired or get a favor. The conflict emerges when one

ethnic group is seen to have more power than another. This is often a left-over of the colonial period, as colonial powers often linked themselves more closely to a specific group. When they left, the favoured group simply replaced the colonizers in the power positions. Cultures that had been resisting the colonizers simply could not get into the structures, not having been trained or even acquainted with it, or even, having been considered as enemies by the group now in power.

The us versus them dichotomy, coupled with exclusivity, are inherent in the concept of the nation-state and are carried within the nation and into different groups within that nation. Whereas in Europe the dichotomy eventually led to the rise of the nation-state, in Africa, the imposition of the nation-state led and still is leading to internal cultural divisions. These cultural problems may not be as acute in Europe as they are in Africa maybe because significant minorities disappeared during the process of European nation-state building. Conflicts have emerged in Africa, yet it seems that African countries have not had either the inclination nor the time to get rid of their minorities to the extent the Europeans did, although some efforts are being made by some government (like Eritria, or the Igbos, or Idi Amin Dada). Several hundreds of cultures still exist in about 55 countries.

C. The (il)legitimacy of the Nation-State in Africa.

So far, we have assumed that the nation-state in Africa has attained the same important quality it has attained in the West: political legitimacy. In Africa, the legitimacy of the state is, at the very least, questionable. In Europe, the nation-state developed slowly, at its own pace and from within: it was not imposed by an external force or by another culture. That is, it was culturally and historically appropriate. Yet, it still led to great bloodshed and misery. In Africa, the Western type nation-state as it is now known had and has no cultural nor historical background. It was imposed from outside at an incredibly fast pace, historically, and the imposition was stopped while the process was barely half way through. It is important at this point to go into greater depth into the actual historical process of the imposition of the nation-state, and how this opened the gate for continuing westernization after independence. The historical process of the imposition of the nation-state sheds light on the problems of the nation-state's legitimacy in taking its roots in Africa.

The general pattern, according to Von Laue in The World Revolution of Westernization, was that subversion began with the killing of the warriors,

with the defeat, humiliation, or even overthrow of traditional rulers. The key guarantee of law, order, and security from external interference was thus removed. With it went the continuity of tradition, whether of governance or of all the other social institutions, down to subtle customs regulating the individual psyche. Thus ended not only political but also cultural self-

determination (Von Laue, 1987, p.27).

The initiative of control, authority, and leadership had gone to the outsiders. This process was never total, but it was pervasive and continuous. The Xhosa turned to colonial authorities for leadership and help after the cattle-killing of 1856-57 (Peires, 1989, p.274). But the loss of traditional authority due to the colonial impact was only the beginning. In terms of westernization, colonialism was only the opening of the path, the beginning of a long and still on-going process.

Western political and economic modes of doing things and religious and cultural ideas were soon implemented. Further military involvement was needed to protect the new and various interests. Once the ground had been broken, it had to be maintained and kept. After the attack on the military leaders and the attempted destruction of political ways and leadership came the attack on society and economics. Today's 'neo-imperialism' is simply a continuation of this, without the overt use of weapons (generally not needed now, since Western structures are already in place in Africa). Today, the attack is concentrated on the culture and the psyche of Africa. The African cultural reality is being changed by a colonialism of a new kind, 'reality colonialism' as the West attempts to change Africa's perception of reality for a Western one.

About a century after being invaded by the colonial powers, Africa used Western tools and ideas (guns,

nationalism and individual rights), and turned them against the colonialists and became independent. Western philosophers were even often quoted by Africans who had studied abroad as sources for an argument of national rights, independence, and sovereignty. Again, westernization acted like a language between two cultures. Africans had realized they "needed power -state power- not only to carry the Western vision into practice on their own but also to make equality real" (Von Laue, 1987, p.29). But the nation-state has yet to find a full place in the collective unconscious of the people and it has yet to 'make equality real' on the international scene. "Loyalty to Nigeria and to Kenya or Uganda was therefore loyalty to an entity carved by the white intruders without reference to indigenous cultural boundaries" (Mazrui, 1980, p.242). So, Mazrui adds, if one is starving or barely getting by,

why should I regard those colonial frontiers as being more important than the needs of my children? Why should I regard integrity in the service of an artificial national entity as more important than staplefood for my children? While I abuse the resources of my artificial nation in favor of my authentic family, let the innocent cast the first stone (Mazrui, 1980, p.243).

The question of legitimacy does not really arise in the West because the nation-state provides enough wealth, comfort, and security for the issues not to be raised by most people. Also, the nation-state is so well legitimated in the West that only very few individuals even bother raise the questions asked by Mazrui. Very few will question the nation-state's validity.

At this point we should backtrack a little. Did the Africans have to adopt the nation-state? Von Laue maintains that "statehood was an inescapable necessity in the global system and state-building, the challenge of the age" (Von Laue, 1987, p.307). It was inescapable because of colonialism, but this is not what Von Laue means. Von Laue actually seems to take the global system as a given, as historically predetermined, perhaps in an Hegelian way, which may be another Western bias. His analysis is weak because it does not take into account the active westernization of Africa through the global system. It is unclear whether Von Laue is being ironic on the following point, but if he is not ironic serious, a serious problem arises with his analysis:

the nation-state was an alien institution derived from Western institutions and imposed by Western-trained intellectuals upon uncomprehending and unprepared people. (...) but it was for their own good in an inescapably interdependent world (Von Laue, 1987, p.307).

These people were 'unprepared and uncomprehending': it was the Africans' own weaknesses and failures that led to the situation they are now in because they could not adapt to the Western world. Von Laue does not mention that it may be the reverse, that the Western culture was, and still is, not applicable to Africa. He also seems to forget that there was nothing inherently good or predetermined about colonization and the imposition of Western ways. Von Laue is guilty of what he should be most aware in writing about westernization: his own Western biases in analyzing the African situation.

The imposition of one culture over another does not mean

the imposing culture should (in moral, historical and deterministic terms) become the universal basis for political aggregation and cultural change. 'These people' may have been 'unprepared and uncomprehending' but Von Laue does not mention that Africans did not have any choice in the matter. And when they became independent, the global system was already formed and they could only become independent in one way: by entering the nation-state system. Their colonial past and the international system based on the nation-state did not leave them any alternative. By definition, a territory that is not a nation-state is either terra nullius or terra communis. And if it is terra nullius, like Africa, and South and North America were, that means it is up for grab by the European defined nation-state: up for colonization. Africans had to form nation-states, but might does not make it right nor any easier for Africans.

For scholars, it may seem that the basic problem of westernization in Africa, then, is the following: how can one jump over centuries, even millenia, of African cultural evolution to get into the game of another culture imposing itself on the world? Von Laue poses another question: how do we "reculture a people entirely ignorant of the road to an externally prescribed future" (Von Laue, 1987, p.325)? But that is not a legitimate question. It assumes that the West is the legitimate universal basis for change, for development as defined in the thesis. The problem is that the 'externally prescribed future' is a future imposed by an external force.

But the solution to the problems of underdevelopment is not the reculturation of an entire continent, as Von Laue seems to think. We will get into this more in the conclusion but suffice to say that if the solution may be in an African answer, it certainly cannot be in a Western imposition.

This discussion emerged from, and leads to, a problem that still exists in Africa today, one which may very well be on the rise in the 80s because of the poor economic performance of most sub-Saharan countries: the legitimacy of the nation-state.

The legitimacy of the nation-state in Africa was on the rise during the 50s and 60s, during the independence wave. The nation-state seemed highly promising as it promised Africans it would get rid of the oppressors. But then, during the 70s and 80s, economic disasters hit sub-Saharan Africa. The reasons are complex, and we shall spend more time on this in the section on capitalism. Suffice to say for now that the international system, along with Africa's dependency and lop-sided economies, were hard on Africa, and had and still have a significant impact on the legitimacy of the nation-state. The effect of the economic failures was a reversal of the process of legitimation.

Another problem in this issue is that nation-state building and legitimacy are usually seen as necessary for (Western) development:

for many third worlders, development is an heir to the national liberation urge. Development is only the next installment. Thus, when development does not occur, one looks at what went wrong with the national liberation.

Hence, one speaks of legitimacy of the nation-state, nation-state building, etc... but without regards to what those are exactly (Van Nieuwenhuijze, 1983, p.14).

The necessity of state-building for development is inherent in developmentalism: "[development] can only be done if the nation becomes a living reality and really has the same meaning for all citizens" (Compagnie d'Etudes Industrielles et d'Amenagement du Territoire, in Markovitz, 1970, p.295). And many Africans also saw a necessity in the nation-state, especially the African heroes of the independence movement, such as Julius Nyerere, who wrote:

If the present states [of Africa] are not to disintegrate it is essential that deliberate steps be taken to foster a feeling of nationhood. Otherwise our present multitude of small countries could break up into even smaller units -perhaps based on tribalism (Nyerere, 1968, p.209).

There are no alternatives to the Western style nation-state if one is to develop. This may be true. The only way that Africans have to develop may be through Western institutions and methods, through the Western discourse, but the problem is that this discourse is resisted by Africans because it does not fit their cultures. So, Africans have no choice: they have to use the nation-state for certain of their affairs because of the nature of the international system but necessity does not lead to the good life for Africans. There are two discourses at work and the Africans are trying to deal with the Western one while trying to keep their own. But the two discourses are not compatible, and it is exactly this lack of compatibility (the clash of two different perceptions of reality) between the two discourses that leads to

underdevelopment. In the chapter on capitalism, I will give the example of a different discourse which is compatible with the Western discourse and see that development has occurred in that situation: Japan.

With the economic failures of the late 70s and 80s, the nation-state's authority started eroding and one saw a return to traditional African authorities as a source of leadership. In Ghana, for example, Chazan mentions that people refocused their energy and attention away from the state and turned toward local politics and toward devising new strategies to either live outside of the state's reach or to use the state for their own purposes, legal or illegal (Chazan, 1983, p.192-200). Psychologically, the state's failure to legitimate itself can be seen

as a refusal in some cultures to believe that when the reasons of states under a nation-state system do not coincide with the needs of personal or collective morality, it is the reasons of state that should get priority (Nandy, 1988, p.173).

In other words, it is the rejection of the theory of the sovereignty of the nation-state by non-Westerners. The shock of the nation-state's failures must have been even greater simply because Africans were expecting a lot from the nation-state in the post-independence period. But the nation-state failed to fulfill people's expectations. The chiefs are now competitors with the state for legitimacy, leadership, and authority. In other words, Africans have failed to internalize the Western discourse of the state. So, the nation-state exists in Africa because it was imposed and is

sustained from above, by the Western international political regime of discourse. It seems that the Western state in Africa has not yet succeeded in gaining support from the general population. Thus, it seems that, at the internal level, within the nation-state, there is no regime of discourse, but rather two discourses competing for power. Current research undertaken with Don Ray of the University of Calgary suggests the following. There does not seem to be a regime of discourse because people have not internalized the Western discourse and because there still exists in Africa an alternative to the Western discourse, the African discourse, in the form of traditional authority, for example.

But these traditional authorities are also eroded. The colonial period was destructive not only in terms of human lives and material goods but also in terms of political and economic structures. No institution can fail to resist to an invader and hope to retain its full authority. Colonial authorities prevented the chiefs from receiving tribute (for hunting, fishing, river crossing, or simply as gifts), destroyed family and clan lines, and sometimes even replaced them with illegitimate chiefs. The horrors of the colonial period left a deep scar on the African psyche, and the traditional authorities had been unable to stop any of it. That also left a scar. As well, traditional authority is still being undermined in Africa, this time by Africans who are part of the newer authority structures in the shape of the nation-state.

Thus, Africans are left with weak sources of legitimate authority, at times turning towards one, at other times leaning towards the other. Perhaps this is partly why there is so much talk of pan-Africanness in intellectual circles. Perhaps this is also why there are so few working 'democratic' systems, democracy being defined along nation-state lines. The lack of legitimacy leads to some real policy and political problems, and by extension, it also has economic implications.

In the West, the police, taxes, and governments are accepted because the nation-state has legitimated itself through history. Westerners, in addition, know how to and whom to voice their concerns if they do not like certain policies. Or they wait until the next election. There is the feeling, justified or not, that most times they can influence the political process. People may be dissatisfied with the political process or with the economic situation, but they have internalized the power relations enough to not question their workings. In addition, they do not have any alternative as Africans do.

But if the state is not fully legitimate, if the discourse is not fully internalized, why should I pay taxes? Why should I voice my concern to a member of government which I feel will not or cannot do anything about it? With the failure of the nation-state in fulfilling its promises, Africans not only can turn back to traditional sources of authority for leadership, but economically, they can also

turn to the black market or the grey economy, thereby undermining the nation-state structures by redirecting away from it revenues in the form of taxes, tariffs, etc.

The nation-state's failure to become legitimate in Africa stems from the state's failure to supply the goods and to fulfill people's expectations, and by the existence of an alternative source of legitimacy. But more importantly, the reasons of the failure reside in the cultural and historical sources of the nation-state, post-Middle Ages Western Europe. This failure in Africa is not caused by an inherent evil of the nation-state but rather from the cultural differences between the West and Africa, with these differences not being compatible.

So far, we have looked at how the nation-state attempts to act as a regime of discourse internally. We have seen that within its borders, the lack of cultural compatibility between the Western nation-state and African political ways lead to political and economic problems which contribute to underdevelopment in Africa. But I have also hinted at the nation-state's role at the international level in keeping Africa in its present power location. We will now turn directly to this question of the state acting as a regime of discourse internationally.

D. The Western Nation-State as a Building Block of the International System.

I will argue in this section that the nation-state is the corner-stone of international law and politics and that

it has played a major role in the setting up of the international political economy. This section will first deal with the sources, cultural characteristics, and assumptions of the nation-state as the building block of the international system, and then go on to see the effect this has on non-Western countries.

One of the most important Western assumptions about the nation-state is probably its universality and its necessity. Hobbes' idea of the Leviathan arises from his perception that it is necessary, otherwise, humans would be living a 'nasty, brutish, and short' life. This is also true in contemporary beliefs: "it is the power and the policies of the state to create order where there would otherwise be chaos, or at best a Lockean state of nature" (Krasner, 1991, p.67). Levi sees the one emotion common to all people of the earth as being nationalism (Levi, 1976, p.136). This type of belief is widespread in both the general Western population and in Western academia. There is also, as we have seen, the belief in the perfection and superiority of the West and of the Western nation-state. With such a belief in mind, it becomes easy to impose the nation-state on the non-Western world, because the necessary state is equated with order and potential peace.

As a regime of discourse, the nation-state allows and encourages certain behaviors and thinking but prevents others. The nation-state's cultural origins provide a Western channel or environment that allows westernized elites of the

non-Western world to gain power through the political and economic processes associated with the state. It also prevents the non-westernized from gaining that power, effectively increasing the rate of westernization outside the West, as individuals attempt to westernize themselves so as to be able to make use of the Western structures. Westernization leads to power because the power structures at both the domestic and international levels are Western. Learning the skills of power, by definition, means westernizing oneself, and thus, for the non-Western individual, being westernized means gaining power, and can often become an end in itself.

This is also true of non-Western governments vying for more power at the international level. This is often done through treaties and agreements which are often biased toward the West because they were drafted in a Western international environment. In addition, the very idea of a written document symbolizing agreement between parties may be foreign to some cultures.

To have a treaty, one has to have a written language (for which the Western alphabet is now most often used) and the faith that the other party's signature and one's signature at the bottom of a sheet of paper will actually mean something in the real world. Contracts and treaties, like money, are a social construction of reality, and thus, culturally dependent. Faith in treaties means the psychological reality that the signature, once put down,

could lead to war if the written words, because of the signature, is broken. Throughout their history, Japanese have based their agreements on honour and verbal promises, which sometimes bound the promiser's family for generations. To the Japanese, the verbal agreement is much more meaningful than the written word (Whitney-Hall, 1968, p.94-95). So, when Perry came to Japan and imposed the open door policy on the Japanese, he did so with a treaty, a concept very much alien to the Japanese. This led to an even greater effort by the Japanese to learn Western ways, so as to change the treaty. Japan learned very quickly and well, but even today in business, initial personal contacts are highly important in determining whether the contract will be signed, an added legal formality for the Japanese who have to deal with Westerners. At least, Japan had a written language, but many African cultures did not. Many Africans had no psychological experience of the written contract. Yet, this, along with the nation-state sovereignty, is at the basis for international law, and other agreements such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Levi writes that, in relation to cultural differences, it is commonly believed that

international law has two problems. The first is that in the hierarchy of values among states, their own national, not the international, society is at the apex. The second is that value systems vary from state to state. This diversity of values or, more generally, the heterogeneity of cultures in the international society has been held responsible for the ineffectiveness or even the impossibility of international law (Levi, 1976, p.135).

Levi dismisses the second problem as going against historical evidence and maintains that only the first is a real issue in the international system. I disagree with Levi on the second point and think the first point needs some clarification. I agree with Levi's point that states put the national level above the international level. He seems to assume that if states put the international system above their national interests, there would be no problem for international law: it would be respected and the world would be a better place. But that is not the problem. The problem lies in the relationship between the West and the international system and the non-Western world and the international environment. Westerners seem to think that their society is universal, and that therefore the westernization of the world is not a cultural phenomenon but a universally human one. In other words, it should be much easier for Westerners to put the international system above their national interests than it would be for Non-Westeners. But non-Westeners are dealing with culturally foreign international system and have even less of a reason to put the international system above their national interests. In fact, it was argued earlier that most Africans do not even put their local interests above their national ones (this, of course would exclude political and economic elites), that the state in African has not been internalized by Africans. This argument goes directly against Levy's dismissal of culture being a significant factor in international relations:

the surprising aspect (of the effort at developing a common denominator from different cultures in international law) is that it is undertaken in the face of the historical evidence over several hundred years that states accept and obey international law. The assumption that cultural differences are very relevant to international law does not withstand closer examination on either empirical or analytical grounds (Levi, 1976, p.137).

Levi's statement holds true with the Western nation-state, which has existed for hundreds of years, in Europe only. He is not aware that the state is a cultural entity. Most states in Africa are less than 50 years old. Levi also makes the assumption that since there are nation-states all over the planet, his statement about Europe holds true for all cultures. He does not seem to realize that the nation-state is a Western structure and ideology, that it was imposed and that it acts as a regime of discourse. He does not realize that the nation-state did not arise out of a Hegelian universal process.

But the important question

about the operating rules of the Western system may not pertain to the way these rules regulate pre-existing state activities (activities whose existence is independent of the rules). Rather, the key question may well be the way in which national societies are created in accordance with these rules, the way they are originally constituted and defined by internalizing the structural principles and pressures of the world wide organization of production (Andrews, 1982, p.153).

This applies equally to both the political (the nation-state) and the economic realms (capitalism). The process is similar to what is described in regime theory. In this theory, an actor provides a framework within which specific agreements can be reached. In the context of westernization,

international law would be a specific set of agreements which was developed in the framework of the nation-state, which itself is part of an underlying super-framework, Western culture and history. This applies not only to law or forms of organization of production but also to political ideology and values more generally. The determination of values "is legitimated by a world political culture, with its modernizing intellectuals and its forms of ideological hegemony" (Andrews, 1982, p.152). I mean ideology not only in the sense of Marxism or liberalism, but rather in the sense of 'meta'-ideology, or beliefs about political aggregation and economic structures and processes (like the nation-state, industrialization, and monetization).

We have covered some of the political aspects of the Western discourse and how it acts on Africa internally and internationally. In the next section, we will look at the economic aspects by looking at how capitalism as a discourse affects Africa. We will concentrate on the impact of the international Western capitalist system on African economies and cultures.

Chapter 4

'Made in the West': Capitalism as Discourse

As has been hinted at so far, I consider there to be only one international system, a political-economic system, one ultimately based on the Western culture. The themes of exclusivity, homogenization, and centralization also emerge in capitalism and it, like the nation-state, has both an internal and an international component. We will also find that capitalism acts as a regime of discourse much like the nation-state does. It is believed that the parallels between the nation-state and capitalism are not an accident but rather are indicative that they are part of the same underlying super-regime of discourse, Western culture.

By looking at the nation-state, we have looked at the political end of the international system. To use Foucauldian terms, the idea of the nation-state can be said to be acting as a regime of discourse out of which emerges regimes of practices like the nation-state, multinational organizations like the UN, the practice of diplomacy, etc. We will now turn to a similar analysis of capitalism, looking at the messages inherent in capitalism and at how capitalism acts as a discourse at the national and at the international levels. Finally, we will look at the relationship between capitalism and the state.

A. Capitalism as Discourse

Like the nation-state, capitalism was also spread through colonialism, and like the state, it, too, led to the creation of parallel structures outside the West. Thus, like the state, it also acts as a regime of discourse. In order to develop, non-Western states have to make use of the international capitalist structures which were set up in the colonial period. Thus, even after independence, non-Western countries did not have any choice in the matter but to enter the international economic regime of discourse of capitalism. There are no alternatives to it, no alternatives to the IMF, to international trade, to increased monetization of the national economy, to borrowing money, nor to paying interest on loans.

The international capitalist discourse is pushing its way through the non-Western economies. Thus, just like power relations are internalized in the psyche and bodies of the individual, so is the capitalist regime of discourse being internalized by non-Western economies. But

capitalism is for many African nationalists a model which by espousing and pushing for certain economic behaviors, destroy the very values that so many African societies take as fundamental (UNESCO, 1983, p.19)*.

This contemporary process of the subjugation of the African discourse by the Western regime of discourse began in the colonial period. But what are the messages embedded in capitalism?

Capitalism carries within it conceptions of reality, as

well as views about individualism, human nature, and equality. These views are Western in nature, and so is the medium (capitalism), since the existing capitalist system emerged in the West and was imposed on the rest of the world by the West. We will now take the analysis we have seen on truth and knowledge one step further and see how these views translate into macro-economic beliefs and structures on the international level.

I would argue that any one view of human nature diminishes it, because one view cannot take into account the full potential and full complexity of human nature. Thus, the Western view of human nature, like that of any other culture, is reductive but capitalism diminishes it and homogenizes it to 'homo economicus'. Homo economicus is not any more noble than Hobbes' homo savagus. Homo Economicus is a cut-throat individualist whose only purpose is material well-being, profits, and so on. We have already seen Homo Economicus' characteristics in the section on development (the overemphasis on economics in the definition and theories of development) and they are the same ones in capitalism. Western individualism has no room for ties to the community and defines success in individualistic financial and material terms. Hence the definition of development in material terms. But the differences between capitalism and African modes of production go much deeper than simple differences over individualism.

Many pre-colonial African economies were not based on

exchange, as in the West, but on reciprocity. "Reciprocity is defined as the reproduction of a gift, its generalization, thus a gift cannot be considered as a primitive form of exchange, but rather like its opposite" (Vachon, 1988, p.2)*. In an exchange economy, one exchanges a good for another, in reciprocal economies, one gives something material in return for something immaterial. If something were to be given in exchange (another good or money), it would not be a gift anymore. Instead, one gains prestige, authority, and a form of symbolic I.O.U. in the community. Generosity and giving rather than accumulation beget power. The difference between the two is fundamental. Reciprocity is the principle by which power is

proportional to giving, the reverse principle operating in the economy of exchange according to which power is positively related to accumulation (Temple, 1988, p.11).

This is not to say that reciprocal economies did not use exchange but rather that they used it when engaging in economic activity outside the community, or with other cultures, like the West. According to Vachon, exchange is based on the

desire of each partner to satisfy his/her own desires. The individual is looking for individual interest, which implies property... Its identity postulates difference with others as rivalizing. The reciprocal economy, on the other hand, is motivated by the necessity of others, by the common good, understood to be both the sum of individual goods (the collectivity) and as a communitarian being, an invisible and inclusive third that is not reducible to the sum of its parts and which cannot be anyone's property... (Vachon, 1988, p.3)*.

During colonization, this difference in economic mode

worked to the benefit of the West, holders of the economy of exchange. This is a specific example of how the lack of compatibility and the very nature of the differences between the West and Africa gave and still gives the West an advantage and power over Africa. While Africans gave as much as possible (since, by doing so, they would gain prestige, and in their minds, would create an obligation for the recipient to reciprocate), Westerners,

on the other hand, were trying to accumulate as much as possible for the cheapest possible price, according to the rules of exchange and profit, both misunderstanding the nature of the other's economy. Thus, both sides' practices helped the transfer of natural resources from one system to the other. This explains, in great parts, under-development, something that the theory of unequal exchange does not explain (Vachon, 1988, p.6)*.

Vachon gives the example of the Balantes of Guinea-Bissau, where giving is considered to be the basis of society. "A man who is successful in his work is appreciated because he is able to give. He is even more appreciated because he is able to distribute more" (Vachon, 1988, p.4)*. Funerals can be postponed for years so that the redistribution is maximum (Vachon, 1988, p.5). Prestige is the social reason for over-production. A built-in welfare, wealth redistribution system, exists without the need for institutionalization.

Another important difference becomes apparent when one looks at the 19th century Asante, prior to the British take-over. In this case, the crucial figure in political-economic development was the obirempon (the individual accumulator of surplus wealth). The obirempon's achievement was shown

through public displays of wealth, and was the source of public order; the obirempon was the symbol of achievement and of good citizenship: "to be an obirempon was [in the thoughts of people] all at once to preside over society and to be responsible for its maintenance and continuity" (McCaskie, 1983, p.27). Interestingly, accumulation was seen as endlessly indiscriminate, because **accumulation was the strengthening of culture in face of nature**. This is an important difference with Western capitalism:

the ultimate meaning of accumulation and of wealth was construed as being social rather than individual. (It was) an obligatory aggrandizement or enlargement of the stock of human (Asante) capital, undertaken in conscious discharge of duties toward the achievement of the ancestors and of responsibility towards the 'historic' future represented by the unborn. Thus, at its most fundamental, the accumulation of wealth was basically about the amplification of cultural space over historical time (McCaskie, 1983, p.34).

This is why, at someone's death, wealth went not to offspring but to the Asantehene, as the symbol of the cultural custodian of the Golden Stool. From the Asantehene, the wealth was redistributed either to family members or others that may have had a legal claim to some of it (McCaskie, 1983, p.34). The rugged extreme individualism inherent in Western capitalism is not to be found in the Asante economic system, although that does not prevent some Asantes from being great wealth accumulators. The point is that the social and psychological reality under which they accumulate wealth is different from the social and psychological reality found in the West. The incompatibility between the two economic modes stems from the differences in

their *raison d'etre*. The capitalist discourse, being more powerful and exclusivist, excluded the Asante discourse. The process is not yet completed but the ground has been broken and the process is very probably irreversible. Asante methods of wealth accumulation still exist but they are under attack from the capitalist system.

In more general and contemporary terms, on the international level, capitalism's greatest efforts are devoted to homogeneity. It is cheaper to produce similar products in a similar manner anywhere on earth than to find alternative methods of production, etc. Thus, cars, radios, soft drinks, even t.v. programs are more or less the same all over the world. An interesting aspect of this, and another evidence of the westernization of the globe, is that other cultures have Western soft drinks but that the Indian or Japanese soft drink is not available in the West. Who in the West has heard of Pocari Sweato, a Japanese soft drink?

But the homogenization of products means that, to be economically successful, these products must be purchased by a homogenized purchaser. Thus, Africans must be like Asians, Asians like South Americans, and everyone like Westerners, because the West is the main producer of these goods, whether the products are produced in the West or not. Harrison writes that "the day is not far off when manufacturers will be producing the same line of products for sale everywhere in the world, with only the most minor variations" (Harrison, 1981, p.56). Harrison writes that

the production of homogenized products would come about through the 'homogenizing of consumer tastes' through modern communications... The multinationals join forces with the national elites as agents of westernization (Harrison, idem).

Capitalist elites are highly aware of this homogenization and are consciously striving for it. Harrison quotes the head of Ford's North American Automotive Operations as saying that "if the product is not made to suit the market, the market has to be moulded to suit the product" (Harrison, idem). To be able to get these goods, the non-Westerner must make use of Western supply channels, which are structured on Western methods and ways. To get into the international 'rat race', Africans and Asians alike must dress like Westerners and learn a Western language (usually English). They also learn to eat what and how the Westerner eats, and to think like (s)he does. And this is true not only of the non-Westerner going to the West, but also of the non-Western at home. The message 'Westerner is beautiful' is actively being carried by the media. And in order to homogenize, one has to exclude other forms. But how did the processes of exclusion and homogenization start?

B. The Spread of Capitalism as Discourse.

As was argued earlier, through the process of westernization, things Western have tended to become the lingua franca, the preferential standard, of non-Western cultures. This preference started with the European colonization of Africa and the introduction of a far-reaching

process of consumerism that changed traditional patterns of consumption. Marx and Engels wrote:

the bourgeoisie has, through its exploitation of the world market given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country (Marx & Engels, 1955 (1848), p.13).

By manipulating knowledge (and thus culture) so that Western ideals, process, and technology (in short, Western reality) are seen as best or most desirable to the non-Western world, a pattern of consumption and consumerism has been created that follows almost exclusively the Western model. This pattern of consumption is a child of the world economy that was created by the European, and subsequently American, expansion of mercantile capitalism and industrialization.

During the colonial period, there was a global transfer of plants and new staple foods that created the basis for plantation economies throughout Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. Colonialism laid the foundation for a world divided into the industrial nations on the one hand, and 'hewers of wood and drawers of water' on the other.

Local economies and local industries were severely undermined and in many cases, eliminated, while the colonies were forced to buy goods from the homelands of their European conquerors. Indigenous culture was also undermined. The colonies became sources of inexpensive raw materials for Western industries and Western consumption. And, if one follows Dependencia and Wallerstein's world system theories, the result was a new order with established rich and industrialized metropolitan centers supported by a periphery

of primary producing satellites. These colonial powers created administrative centers and introduced Western technology and beliefs that are still acting in African cultures today.

Cocoa was introduced in Ghana in the 1860s by its Western colonizer. "By 1911, Ghana was the world's largest producer of cocoa and by 1939, cocoa accounted for about 80% of the value of Ghana's export commodities" (Ake, 1981, p.54). Prior to the introduction of cocoa, Ghana's main exports (about 50%) were palm oil and palm kernels. By 1910, cocoa had reduced this share to 10%. Already by the early 1900s, patterns of lop-sidedness and dependence had started emerging in Ghana. By lop-sidedness is meant the over-emphasis on one or very few goods for a country's income. It also means that the geographical development of the economy was concentrated in a few specific areas (geographical lop-sidedness). By dependence is meant that the colony or ex-colony has no choice but sell its produce to a specific country, generally its ex-colonizer, and to buy finished products from that same country. Choice may not exist because of the power of the colonizer, as in the colonial period, or it may not exist because of already-existing regimes of practice and a regime of discourse. So, African entrepreneurs may not have nor think they have any choice but to do business with their ex-colonizer, because of both economic and psychological constraints. Most African countries follow this pattern because they have been pulled in by the Western

regime of discourse and have internalized it at both the national and psychic levels.

In most French colonies, "the French started cocoa and coffee plantations (...), sometimes forcing African farmers to do the same" (Miracle, 1969, p.197). Senegal, which "up to the middle of the 19th century (...) hardly exported groundnuts, became predominantly a groundnut economy" (Ake, 1981, p.54) during the colonial period. Then came the decolonization wave. But westernization did not stop there. The West is able to keep economic control through the web of power relations it created during the colonial period. The goods introduced into and produced by the colonies are still very much the same today: Africans are still producing and exporting coffee and cocoa which they still do not consume. Before going any further, I would like, tentatively, to offer an alternative explanation for colonialism, one that does not necessarily exclude other explanations for it.

What if the Western web of power relations was arranged in such a way so as to be inherently expansionist? An expansionism which, through technology, the nation-state, and capitalism, led to the spread of the Western discourse, making it the regime of discourse at the international level? This expansionism would be linked with the other characteristics mentioned previously, homogenization and dichotomic thinking. On the other end of the process, it may be that some cultures are more vulnerable than others to external domination. And it is probable that the specific

dominator makes it more or less difficult for a specific dominated to be dominated, and how that dominated will react to that domination. This is worth further enquiry.

C. The Contemporary Discourse of Capitalism.

After independence, the goods introduced by the colonizers became the only source of income available. African countries were too poor to change an economic infrastructure which was already relatively well-established. So, they developed the existing structure into a geographically and an economically lop-sided infrastructure. This becomes clear when one looks at the main products and the kind of industries that exist in a country. In 1964, 90% of the active population of Cote D'Ivoire was in agriculture (Miracle, 1969, p.209). The main products were cocoa, coffee beans, pineapples and woods. The same products were also the main exports. Except for palm oil, there was only very minimal internal consumption for these products. Industry, which was only 7.8% of the Gross Territorial Product, was centered around these same agricultural products and was made up of "fruit canning, especially pineapple; margarine manufacturing; cocoa butter; 5 instant coffee plants; and plants for extraction of palm oil" (Miracle, 1969, p.220). Most countries are developed along the coastal regions. This is also where most of the urbanization is taking place.

There is thus the perpetuation of the colonial lop-sided economy into post-colonial lop-sided development. In 1989,

cocoa and coffee still accounted for half of total export earnings (Africa: South of the Sahara, 1990, p.417). Cote D'Ivoire does export some finished products but these are only 1/50th of agricultural products (Renault has an assembly plant in the country). In Senegal, the reliance on groundnuts for exports led to a lack of staple food and chronic malnourishment. The displacement of the African discourse by the Western regime of discourse was followed by the internalization of the struggle between the two discourses into the very bodies of Africans in the form of famine and malnourishment.

We have noted earlier how capitalism attempts to 'homogenize the market', i.e. people, so as to reach economies of scale. One of the most efficient ways of transmitting the messages 'Western is beautiful', 'be like us (Western)', and 'homogenization is good', is the media.

The media is an efficient force of Western homogenization, working hand in hand with capitalism, and it works on large numbers of people, sending cultural messages without regard to local customs or cultures. In Nigeria, Ghana, and Kenya "the largest advertising agency is American. They use Western methods, often Western images" in their ad campaigns (Harrison, 1981, p.55). 'Smoke a Player's and you too may look like you have a Corvete in your garage, or a light-weight mini aircraft. Show how modern (Western) you are, buy Levi's, Michael Jackson tapes and mopeds!' Media's most important function is not to sell, but rather to create

a homogeneous demand so companies can produce similar products all over the world and profit from economies of scale. Also significant about the media in Africa is that Africans are highly dependent on Western news sources, so much so that Ghanaians know about Zairois by Western means and often from a Western reporter (Harrison, *idem*).

Highly important messages are being transmitted by the media and internalized by individuals who want the product because of the image associated with it. This means that rugged individualism, capitalism, and 'proper' gender roles will give one wealth and success (success being defined in capitalist terms, i.e., how much money one has in the bank account), as shown in television shows like *Dallas* or what development is and how development should occur and what its goals are, as *Babar the Elephant*. These changes in taste have an impact on what people eat, what they buy, and therefore have an impact on the economy of their country.

In Africa, an increasing taste for wheat (which cannot be grown in most areas), plus stagnant local yields, led to net imports (of wheat) rising from 5% of requirements in 1961-65 to 18% in 1982. On these trends, the deficit would reach 44% of needs in AD2000; (...) the deficit would then be translated directly into malnutrition (Harrison, 1981, p.435).

In fact, ads do not merely sell soap, they sell the Western regime of discourse which pushes for standardization and efficiency on Western lines, and which conditions and brainwashes the non-Western into becoming Western. In fact, if ads sell a discourse more than they sell a product, then the international system and development are the largest

advertising campaign in history.

The above discussion also illustrates the point that the West is not the only player in the westernization process, but that the receiver, Africa in this case, also plays a complex role. Not all people are influenced by ads, and those who are are not all influenced to the same extent nor in the same way. The role may be passive, resistant, or actively promoting westernization, separately or all at the same time. Whatever the role, however, Africans must engage in international and domestic activities in the so-called modern -read Western- sector.

The unequal terms of trade between the West and the third world and the demand-side controlled nature of the international system are well known. Tanzania earned about \$26 millions (all figures in US dollars) for its sisal exports in 1970. In 1974, revenues from sisal were about \$67 millions with 60% less sisal export. In 1976, sisal export quantity were roughly equal to that of 1974 but revenues were only half (all figures from Harrison, 1981, p.332). At the same time, secondary products import prices increased. At this point, Tanzanians had to sell twice as much sisal to get the same tractor. This means Tanzanian sisal workers had to work twice as long or as hard to get the same revenues because what the Western businesses paid for the sisal or its by-products never changed. Thus, the Tanzanians had to work twice as hard so that Western businesses would not see a diminution of their revenues through decreased work or

increased price of sisal. This is a direct empirical implication of the Western being the regime of discourse. What made this possible are the (Western) rules and structures of the international economic system.

Some would argue that 'these are the fair rules of trade'! But in this system of 'trade', relying on the primary products is economically dangerous. Trade is seen as 'fair', as engaging in equal and mutually beneficial trade because it assumes equal power relations. But power relations are very unequal at the international level and if at times the powerless get a good deal in a free trade situation, the more powerful are more likely to benefit unequally at most times and in the long run. The West is still the hegemon after 200 years or so of international trade, with Japan being the exception, probably because, although different, its culture is compatible with the Western regime of discourse. The international economic system is not, and cannot be, despite liberal trade theory, an advantageous natural state of affairs because it was imposed by force during the colonial period by countries who were and still are at the top of the ladder. These powers are maintained by the very system they created. Again, by defining reality, the Western system helps the West remain in power. This system was created by Western powers who set it so as to benefit them. Why not, they were the meta-power and the super-hegemon, were not they?

International trade is an interesting example of the

westernization of the international system. In 1986, the 'developed' countries (all Western except Japan) controlled 69% of world exports while the third world's share of the world trade was about 20 %, the remaining being the centrally planned economies (Todaro, 1989, p.369-371). The dominance of the West is also seen in the direction of trade where much of the trade goes to the West. In other words, the third world is not needed as a market for the first world. Yet, the third or non-Western world needs the first to sell its primary products, which, of course, are worth less than finished products which are manufactured mostly by the West and Japan. In addition, tariffs and non-tariffs trade barriers are usually higher against the non-Western world than they are against the West (Lindert, 1989, p.381). Interestingly, Japan has also been a victim of this: "the more Japan has succeeded in penetrating new first world markets for its [goods], the greater the constraints put against it by the U.S. and the EEC" (Lindert, 1989, p.381)*. Lindert also adds that it is in the area of manufactured goods that the difference between the laissez-faire rhetoric and the practice was the greatest (Lindert, Idem). This leads to a dependence of the non-Western world on the Westernized world for its trade, much of its revenues, and by extension, development. Canada may catch a cold when the U.S. sneezes, but Africa catches bronchitis.

Central to this discussion is a question of organization. To deal with the Western international system,

the non-Western must organize along Western lines. We have already seen how, politically and legally, they have to be aggregated in the form of the Western nation-state to have any legitimacy at the international level. This also applies in the economic realm.

Conversely (to Western countries), third world countries are poorly organized because they are poor (...). They do not control the marketing of their produce: the companies of London, New York and Tokyo do it for them. (Harrison, 1981, p.345).

The non-Western world must be economically structured along Western lines to be part of the game, the theme of exclusion. The question of control, or power, is the question of westernization, the West being in power because it has created the assumptions and views that are embedded in the international economic structures, which it has also created. The non-Western countries cannot even threaten to strike back by stopping production, for example, because they are too poor to withstand any reduction in revenues. As Harrison put it: "the message is clear: because the rich can organize more easily [because of their wealth], they get richer; because the poor cannot, they get poorer" (Harrison, 1981, p.345). And the poor cannot organize in any effective manner because they have to take action in a Western international environment that is unsuitable to their surviving power relations, their discourse, their way of organizing. Yet, the only way for the non-Western world to become wealthy is to learn the Western rules of the game, otherwise, the game would not recognize as valid the new rules nor the players

that do not accept the rules. Again one can feel the issue of compatibility emerging again. Why was Japan able to develop? Or, in other words, why or how is Japan compatible and Africa incompatible with the West?

D. Japan's Economic Compatibility.

It may be argued that, in the last forty years or so, Japan, a non-Western country has managed to pierce through the Western system and that it is now sharing hegemonic power with the U.S. and Germany. This would invalidate the hypothesis of the West as a hegemon, and that the Western regime of discourse is the only one. But that argument would imply that hegemons do not change. More importantly, Japan is a highly westernized country in its links with the international system. Moreover, if one applies the analogy of the lock and key theory, even though Japan is not Western, it seems its cultural differences are compatible with the Western system. And there are also interesting similarities between indigenous Japanese capitalism and early Western capitalism.

The early Japanese merchants (early 17th century) engaged in silk production as well as construction. They mostly catered to the aristocrats and the samurai.

By the eighteenth century a number of great commercial houses had grown up in Osaka and Edo [Tokyo] whose diversified activities focused upon moneylending and exchange. By the 19th century, house-based manufacturing and cottage industry had begun to make their appearance (Whitney-Hall, 1968, p.208).

Merchants were selling both wholesale and retail and had a comprehensive bookkeeping system. Some of the contemporary zaibatsu (family based big business interest) were born in the early 1600s. Mitsui is now a multinational corporation involved in high-tech research, manufacturing, cars, department stores, banking, construction and real estate, with the last three having started by the early 18th century (Whitney-Hall, 1968, p.355).

By the 18th century, it is clear that Japan had entered a new phase of urban-centered commercial economy. By the late 19th century, urban growth and the expansion of the consumer market had injected a new spirit of enterprise into the countryside. Wholesale organizations and village entrepreneurs had developed new technologies of mass productions exemplified in the silk-weaving, paper-making and lacquer-work industries (Whitney-Hall, 1968, p.210).

Thus, the Japanese economy, like Europe, went through an expansion of the money market and the growth of industries and companies. Of course, this did not mean that all was easy for the early Japanese capitalists. As in Europe, they faced social prejudices. The merchants were seen as the least important group in the official division, below samurai, bureaucrats and peasants. This resistance was not based on religious piety as in the West but on socio-political disdain for money-oriented behavior and structures.

This social background is important, because in order for ideas to lead to material conditions, a certain social bed conducive to these ideas had to exist. The thriftiness, the work ethic, the appearance of honesty, in short, some kind of utilitarianism, are also present in the Japanese

culture. 'But if capitalism and the earning of money did not exist in Japan as an ethic as it did in the West, the attitude conducive to this kind of ethic did seem to. Unfortunately, we cannot go very deeply into the mental aspects that gave rise to Japanese capitalism, for lack of space, but the preceding discussion shows that such a background seemed to exist in Japan. It is no wonder that the unique Japanese managerial style seems to fit well with Western style industries. Japanese cultural compatibility allows it to tie itself to the Western system without losing its culture and identity. Its compatibility also allows it to develop and become wealthy, and doing so, it can and did develop resistance and 'translation' mechanisms between the Western international system and its own micro-level Japanese economic and political structures. These translation mechanisms make possible further development and wealth creation.

But Africa is not so fortunate. It is not 'developed' because it does not have the capacity to translate, both because of the incompatibility factor and because it does not have the wealth to develop translation structures. This leads to 'underdevelopment'. Because of this factor of compatibility, Japan is on a self-reinforcing loop of wealth, whereas Africa is in a self-reinforcing loop of poverty. Today,

the gap between the developed and the developing countries continues to widen in a system which was established at a time when most of the developing countries did not even exist... (This) perpetuates

inequality (UN Yearbook, 1974, p.324).

This will continue for as long as development theories are not profoundly revised, and their cultural and historical assumptions are not taken into account.

So far, we have looked at politics and economics in isolation. This is useful theoretically but it leaves much to be desired in terms of explanatory power. So, we will now turn to the relation between politics and economics, a relation that will be looked at in terms of the framework developed in this essay.

E. The Relationship Between Capitalism and the State.

One aspect which emerged in the above analysis is the relationship between the state and capitalism, where the state helped to spread capitalism through the implementation of roads, laws, and the encouragement of export products, etc, before, during, and after colonialism. In fact, post-colonial state involvement in the economy in Africa is both due to the effort of getting rid of the ex-colonizers and of development. The state was central in the colonization process, a process that laid the foundations for the international capitalist system, in which the non-Western world is now tied. The nation-state has also "played a crucial role in the creation of a world market and the establishment of an international division of labour" (Camillery, 1984, p.71). Capitalism and the nation-state have played and continue to play a westernizing role. Even the

means to remediate the negative effects of westernization only leads to more internalization of the Western regime of discourse: independence led to the increased integration of Africa in the capitalist world system and to the nation-state.

Again, it is useful to briefly go back to history and look at the relationship between the rise of capitalism and the rise of the nation-state. What is interesting is that both occurred at the same time in Europe. The nation-state seems to provide an environment conducive to capitalism. Foucault writes that the theory of the nation-state hides something important (and this is the other part of the reason for the success of the theory of the nation-state which we looked at earlier), what Foucault calls 'disciplinary power', a power created by industrial capitalism and which lies outside sovereignty. This disciplinary power, a coercive force by nature, is necessary to the functioning of industrial capitalism.

One might say that once it became necessary for disciplinary constraints to be exercised through mechanisms of domination and yet at the same time for their effective exercise of power to be disguised, a theory of sovereignty was required to make an appearance at the level of the legal apparatus (Foucault, 1980, p.105-106).

Thus, the discourse of the nation-state is seen as offering a smoke-screen to the discourse or power of capitalism. This power is disciplinary in that it is internalized by individuals who will, for example, get up in the morning and then go to work without any guns being pointed at their

heads. They do so because of their own discipline. Thus, the political discourse helped the economic discourse to spread locally, as well as internationally, as is argued here.

In the West, political power through laws, for example, encouraged the political-economic complex to put individuals to work. Individuals are required to work, and work brings profits to the wealthy class which reinforces the ruling political class. But in Africa, this mutual assistance between the state and capitalism may not exist or may not be as strong: the state may not be trying to put people to work and therefore, there is insufficient accumulation of wealth within the country for wealth to increase. So, as Marx put it, it seems that the state is a tool of capitalism, but I would argue that the relationship is also more complex than that.

This mutual-help dynamic between the state and capitalism which existed in Europe more than 400 years ago is transplanted today in Africa, with an added difficulty: the African discourse still exists in Africa. Bayart writes that in Africa, since colonialism,

in a few decades, the production of inequality has increased qualitatively compared to the previous centuries. Potentially, the indigenous dominant group have never had at their disposition as many political, economic, and military resources to oppress the dominated group and insure their autonomy of power. Never has the specter of social stratification loomed so large. Thus, it is not a simple reproduction of old hierarchies that this century has brought back but rather, their enlarged reproduction in a way never possible and even never thought possible before (Bayart, 1989, p.147)*.

The juxtaposition of the Western discourse and the African

discourse has led to the exacerbation of old cleavages and the appearance of new ones. And, again, it is this struggle between the African discourse and the state-capitalism discourse that leads to underdevelopment. Thus, the state\capitalism discourse does not have the same effect in the West as it does in Africa. But if the state is a tool of capitalism, or more accurately, if it facilitates the expansion of capitalism, there may also be a struggle between capitalism and the state.

Indeed, there may be a contradiction between capitalism, where individualistic cut-throat competition is the norm (the dichotomy factor) and nationalism, where large groups of people are expected to behave in unison (the homogenization factor). Their different ways of aggregating people may lead to conflict. At the micro-level, the state aggregates large number of people together but capitalism pits individuals against each other. At the international level, the state pits groups of people against each other but capitalism binds individuals across borders, even if the bond is one of exploitation. MNCs are a good example of a capitalist structure that exists beyond states and may link large numbers of people from different states. The stress in this relationship could be manifesting itself in the creation of the EC. The discourse of capitalism is pushing hard in Europe, and perhaps winning, since the nation-state is being changed radically and sovereignty being eroded by capitalism. But, as we have seen with the several national

referenda on the Maastricht treaty, there is a lot of resistance from nationalism as well. This is another road opened up by the analysis developed in this essay and like so many other roads that have been opened here, there is unfortunately not enough space to explore further.

This conflictual relationship between the state and capitalism has implications for Africans where it adds to the erosion of the legitimacy of the nation-state. The lack of success of capitalism as discourse in Africa for Africans (i.e. the lack of an increased standard of living) adds to the lack of success of the nation-state as discourse (the failure of the nation-state to become legitimate for Africans). And this is complicated, and probably even made possible, by the continued existence, even if somewhat eroded, of traditional sources of authority and political structures which compete against the state for legitimacy, i.e. the lack of internalization of the Western political discourse by Africans or, in other words, the struggle between the subjugated African discourse and the Western regime of discourse.

If one follows the implications of this chapter, then, a parallel conclusion can be made between the discourse of the state and the discourse of capitalism: capitalism as it is expressed through the international system (i.e. development, lop-sided economies, unequal terms of trade, cash-crop commodities, and so on) is being resisted by Africans because an alternative economic discourse exists in

Africa. Thus, like the nation-state, capitalism is the regime of discourse at the international level, but it is only a discourse at the local, sub-national level in Africa.

Capitalism has not succeeded in becoming a regime of discourse within Africa. Thus, in other words, capitalism as a discourse has yet to be internalized by Africans. And like the Western state discourse, in order for it to be internalized, it must get rid of the alternatives. When only capitalism remains, then Africans will not have choice and will internalize the Western economic discourse. When only the state remains, Africans will not have a choice and will internalize the state as discourse. When only the Western discourse remains, Africans will have become fully westernized and will stop resisting the Western discourse.

The issue of inter-subjectivity (the interaction of different perceptions and constructions of reality) thus plays an important role in the political and economic analysis of Western Discourse theory. The lack of internalization leads to political and physical conflicts and takes resources away from other issues like famine and, importantly, alternatives to the Western regime of discourse. The introduction of inter-subjective phenomena in the theory allows one to go beyond a strictly economic view of power and allows us to make use of Foucault's idea of the internalization of power relations.

But Foucault, as far as this author knows, never considered that this internalization could be done with

another discourse already existing. Foucault looked inward, inside the West. Western discourse theory projects Foucault's power analysis to the realm of intercultural, inter-discourse, dynamics, where the Western discourse is being internalized but also resisted by other discourses. The Western political discourse may conflict with the Western economic discourse in Africa, and this conflict only adds to the conflict existing between the African and the Western political discourses. So, if one is talking about Western political economy in Africa as a discourse, one should take into account the complex relationship between capitalism and the nation-state. This political-economic discourse, however, as a whole acts so as to displace the competing African discourse. The unequal power relations between the two cultural discourses (because of the specific arrangement of the power relations between and within each power webs) gives a better location to the Western regime of discourse which then treats the African discourse as subjugated, hence underdevelopment.

We have seen in the previous sections how the Western regime of discourse has subjugated the African discourse. This subjugation was done through political, economic, and psycho-cultural means. I will end this thesis by considering how Africa is taking part in its own westernization, Africans' internalization of Western power relations, and also how it is and could be resisting the Western regime of discourse.

Conclusion.
The Good Life: A Few Suggestions.

Africa is not alienated by the West. It is incorporated by it just enough for Africa to be useful but not enough for Africa to 'develop'. The way to development is not going back to the past. Africa in the 1990s is not and cannot be pre-colonial Africa. Yet it seems many Africans make that mistake. As a conclusion to this thesis, we will have a brief look at the other end of the westernization process, the Africans' role in African underdevelopment, using mostly Axelle Kabou's book, Et si l'Afrique Refusait le Developpement?. As we will see, her analysis is cultural, and although it is not explicitly Foucauldian, it fits well in the framework developed in this thesis.

Kabou's argument has been quite controversial, especially among African intellectuals. Kabou argues that Africans are actually refusing development, that they are partly responsible for underdevelopment in Africa. She looks at reasons for this underdevelopment within Africa and more precisely, within African cultures and the African mind. In this thesis, I argued that Africa cannot develop because African cultures do not fit with the West. The phenomenon of compatibility is a two-ended thing and while we focused on the Western end, Kabou focuses on the African end. The reasons she gives may simply be, in the last analysis, a detailed analysis of the African development discourse.

One of her basic arguments is that Africa's will and

desire for development is a myth which has three functions. First, it takes away from the political elite any hint of incompetence and corruption by putting the blame on the international system and the ex-colonizers, to ensure their place in power. Second, it channels and concentrates Africans' energy toward vague development objectives. And third, it fattens

a multitude of experts pursuing useless researches and missions whose usefulness has been denied by an increasing underdevelopment (...) Imagine for just a moment what would happen if 'official' Africa were to declare that they were not interested by development: a whole set of international relations would crumble. Our monocracies would lose their *raison d'être* (Kabou, 1991, p.18)*.

Interestingly, she also criticizes the economic analysis of under-development on grounds similar to those found in this thesis, except that she uses the word 'African' where I use the word 'Western', expressing a different focus of analysis:

one really has to wonder if this fixation on economic stagnation (...) does not hide more complex socio-cultural factors (...). To understand why the continent has kept regressing even with its great wealth, one has to look at the most basic, micro-economic level: inside Africans' heads (Kabou, 1991, p.21-22)*.

One of the major problems with theories that go 'inside people's heads' to explain underdevelopment is that they are too often used to justify some kind of genetic backwardness and inherent stupidity on the part of Africans, the White Man's Burden. The framework developed here keeps away from this by not putting any value to a culture by not using, explicitly or implicitly, a language of superiority, which it

sees as one of the problems and one of the reasons for underdevelopment.

There seems to be an African discourse of development, one that suitably coincides with the Western discourse. If one looks at the causes usually found for underdevelopment, ranging from insects to brain-size to neo-colonialism, "one notices that African systematic analyses on the internal causes of African underdevelopment are more or less non-existing" (Kabou, 1991, p.29)*. In other words, "Africans seem little inclined to do any self-centered analyses on their [economic] backwardness (...). In fact, development allows us to talk about everything, except Africans" (Kabou, 1991, p.28)*. Worse, Africa rejects development as hard as it can and wait for others to do it for them:

Africa is not dying: it is committing suicide through a cultural drunkenness which gives Africans their moral basis. Massive injections of capital will not change anything (...). Africans are largely certain that their destiny must be taken care of by foreigners. Therefore, to really develop, Africans must be encouraged to create psychological conditions conducive to change (Kabou, 1991, p.27)*.

In other words, to use the terms used in this thesis, Kabou is describing the African discourse on underdevelopment. For to say that Africans refuse development "leads automatically to barriers and a flow of protests which prevent discussion. As if there existed a silent prescription formally forbidding to relate Africa's situation to Africans' behaviour" (Kabou, 1991, p.27)*. This is simply another way to define 'regime of discourse'! To criticize Africans' role in development is forbidden. For example, she argues that development theories

which are accepted by Africans idealize the African in his or her own eyes, makes her or him an unreal, unrealizable, and thus an unworkable African (Kabou, 1991, p.30)*. The problem is that because of this discourse, Africa remains colonizable and this colonizability must be changed (Kabou, 1991, p.60)*.

According to Kabou, much of Africa's radical culturalism, looking toward the past and rejecting all that is not African, "keeps Africa where it is: underdeveloped and violating human rights to death" (Kabou, 1991, p.53-56)*. Africans must not define themselves as they once were but as they want to be in the present and in the future.

Africa would really gain to deeply review its thinking modes so as to understand how it makes the choices that would explain its present situation (Kabou, 1991, p.57)*.

The important point is not only that westernization itself leads to underdevelopment but that opposition to westernization also does. This is not surprising since the Western regime of discourse seems to work on dichotomies and exclusion of the other.

One should note that the brunt of her attacks and critique is directed at African intellectuals who have a stake in the present system, and not at most people, who could not care less about development strategies but care very much about raising their standard of living.

Developmentalists, African and Western, often "prefer to manipulate numbers and statistics, quantify performance rather than observe Africans and listen to them" (Kabou, 1991, p.39)*.

What should Africans do, then, according to Kabou?

Kabou's message is clear: Africans, especially intellectuals, are stuck in a victim mentality and it is time for them to get out of it. "Africans should make a list of all their cultural values that could form a solid base to any coherent development project" (Kabou, 1991, p.39)*. Related to this, is the rejection by the third world of the belief that in order to develop, all the third world has to do is to imitate the West.

Africa must understand that "development is not a race against the West, but against the multiple and increasing pains of Africa" (Kabou, 1991, p.112)*. Africans must also realize that "people are in the first and final analysis, responsible for their history, no exceptions" (Kabou, 1991, p.112)*. Yes, colonialism did occur but the important point now for Africans is to look at their way of reacting to this period, get out of their victim mentality and move on. Kabou thinks Africans are pushing for the right to be different so hard that it prevents them from trying to adapt or translate other cultures' values and methods, hence, according to her, it stays in a traditional, conservative frame of mind and prevents development. Thus, she is not arguing that Africans must become Western but rather, that they must critically look within and do some cultural and values cleaning. Only by doing this may Africans have a hope for development. Not a return to a glorious and very dead past, nor westernization, but an adaptation which would include some rejection and some

integration of both African and Western values. Kabou argues that the greatest barrier to this is the belief that development is imported, a white man's thing, and anti-African. Because, to try to develop, for many Africans, is to admit to themselves to a racial and cultural inferiority (Kabou, 1991, p.40)*, an inferiority Kabou does not buy. Yet, I would argue that this is what development as a discourse implies: development is a white thing, Africans do it the Western way or they cannot do it all. No wonder Africans believe it is a white thing: development as it is defined, practiced, and conceptualized in the contemporary world is Western. But development defined as the good life as defined locally by people is universal, and thus development could be made African. But on the empirical level, the Western regime of discourse defines what African development should be. The trick, therefore is to realize it is a Western animal, but that it can be Africanized if Africans were to do an inventory of their cultural values, and do some cultural and value clean up, as Kabou prescribes.

And very much like Kabou, I also think that it is not a total rejection of the West nor a going back to a now-dead tradition which is the solution. This thesis does not propose a particularism from the top down because that leads too easily to repression, corruption and under-development. It does suggest a cultural particularism from the bottom up. Some kind of syncretization and cultural translation mechanism with Africa as reference point, rather than the

West, is 'probably the best. But of course, this does not fit in a dichotomic-exclusivist form of thinking and would be rejected by the regime of discourse, unless Africa is somehow able to break its discourse chains with the West. For this, both the Western and African cultural codes and respective power relations, and the relation between these must be understood. Perhaps there is a dose of exclusivity in the African psyche as well. Determining which discourse, the African or the Western or both, has been causing this exclusivity is very difficult to do and outside the scope of this thesis. Some further research is needed on this point.

Some synthesis of cultures could be possible, as when Kenyatta made Kiswahili the language of parliament (a Western institution) of Kenya. Previously not very habile English speakers became the new great orators, using Kiswahili and poetry to make their points, as Kiswahili seems more conducive to poetic political discourse than English is. The daily newspaper may be a Western invention, but in Swahili newspapers, one reads, in addition to news and sports, essays and poetry on inflation, love, unemployment and politics (Mazrui, 1986, p.245). Another example is the musical group Ladysmith Black Mambazo, which sing with a South African beat of Jehovah in Zulu.

Another possible answer to westernization would be the indigenization (the greater use of African personel, materials, techniques and resources) and domestication (making something which is not indigenous more relevant to the African scene) (Mazrui, 1986, p.171).

Domestication means cultural translation of concepts,

technology, ideology, etc... To accomplish this, one would need the "diversification (of trade and production, for example) and counter-penetration of the North (by using the leverage of Africa's mineral power and even debtor power against the North)" (Mazrui, 1986, p.171, first bracket added). There is potential in these measures but they are also close to Africanization, a concept that too often arises from this cultural radicalism Kabou was warning us about. Africanization of Western structures, like the state apparatus, too often means a westernization of individual Africans working in the Western nation-state.

Yet, we know that the trick is not to make Africa like the regime of discourse, the trick is not to westernize Africa. Western discourse theory is an effort not at co-opting a subjugated knowledge but rather at using such a knowledge in order to change the regime of discourse. Of course, by that very act, one takes the chance of seeing the subjugated knowledge being coopted by the regime, thereby defeating the original purpose. But by the act of cooptation, the regime may be affected by the subjugated knowledge. Unfortunately, there is also the chance of total co-optation and no change for the subjugated. But there is not much choice in the matter- one must take that chance. By being aware of the existence of the regime and of the possibility of cooptation, one can possibly prepare so that cooptation becomes more difficult, and perhaps even impossible, forcing a change of regime.

To counteract the Western regime of discourse, one must bring forth subjugated knowledges and practices, such as cultural analyses. We have talked about Africa's role in its own development but the West has its role to play as well. Within the West, we would need global education, the study of culture as a concept and an empirical system that would eventually lead to the study of other cultures and of our culture as a culture amongst many others, so as to reduce ethno-centrism (Perrot, 1987, p.3). The understanding of other cultures as legitimate can be undertaken in several ways. One of them is travelling and living in other cultures. But there are problems of costs and time associated with such a method. From early childhood on, the education system should expose children to other cultures and other ways of thinking and perceiving. It would also imply learning about global issues, such as peace, development, the environment, and cultures in general. For the educator, it involves the understanding of learning as a cultural entity. Poverty, development, and cultural differences have to be learned horizontally, across disciplines and professional expertise, but also vertically, across levels: local, regional, national, and global.

The trick for Westerners is not to say no to Western values but rather to relativize these values and realize their cultural value. The West is also a culture that is in a better power position than the others, so we should study the impact our culture has had and still has on other cultures.

This would, hopefully, make people culturally more sensitive and respectful of cultural differences, aware of the strength and traditions of others' and their own culture, and create a positive view of difference and diversity (Perrot, 1987, p.4). This would help take away the assumption that the Western culture is at the apex of a cultural Darwinian ladder and that all other cultures want to be like the West and that Westerners have the inherent right to change Africans into Westerners, whether Africans like it or not. One should note that the relativization of the notions of culture, the West, and development, is not the absolutization of traditional cultures nor the rejection of development but rather it is the development of the awareness that development is always plural, different. An alternative to the failings of Western-style development could be to "introduce into the problem of development, elements of spiritual values, and into economic and political activities, methods of non-violence" (Parel, 1988, p.19). This is an Indian view, championed by Gandhi, and it may not be, in the specifics, applicable to Africa. However, elements of the African psyche, metaphysics, and identity should be introduced in the notion of development in Africa. What is necessary is that in order to introduce African cultural elements into the notion and practice of development, one needs a knowledge of African cultures. But one also needs a good understanding of westernization as a process, as a composite of different cultural elements, and its effect on Africa. The concept of 'modernization' would

shed its Western baggage, and other kinds of modernity would become possible. It is also therefore, a critique of the prevailing concept, theories, and practice of development.

A lesson can also be learned from Japan's experience of the relationship between culture and economics. The Japanese have managed to retain their culture probably because they are wealthy enough (and have a long historical experience of dealing and adapting other cultures to their own) to provide the structures of translation that allowed them to resist the push of westernization. But Africans do not have the wealth. Other techniques have to be found. In fact, in Africa, wealth may be lacking exactly because the culture is under attack. Is it too late? No, far from it. African cultures are remarkably resilient and dynamic, but the longer we wait, the greater the westernization, and the harder it will be to find African versions of development.

International measures can also be undertaken, such as restricted entry of Western cultural elements in the non-Western world, especially in the regions negatively affected by the Western regime of discourse. Since the power is biased in favor of the West, structures and rules should be developed to favor those at the receiving end of the power structures and relations. This should be extended to politics and economics as well. This would also include a greater transfer of non-Western cultural values to the West through the media, for example.

Another implication is that the developed nations

will have to considerably re-orient their assistance programs if they are to succeed in the third world in the future. They will have to genuinely, not just pay lip service, pay attention to local wants and aspirations (...). They will have to learn the language, culture, and institutional procedures of various third world areas (Wiarda, 1989, p.32).

In short, the West will have to shed its attitude that it knows best, that it is universally applicable. The suggestions listed above imply a change in thinking habits. The need is not to accept other cultures as ours, but rather accepting them as living entities which change and adapt. This means acknowledging the legitimacy of other cultures, not just ours. This would allow the understanding of another culture without assimilation taking place.

In some ways, Kabou and I share a similar problem: we come near to playing into the hands of the colonizers who can read Kabou's book and say: 'I told you it was their fault' while non-Western dictators can attempt to use the power-culture framework developed in this thesis to say: 'it is our custom, so do not interfere' while 'they are violating human rights to death'. Both dangers are avoided in basically the same way in both cases: small scale, bottom-up decision making and action-taking. It would be possible to have a truly universal, cross-cultural set of human rights and definition of development. For example, all have the right to food, shelter, and security, but the kind of food, shelter, and security could differ from place to place, as decided by the people, and not by the state. This means a decentralization of political, economic, social, and cultural

structures, a decentralization of power. This would seem to make sense, since it seems that a large part of the problem of Western underdevelopment and Western power relations in general is that they tend to be centralized and to centralize others.

What is needed then, is a change in the power relations at the international level between the West and the rest of the world. But most fundamentally, does the West really want the third world to develop? Is there room in the Western power relations for third world development? The arguments found in the thesis point to a negative answer. They constantly point to the fact that the West is not likely to give in unless a major international crisis occurs. The conclusion of this thesis is that, because of the nature of the Western power relations, a deep, fundamental, change, perhaps a breakdown in the Western power relations themselves is needed for development occur.

People ARE the grains of sand within the machinery of the regime of discourse...

The decolonized is a man going through decolonization and who continues to define himself and to conduct himself in relation to a condition whose effects have not disappeared... The trick is to finish conquering independence relative to the colonizer and to rebuild himself. Hence, the extent (and the variety) of the problems facing a decolonizing people: one has to find new solutions in all areas; political, economic, social, and cultural.

A. Memmi

"I can speak a little bit of English,
I am the seed that has survived.
I am the fire that has woken,
I am a third world child".

'Third World Child', by Johnny Clegg.

Endnote #1

It needs to be specified that when I mention African culture or Western culture, I do not mean to imply that there is only one culture. I am well aware that there are hundreds of different cultures in Africa and many Western cultures as well. By using the generic term, African 'culture' or Western 'culture', I want to emphasize the commonalities between these African cultures, certain patterns one can find among them. I realize this is a gross simplification but it makes the analysis easier to deal with. This use of 'culture' does not prevent the comparison of one specific African culture with one Western culture if need be. In fact, I use the Asante as a specific example, as a case study, for the analysis developed in the thesis.

In the same vein, when I use African 'reality' I mean to point out the common way Africans have of dealing with, and perceiving, reality. The same applies to the use of Western 'reality'.

Endnote #2

The name 'Western Discourse theory' did not come without some difficulties. At first, I had thought of Westernization theory, but this label was too close to the concept of westernization in modernization theory, where

westernization is a necessary part of development, an argument quite opposite to that found in this thesis. I would like to thank Don Ray for his suggestion of 'Western Discourse' theory, a name that reflects both Foucault's influence in the theory as well as the added cultural component, which is what the theory is based on.

Endnote #3

The implication here is that I feel several discourses are better than one, better than a regime of discourse. The lack of choice one finds in a regime takes freedom and power (to choose, act, think, and solve problems) away from people. A problem with having only one discourse is that it reduces the number of possible solutions to different problems, such as 'underdevelopment'. For example, the push for culturally and environmentally appropriate technology in development is only possible when different discourses co-exist. Also, I would not want to give up Indian food for McDonald's. Perhaps a true democracy cannot be said to exist as long as a regime of discourse exists. This would mean defining democracy in terms of choice between viable and existing economic and political discourses.

Endnote #4

By acculturation I mean the acquisition of another culture, another way of dealing with reality, through language, social habits, religion, economic and political systems, and different modes of thinking and being. By deculturation, I mean the loss of one's way of dealing with reality. The second often follows the first, either through the forced acculturation one finds in colonialism, moving to another country, or westernization or through a 'softer' kind of acculturation, as when one travels to another country for an extended period of time. In this case, often the deculturation is felt when one comes back to one's culture and experiences culture shock. In the case of the forced acculturation one finds in westernization, the impact can be emotional pain, loss of cultural roots, underdevelopment, poverty, etc, as is argued in this thesis.

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