

WHY THE EXTERNALIST-INTERNALIST DISTINCTION OVER THE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT DISCOURSE IS A DEAD END

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Abstract

In recent times, scholarship has reduced the paradigm for why Africa remains largely underdeveloped to two: the externalist and the internalist views. The former is conceived to comprise scholars who tender that the reason Africa is underdeveloped and remains thus is due to the exploitative presence of Western capitalism and, in recent times, China. Walter Rodney has, however, been placed here as a key figure. The internalist, on the other hand, argues that the reason for Africa's underdevelopment may be traced to the presence of bad leadership and mismanagement on the part of Africans themselves. 'Muyiwa Falaiye and George Ayittey are more pronounced representatives. In this research, I counter the locus that Rodney is an externalist. I disclose how criticizing him from this externalist reading amounts to a Strawman. I extract and build on the eclectic basis of his assessment of African development as a justification for why the externalist-internalist debate leads nowhere.

Keywords: African Development, Externalist, Internalist, Walter Rodney

Introduction

The African development discourse has invited many intellectual exertions, especially among African scholars. This has caused the views of some scholars to be misrepresented and then criticized along this line of distortion. My present purpose is to argue against Nigeria's Muyiwa Falaiye and Ghana's George Ayittey (both internalists) over their reading of Walter Rodney as an externalist concerning the cause of underdevelopment in Africa. Before stating their positions, it is helpful to disclose the personal overriding circumstances that inspired me to salvage Rodney's ideas from distortion. It was a classroom experience which occurred over a decade ago, when I was in my third year of Philosophy at Lagos State University, Ojo, Lagos. It was a course on African Philosophy and having read Walter Rodney's *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, in the previous academic session under the tutelage of Professor Princewill Alozie, I was surprised when the lecturer passed Walter Rodney as an externalist concerning the reasons for Africa's underdevelopment. I politely asked Mr Ademola Kazeem Fayemi (who would later take his PhD in 2013) where he got this distinction: "externalist and internalist scholars on African development." I was hearing this for the first time as well. Being a very generous teacher, always willing to learn from, and improve, his students, he mentioned Dr 'Muyiwa Falaiye (who would later become a professor of political philosophy at the University of Lagos), as his source. Mr Fayemi seemed to agree with Professor Falaiye that Rodney is an externalist. I did not concede. I was fortunate to have my hard copy of Rodney's masterpiece with me and I quickly demanded to read out loud a fundamental passage in Rodney's (1972, 33-34) work, which not only makes him misunderstood but misrepresented as an externalist:

The question as to who and what is responsible for African underdevelopment can be answered at two levels. Firstly, the answer is that the operation of the imperialist system bears major responsibility for African economic retardation by draining African wealth and by making it impossible to develop more rapidly the resources of the

continent. Secondly, one has to deal with those who manipulate the system and those who are either agents or unwitting accomplices of the said system.

"An unbiased reader will clearly discern from this excerpt that Rodney is not blind to the role that Africans themselves play in reinforcing their poor economic conditions. So, to brand him as an externalist without paying attention to his emphasis on how Africans contribute to their misfortune is unfair," I contested. Mr Fayemi's wry smile is still vivid and fresh. Mr Fayemi retrieved the book from me to be sure I was not paraphrasing Rodney, I assumed. I noticed the second wry smile with a chuckle as my heart thumped, awaiting his affirmation of my exactitude. Mr Fayemi's next move caught me off guard. He proceeded to the cover page and said: "Class! Look at the cover of the work!! A white hand ripping the continent apart is Rodney's affirmation as an externalist – that Africa is underdeveloped thanks to Euro-American market and military forces." This rebuttal made me squeeze my glabella thinking of a response when a coursemate, Mr Kofoworola Omotayo Azeez (who would later become a world-class freelance professional photographer), boomed from four seats behind me: "Sir! You do not judge a book by its cover." Other coursemates soon joined in as they made a soft plea demanding Mr Fayemi to reconsider his Rodney stance. He had to give in. After all, Mr Fayemi is our most beloved lecturer who does not compromise on standards and criticality. More so, I had wonderful and intellectually agile classmates! Realizing he had to abide by the standard of scholarship he had imbibed in us, he invited me to amplify Rodney's position and this moment continues to be a prevailing influence which demands that I defend Rodney against other similar Strawman Fallacies in publications beyond the four walls of the classroom. It was when Muiyiwa Falaiye was delivering his Inaugural Lecture on 16 May 2012 that I noticed glaringly an elaborate Strawman Fallacy against Rodney (1972).

Falaiye (2012) distinguishes scholars and nationalists on African development into the internalist and externalist camps, placing Rodney and some others in the latter. For the former, he does not hide from being one and continuously invokes the Ghanaian economist George Ayittey as an internalist ally. I had to commence a

long research toward not only redeeming Rodney from this uncharitable misrepresentation but also establishing that the distinction between the internalist and the externalist is a needless and redundant effort. This is because each camp merely highlights only one aspect of the two reasons for Africa's underdevelopment that Rodney affirms. So, in the present research, I aim to show that: (1) Rodney is not an externalist; (2) the internalist-externalist dichotomy is needless and a colossal waste of scholarly effort and time; and then (3) build on Rodney's eclectic outlook which already took cognizance of the concerns of scholars over the internalist-externalist conundrum.

The Externalist Position on African Development

The reality of exploitation has eaten deep into the relationship between the (former) colonial administration or government and the colonized state that in recent times, it is important to revise their relationship for want of who is benefitting or losing. Strictly speaking, there are two parties to the debate. On the one hand, there are those scholars who believe that the relationship between Africa and the West is responsible for the level of underdevelopment that is experienced on the continent. Popular scholars here are Frantz Fanon (1952), Walter Rodney (1972), Patrick Bond (2006), Michael Parenti (1989), Kola Ogundowole (1988), and nearly all the African Marxist scholars. They are usually referred to as externalists. They are said to be externalists because, for them, the cause of underdevelopment and exploitation in Africa are tied to foreign presence and influence. On the other hand, there are those post-colonial scholars who think that upon considering the connection between Africa and the Global powers, the fault for underdevelopment and exploitation lacks substance. For this group of scholars, the problem stems from within. These are the internalists, and the most vocal among them are George Ayittey (1992, 1995) and Muyiwa Falaiye (2012).

For the sake of my contention, it is cardinal to restate once again that the first attempt to make a distinction between the internalist and externalist camps finds force in the work of Muyiwa Falaiye (2012). So, Falaiye's (2012) expression of the core kernel of each camp is used as a fulcrum. As previously indicated, the

externalist maintains the perspective that the reason why Africa is underdeveloped is because of the exploitation that they experienced via colonization and imperialism. One of the most popular names among this group is Walter Rodney, but before considering his view, the first task is to consider the general nature of the externalist camp.

Rodney (1972) is convinced that Africa has been one of the lands most often misrepresented as 'primitive' and 'underdeveloped' by imperialism's image-makers. Rodney (1972, 46) was more articulate when he reveals that:

As early as the 1400s, Nigeria, Mali, and the Guinea coast were making some of the world's finest fabrics and leathers. Katanga, Zambia, and Sierra Leone produced copper and iron, while Benin had a brass and bronze industry. As early as the thirteenth century, finely illuminated books and manuscripts were part of the Amharic culture of Ethiopia, and impressive stone places stood in Zimbabwe.

One may counter Rodney's analysis on the ground that he uses names for places that were created in the 19th and 20th centuries for Africans of the 1400s. Critically speaking, it is not possible to conclude that the regions he is talking about in the 1400s reflect the geography and territory of the countries that followed the 1884-5 Berlin Conference, where the continent was partitioned regardless of primordial affiliation. For instance, there was nothing like Nigeria, Ghana, South Africa etc., before the Conference. What Rodney could have done is to refer to these peoples in their geographical and cultural formations before colonial domination. This is because, following the Berlin Conference, cousins and villages were divided among the colonial powers. For instance, the Yoruba extends from southwest Nigeria into the Benin Republic and some parts of Togo. However, whereas those in Nigeria speak English, the ones 'created' by imperial will in Togo and Benin Republic speak French. To visit these neighbouring countries, an 'English-Yoruba' must present themselves for immigration briefing in a country where their cousins (French-Yoruba) reside, an area where, before colonial influence,

they roamed freely without borders. However, the English Yoruba in Nigeria is grouped along with peoples with distinct cultures and heritage such that when she crosses the River Niger and encounters a new community, local dialect, food and customs, she does not receive an immigration briefing. What the colonial will is pointing out to the Yoruba in Nigeria is clear – the Igbo, Hausa, and Efik in Nigeria are more of your people than the Yoruba in Cotonou and Lome. The failure of the Berlin Conference clearly plays out in the politics of suspicion and zoning, which now characterize Nigeria, but this is beyond the thrust of the present discourse.

In his analysis, Falaiye (2012) argues that the externalist argument was the politically correct explanation of the situation in Africa until very recently. The argument, for Falaiye (2012, 24-35) simply put, runs like this: "Africa's economic and political instability, social injustice, violence (including Boko Haram, Niger Delta militants, OPC, Egbesu boys, etc.), stagnation, censorship, extra-judicial killings, poverty, illegal detention, abuse of human rights, in one word, 'underdevelopment', is the legacy left us by the Europeans." What this means is that Africa is where it is today as a result of European presence and influence in her economic affairs via the ruthless and unaccountable exploitation of her resources. This is a position shared by the non-African externalist scholar Michael Parenti (1989, 12), who concedes that the Third World is designed for the benefits and interests of the West.

The argument of the externalists, as Falaiye (2012, 25) puts it, is that: "Africa was developed before the coming of the Europeans and Africa would have been even more developed had the Europeans not visited Africa without obtaining proper entry visas. The externalists argue that the European forceful entry into Africa is at the heart of the continent's entire predicament today." Rodney's *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* has been erroneously used as a representation of this locus. But how reliable this text is for what seems like the externalist position of Rodney will be addressed in the next section. In the meantime, the ways through which the externalist approach to the discourse has been affirmed will be expounded further.

The roles of non-African or Western institutions, such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and more recently, China, as agents of sharp philanthropy and the establishment of Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs) are also disclosed as other externalist causes of African underdevelopment. The presence of these financial institutions in Africa has been to find a way to assist these countries to rouse from the doldrums of underdevelopment and cultural backwardness. However, it has turned out that they are actually aimed at exploiting the African economy whilst claiming to civilize the people. This is endorsed by Claude Ake (1981, 83), who claims that colonial powers justify their presence in Africa as a service to civilize the people. These foreign financial institutions are said to be in control of the American and British governments. The most popular are the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, both of whom are the major perpetrators of the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs), which, to a larger extent, are more committed to denigrating the African economy. While the IMF monitors monetary policies, the World Bank is saddled with economic reconstruction. It would appear that these institutions exist in the interest of the whole world but when we make a critical assessment of the matter, we discover that these institutions are put in place by the wealthy class of the West to monitor and suppress any economy.

The externalist argument continues with the understanding that authentic efforts by African heads of government toward steering their people's lot have met gridlocks via some of the stringent conditions put in place by these financial bodies. A case in point is the Lagos Plan for Action (LPA) in 1980, which is a consequence of the displeasure of African heads of government with the continent's economic progress and their realization that incompetency has become the character of nearly all the development strategies recommended for Africa's growth and economic development. The principal reason for the Plan is to actualize a form of development that will be African-driven and reinforced from within Africa (CAYNE 1992, 321). However, as the externalists would argue, the Plan encountered some problems most

of which may be said to have derived from the Western-controlled financial institutions.

Specifically, some African governors at the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) made a request to study the economic problem in sub-Saharan Africa as it was predicted by the World Bank Development report of 1972 that the continent would soon plunge into an economic downturn (AKE, 2001). This inquiry led to the famous World Bank's Accelerated Development in sub-Saharan Africa: An Agenda for Action, 1981. The report emanating from this study, contra the LPA, singles out three areas for improvement: trade and exchange rate policies, reform of input supply and marketing services, and more effective use of resources in the public sector. African leaders, however saw this to be against their interests and the objectives of the LPA, and this led to a sort of gridlock. Claude Ake (2001, 25) makes this analysis clearer:

The Bretton Woods institutions and the West would not accept the approach of the Lagos Plan, although they refrain from opposing it openly. Instead, they expressed this rejection of the Plan by ignoring it and refusing to reorient their economic relation with Africa so as not to connect with and address the program and policies of the Plan.

This culminated in the abandonment of the Plan by African heads of government.

The foregoing is another clear indication, which reinforces the conviction of the externalist that much as African leaders have continuously made efforts to improve their poor economic conditions, they lack the adequate affluence and influence to make this happen. Realizing that African governors at the World Bank and IMF had a role reminds one of Fanon's (1963, 219) claim, "even more terrible than the colonization of a country is the colonization of the mind. The equation 'white' and 'civilization' in the minds of the Africans implies that the equation's opposite is also true; to be black is to be uncivilized." The failure of the LPA has also been disclosed by Rawia Tawfik (2008, 60-61) as lacking the inner will to be able to combat the economic woes of Africa.

As this indicates, it is hardly possible for externalists to mention the West as the cause of the economic frustrations faced by Africa without failing to indicate instances where Africans themselves are to blame. As a way of adding to the depth of the externalist argument, the recent activities of China in Africa for Africa's mineral and natural resources are also worthy of exposition.

It is important to first consider the outlook that "[d]uring the Cold War, foreign aid was an important political tool that China used to gain Africa's diplomatic recognition and to compete with the United States and the Soviet Union for Africa's support" (SUN, 2014). It is interesting that "much Chinese funds to Africa is associated with the continent's natural resources. Using what is sometimes characterized as the 'Angola Model,' China frequently provides low-interest loans to nations who rely on commodities, such as oil or mineral resources, as collateral" (CORKIN, 2011, N.P). Under this arrangement, there is no doubt that the argument of the externalists over the status of post-colonial Africa as an exploitation hub for non-African benefits continues to persist unhindered. Essentially, it has been found by Zhang Chang (2008, N.P) that:

[T]hough commodity-backed loans were not created by China – leading Western banks were making such loans to African countries, including Angola and Ghana, before China Eximbank and Angola completed their first oil-backed loan in March 2004 – but the Chinese built the model to scale and applied it using [a] systematic approach. In Angola in 2006, USD 4 billion in such loans probably helped Chinese oil companies win the exploitation rights to multiple oil blocks.

Whilst reflecting on this, Parenti (1989, 28) had written long ago that most of the financial assistance given to places like Africa are not in the interests of Africa. They are to be repaid in other ways, such as mineral resources. In short, what operates is 'phantom aid', which African states pay back as part of their debts.

Despite the foregoing, it has been suggested that "China is a saviour – a trustworthy ally of Africa. They view China, a country that does not have a history of colonial aspirations in Africa, as a partner which could provide much-needed funding without any strings attached. They also believe Beijing understands and respects Africa's priorities. Moreover, China has a reputation among African countries for being an actor that respects other cultures and states. This view is widely held by many African heads of state" (MARU, 2019). So, the externalists have maintained the locus that in spite of the 'sharp philanthropy' provided by China toward the exploitation of Africa's resources, African heads of government still perceive the interaction as healthy one beneficial to Africa.

At this juncture, it is not misplaced to ask: Is it possible to still make a clear distinction between the internal and external causes of African development, given the necessary interplay between African heads of government and non-African 'investors' from Asia, America and Europe? It is now time to turn to the argument of the internalists who are of the outlook that Africa's problem is connected to Africa and her leaders. The internalists argue that externalists simply look beyond Africa for the developmental crises and woes peculiar to Africa,

The Internalists Response to the Externalist Argument on African Development

What the internalists argue in the African development discourse, contra the externalists, is the latter's failure to realize the fact that the other parts of the world where Western colonization occurred have been able to evolve positively whereas Africa is still underdeveloped. This is captured in the words of Falaiye (2012, 26), a prominent representative of this arm of debate, thus:

I do not think anyone has ever argued that contact with the West has not had negative consequences on Africa, as it also did in Asia, Eastern Europe, Latin America, the Middle East and the rest of the world. While the other parts of the world were busy weaning themselves off the negative legacies of the contact with the West, Africa in

the fashion of the externalists, continued to glorify and romanticize the role of the West in the continuing saga of Africa's backwardness. This is what I have chosen to call the naivety of externalist dependence syndrome in scholarship.

As internalists are wont to maintain, Africa's exploitation is caused by Africans themselves. An influential member of this position is George Ayittey (1992, 45), who is fairly convinced that "[b]asic common sense tells one to look both ways before crossing the street or risk being hit by a truck. Africa is in bandages because its leaders and scholars looked only one way." Whilst amplifying Ayittey's position, Falaiye (2012, 38) adds:

[T]he source of Africa's numerous problems can be traced to nowhere else but Africa. Those of us who belong to this school have always maintained that black neo-colonialism is as bad, if not worse, than white colonialism. George Ayittey and my humble self, have shown in more ways than one that the nationalists who took power after independence and the military despots who overthrew them have proved themselves to be even worse than the colonialists that they replaced.

One finds from the outset that the internalists seem to be out against African leaders as though they are not working in tandem with some accomplices in the Global North. The internalists are also silent on instances of Western-backed coup d'etat and the military overthrow of civilian governments in African countries (BOND 2006, PARENTI 1988).

The leadership issue or crisis is also central to Falaiye (2012). For him, the leadership issues and their implication on the African polity, as indicated by the internalists, go against the counsel of "Aristotle's idea of the 'best law' [and] is opposed to Plato's 'best man'". Consequently, Aristotle accepted from the start the point of view of the *laws* that in any good state, the law must be the ultimate sovereign and not any person whatsoever. In other words, the good

state need not necessarily have good men, as Plato suggests, but good laws" (FALAIYE 2012, 32). This is not to deny the general understanding that leaders are first of all humans. More so, humans are consequents or derivatives of nature and nurture. It is based on this conviction that Aristotle famously announces that "[m]an, when perfected, is the best of animals, but, when separated from law and justice, he is the worst of all" (ARISTOTLE 1925, 19).

In the case of leadership and the political status of post-colonial Africa, Falaiye (2012) maintains that Africans never had independence in the real sense of the word. Hence, he continues that what Africa has been doing is a mere celebration of her 'independence' in the face of very little change since the colonial powers handed over political powers to Africans themselves. Most of these indigenous leaders, for Falaiye (2012) have now evolved into 'colonial' powers that now oppress their fellow Africans. What may be discerned from the internalist argument is the subtle recognition yet not openly admitted locus that Africa has always been under the influence of the Global North. However, they seem to have placed so much weight or emphasis on the activities of African leaders as the prima causes of Africa's woes that they find other possible causes subaltern. This is why they persistently hold on to the dear view that in nearly all parts of Africa, it is not beyond question that nationalists were soon replaced by military rulers who seized power through military coups and whose 'legitimacy' to power was founded on their monopoly of the means of violence (FALAIYE 2012).

It is helpful to also add that those whom "Ayittey has chosen to call 'military coconut heads' founded a new dynasty, a new orientation in African politics, an orientation that has created a class of ruling oligarchy bent on remaining in power forever" (FALAIYE 2012, 32). While elaborating on this discourse, Falaiye (2012, 32) highlights that:

[T]he greatest malady of African politics is the unwillingness of the rulers to relinquish power. They are entrenched in power by constitutions that have virtually made them kings; opposition to them is treason. Now it

seems the only way a change of government can be effected in Africa is by beheading the heads of states.

Hoeane (1991, 4) maintains this solemn attitude by saying that "[i]t is a crude option which regrettably seems to be the only workable one for Africa." This is the general approach towards understanding how leadership issues contribute immensely to the economic and political conditions of Africa, whereas the West is usually invited to take the blame for their inadequacies as heads of government.

I think the internalists are those species of scholars that really deserve the connotation that "Africa is in bandages because its leaders and scholars looked only one way" (AYITTEY 1992, 45). They have placed so much emphasis on the leadership question in ways that they refuse to disclose how these leaders are easily manipulated. For instance, in spite of the fact that Falaiye (2012) quoted relevant passages from Rodney (1972) to justify his externalist rendition of Rodney, he leaves out some commanding passages that make Rodney fall neither in the externalist nor internalist camp. Clearly, Rodney (1972, 33-34) does not overlook the essence of bad leadership since he writes:

The presence of a group of African sell-outs is part of the definition of underdevelopment. Any diagnosis of underdevelopment in Africa will reveal not just low per capita income and protein deficiencies, but *also the gentlemen who dance in Abidjan, Accra and Kinshasa when music is played in Paris, London and New York.* (italicized emphasis mine).

Of course, by African sell-outs, Rodney means African leaders, and it is unfair that the internalist scholar Falaiye (2012, 2000) refuses to bring this aspect to bear whilst assessing Rodney's seeming externalist stance. Perhaps Falaiye may provide a rebuttal that throughout the text, Rodney lays more emphasis on the detrimental role which the West played in the history of Africa's political economy but does not talk about the leadership problem, which is central to the internalist position. Such a rebuttal sounds valid on the first showing. However, it becomes trivial when assessed in the light

of Rodney's (1972, 293) conviction that "the main purpose of the colonial school system was to train Africans to man the local administration at the lowest ranks and to staff the private capitalist firms owned by Europeans. In effect, that meant selecting a few Africans to participate in the domination and exploitation of the continent as a whole."

Clearly, the kind of leaders African countries have are Western-trained and are infused with the necessary ideology that perpetuates the continuous dance to the 'songs' emanating from important places of the Global North. What needs to be said is that the externalist-internalist distinction no longer matters. If there is any such distinction, and if they are held vehemently, it is to the credit of the two prominent internalist scholars, George Ayittey and Muiyiwa Falaiye, whose studies have succeeded to highlight only one aspect of the development discourse.

Walter Rodney and the Externalist Misrepresentation by Internalist Scholars

For Falaiye (2012, 25-26), Rodney identifies that the impact of Western capitalism and Africans themselves are the cause of the continent's economic backwardness. As clear as this might be, one wonders why Falaiye chooses to stick to the first without considering the second where Rodney (1972, 33-34) does not desist from chiding Africans too for being unwitting accomplices of the corrupt system. It is convenient to put that for Falaiye (2012, 45):

[T]he theoretical assumptions made by Rodney in establishing his thesis that we are where we are today because of Europe are that:

- (a) Africa was developed prior to the 15th century, albeit in a different direction from Europe's conception of development;
- (b) The European slave trade is at the root of black underdevelopment and technical stagnation;
- (c) Africans contributed significantly to European capitalism during the colonial period; and

- (d) Black underdevelopment is a result of Western colonialism (FALAIYE 2012, 45).

Through careful analysis, propositions (a)-(d), as deduced from Falaiye's (2012) reading of Rodney (1972), are correct. However, where does Falaiye put Rodney's second condition or reason for African development? In Rodney's (1972, 34) words: "Secondly, one has to deal with those who manipulate the system and those who are either agents or unwitting accomplices of the said system. The capitalists of Western Europe were the ones who actively extended their exploitation from inside Europe to cover the whole of Africa." The argument of Falaiye and his mitigation of the relevant portions of Rodney's text that takes cognizance of Falaiye's internalist argument can only be read as a Strawman – Falaiye distorted Rodney's argument and then criticized this distorted version making him misrepresent Rodney as an externalist, whereas Rodney's work abounds with evidence replete of both the external and internal causes of African development. In other words, Rodney is not unaware of the two dangers of Western capitalism and the African leadership's endorsement of the system.

Since I have exerted myself with relevant pages of Rodney to defend him against the externalist reading, it is now important to establish the problems facing Africa in contemporary times and the urgency of moving beyond the externalist-internalist blame paradigm, which may constitute a neo-Rodneyan effort as well.

There are now more African problems that are beyond Western and African influences. In recent times, the continent is, for instance, facing harsh economic challenges, some of which have caused citizens to take up arms as means of survival, thereby further compromising the situation of the continent's development drive. The love for corrupt leadership on the part of the colonial powers cannot also be undermined in the protection of the interests of the West in Africa. It is based on this that I take an eclectic position.

The problems facing Africa, from my eclectic position, which is derived from Rodney's work are, on the economic front, a collaborative effort between bad leadership systems in Africa and Western capitalism. I boldly state that a series of mistakes are

usually repeated among African leaders and this is why George Ayittey (2005, 23) has said that "the wise learn from the mistakes of others, while fools repeat them. Idiots[,] on the other hand, repeat their own stupid mistakes." It is therefore not a misplaced factor that "corruption is a major factor for Africa's underdevelopment" (AYITTEY 2005, 9). True as this may be, it is crucial to understand that in the fight to erase corruption, the Western-backed financial houses and commercial banks are playing a huge part. This is a crucial aspect that the internalist paradigm fails to take cognizance of whilst launching a full-scale war against the externalist dimension that Africa remains underdeveloped thanks to the assistance from the West. According to the Lord Aikins Adusei (2009, N.P):

Corruption is rife in Africa because banking institutions in Europe especially Switzerland, France, Jersey Island, Britain, Luxembourg, Liechtenstein, Austria and US among others accept money from African leaders without questioning its source. According to the UN and the AU around \$148 billion is stolen from the continent annually by political leaders, multinational corporations, the business elite and civil servants with [the]complicity of banking and property industries in Europe and North America.

What the foregoing portrays is that there is no way Africa can develop when the love for corrupt leadership on the part of the West continues unchecked. If this were not the case, as bad as the late Nigerian military head of state, Sani Abacha, was portrayed by the media, African and non-African, very little has been said concerning the stashing of Nigeria's stolen money in over 130 bank accounts in Western banks and the complicity of those banks. Specifically, it has been found that:

Within five years of his reign (1993-98) Sani Abacha of Nigeria according to official sources was able to stash four billion dollars and between 12 and 16 billion dollars according to unofficial sources. After his death in 1998,

investigators in Nigeria, Europe and America stumbled on over 130 bank accounts in Australia, New Zealand, London, New York, France and Switzerland among other countries where some of the money stolen was kept. (ADUSIE 2009, N.P).

Nigeria is not the only African country whose leaders have stashed stolen funds in 'cooperating' Western financial firms. Adusei (2009, N.P) reveals more:

Most foreign banks have been implicated for receiving billions of dollars of looted funds from the late Mobutu of Zaire, Lansana Conte of Guinea, Eyadema of Togo, and a number of tyrants such as Omar Bongo of Gabon, Obiang Nguema of Equatorial Guinea, Dos Santos of Angola, Denis Sassou Nguesso of Congo, Paul Biya of Cameroon, Arap Moi of Kenya, Jerry Rawlings of Ghana, Ibrahim Babangida of Nigeria and a number of sitting and ex-presidents in Africa; yet western media is silent about where the funds are being kept.

These realities are aspects which have motivated this study to argue that taking a clean-cut approach as the externalists and internalists are said to have done does the discourse no good. It is a dead-end. I now turn to amplify the eclectic position that I advocate for.

Locating Causality in the Eclectic Position on African Development Discourse

My research maintains an eclectic vision, which highlights that the contention of the internalists is already contained in the argument of the externalists. In order to see how this is possible, it is important to turn to the logical assessment of causality. In philosophical parlance, propositions in the order "If A, then B" are usually called conditional propositions (SALMON 2002, 30). It says that if the conditions that make A appear are noticed, then B will follow. So, A is a sufficient condition for the appearance or occurrence of B. In simple terms, A

is the cause of B. To apply this to the discourse at hand, the proposition may be relevant:

- (a) *If Africa is underdeveloped, then Western exploitation, African accomplices in the form of leaders and other non-human actors are to blame.*

The fact that Africa is underdeveloped is the reason why scholarly attention has garnered to consider why the status quo remains thus. So, Africa's underdevelopment is a sufficient condition, enough to motivate scholars to consider these two causes. Conditional propositions also occur in the form of negation: "If not-A, then not-B." This states the absence of A makes it impossible for B to be present. To apply this to the discourse at hand, the proposition relevant:

- (b) *If Africa is not underdeveloped, then Western exploitation, African accomplices in the form of leaders and other non-human actors are not to blame.*

The assumption that Africa is a developed place will not invite scholars to start debating whether or not Western exploitation, bad African leaders and non-human agents, such as climate change, are the reasons. In this way, -A is a necessary condition that must be present otherwise -B will not be observed. In other words, the absence of A makes the absence of B possible.

The distinction between necessary and sufficient causes, for this discourse, is an important one because underdevelopment in Africa is a sufficient condition for considering the role of Western capitalism, African accomplices and other non-human causative agents, such as climate change and drought, as scholars have shown. It is however not a necessary condition because there are other causes of underdevelopment aside from these two, which have become prevalent among scholars, hence my eclectic outlook.

Climate change and the scramble for survival have, for instance, been lauded as a potential cause for underdevelopment in some economies (see FISMAN & MIGUEL 2008). For instance, "If

global warming brings more droughts to Chad or its neighbors, farmers won't be able to adjust and the region's dire economic situation will only grow worse. And so will the cycle of poverty and violence that afflicts the region" (FISMAN & MIGUEL 2008, 131). In northern Nigeria, the conflict or violent confrontations between farmers and herders continue owing to the effects of climate change which has continued to drive herders downwards in search of fodder for the flock. Aderibigbe Olomola (2019, 10), discloses that "Farmers in Zagga district of Bagudo Local Government Area in Kebbi State have decried the persistent destruction of their farm produce by cattle grazers." In another state in North Central Nigeria, it was recorded that: "Suspected herdsmen have destroyed a farmhouse belonging to Benue State Governor, Samuel Ortom, in attacks on Waku village and a part of Gbajimba town, in Guma Local Government Area of the state. Two persons were also killed in the attacks, which occurred less than 24 hours after suspected herdsmen attacked Yogbo, another community in the same local government area, leaving six persons killed and several property [sic] including farmlands destroyed" (OLOMOLA 2019, 10). In a core southwest region in Nigeria, specifically, Oyo state, it has been discovered that "Herdsmen have reportedly set ablaze a 150-acre oil palm plantation in Lagun, a suburb of Ibadan, the Oyo State capital, Sunday night. An estimated 1,500 palm trees were destroyed in the fire" (OLOMOLA 2019, 11). Given this perspective, what can be learned is that there is no direct impact of the West and their "African accomplices" over the continuous conflicts that have made nearly all sub-Saharan African states to be fragile states.

There are other reasons that make it almost impossible for Africans to attain realities, such as food security, owing to the impact of climate change in their regions (OYEKAN & OFUASIA 2017). There are cases or instances where political instability has been observed as the consequence of climate change, which is forcing humans to react in the most drastic measure in order to cope or adapt to their geographic realities. This is most felt in the farmer-herder conflicts in Nigeria – one of the causative agents for why the country has been perceived as a fragile state. According to Knoema (2021), the fragile state index puts Nigeria at 92.27. It was

discovered that the "Fragile states index of Nigeria increased from 94.4 index in 2006 to 97.27 index in 2020 growing at an average annual rate of 0.23%" (KNOEMA 2021, N.P). Under this kind of status quo, there is no doubt that the development process will necessarily be compromised and this is beyond whether or not the cause has internalist or externalist motivations. It is another aspect that both parties to the development discourse have not been able to provide the needed or relevant attention. This is why the central thesis of this research, though not oblivious to the main thrust of the arguments of the internalists and externalists, goes on to maintain that, in the 21st century, these are not the reliable yardsticks for comprehending the factors that are responsible for Africa's underdevelopment. Environmental causes too, and their effects in the manifestations of conflicts and violent confrontations command attention as well.

From the brief excursion provided, it is not misplaced to ask: how do Western capitalism and Western-induced bad leadership appear as necessary tools for the underdevelopment of sub-Saharan Africa? What this suggests is that the question of African underdevelopment is beyond Western capitalism and the role of African accomplices. The place of environmental conditions and how this continues to shift the narratives, making many sub-Saharan African states fragile states that are hostile to development, seem to have been trivialized. The crux of my eclectic position is that the African development discourse needs to drop the internalist-externalist debate but must extend beyond the continent and engage other sufficient reasons for 'Africa's underdevelopment.

Conclusion

My contention in this study has been to establish that the presence of Western and Asian economic powers in Africa, on the one hand, as well as the role of their accomplices in Africa, on the other hand, may not be seen as the two sole reasons why the continent is riddled with developmental lacuna. This research has used the arguments of the externalists and the internalists to show why the relationship between Africa and the West and even China is one that is based on economic interests and exploitative yet not beneficial to Africa. In

spite of this conviction, this study goes on to establish that there is no need to provide a deep distinction as the externalist and internalist do since they emphasize only one aspect of this exploitative relationship. Hence, this study takes the stance of an eclectic for its position. In a rapidly developing world, it is not enough for African intellectuals to focus only on two causes of underdevelopment – Western capitalism and poor leadership in Africa. Whereas my eclectic position foregrounds another perspective on the development discourse in Africa, it is not shy of the need to combat ways of reversing how this perspective – the climate needs to be checked in order to reverse its consequences with regards to violent confrontations due to scarce resources. The ways through which this can be reversed are however beyond the scope of the present research. The main kernel is to make this problem or challenge as vivid to demand the attention that it requires in order to foreground how Africa can attain her development yearning, which seems to be an elusive venture.

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