AN OVERVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

DEMOCRATIZATION IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

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1992

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(1989-1992)
An Overview of the Literature

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Foreword

In April 1992, the General Directorate of the Dutch Ministry for International Development (DGIS) asked the African Studies Centre to draw up a state-of-the-art report on "political developments in Africa exhibiting tendencies towards opener, more pluriform societies, devoting special attention to the causes of social conflicts that play a role in this connection." The following report is our response to this request.

Before we start, a few words of caution are called for. The nations of Africa often differ more from each other than those of Europe. In an overview on all of sub-Saharan Africa, however, it is often necessary to generalize and make statements that do not always pertain to specific cases. Readers who are knowledgeable about a particular country might find this overview disappointing in some ways, but unfortunately this was the nature of the assignment.

The report describes Africa south of the Sahara. For practical reasons, however, literature on South Africa and Namibia has not been included. The extent of this literature is so vast that it could not possibly be adequately examined by two people who are not South Africa experts in the period of only half a year. Thus as regards South Africa, where the question of democratization has had a longer history, a sizeable body of information is missing.

In order to save space, every so often our language usage may exhibit "impurities." As we note in section III, democracy can be defined in any number of ways; we often use it as a kind of stenography term, even in cases where longer elaborations might have been useful.

Lastly, we would like to thank the people at the African Studies Centre, whose oral or written contributions helped us draw up this overview. We would like to address a special word of gratitude to Wim van Binsbergen, Gerti Hesseling, Ineke van Kessel, Piet Konings, Henk Meilink, Emile van Rouveroy van Nieuwaal and Kees Schilder.

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INTRODUCTION

"Possibly as dramatic and unanticipated as recent monumental changes in Eastern Europe was the sudden coalescence of a 'critical mass' of pre-democracy pressures in Africa" (Decalo 1992: 7).

"Democratic forms are necessary and possible in Africa. To say that they are possible, however, is not to deny a host of factors that make them very unlikely" (Holmquist 1989: 53).

1.1 A SHORT SURVEY OF THE EVENTS

Some time ago, in early 1989 to be exact, there were only four countries in sub-Saharan Africa that were democratic, or at any rate permitted a multi-party system. Everywhere else there was either a single-party system or no political parties at all. Ever since a day late in 1992, this situation has been very different. Most of the nations of Africa have more or less converted to a multi-party system or some other institution leading to an opener, more pluriform type of society (for example as regards freedom of the press), a development that very few people, including social scientists, could have predicted. It should be noted here that not all the countries of Africa are advancing at the same pace in this respect, and that the steps did not lead to the same results all over. It might be wise to stop here to devote a bit more attention to this point. Roughly speaking, the African nations can be sub-divided into the following five categories:
The democratic "reservations." In the sense that the multi-party system has been maintained undiminished ever since they gained independence, and that free and more or less honest elections have been regularly held, three small African countries — Mauritius, Gambia and Botswana — have never been without democracy. Senegal can be included in this category as well. Although Senegal did function as a single-party state for some time, President Senghor permitted a limited number of opposition parties as early as 1974, and in 1981 his successor Abdou Diouf abolished the restrictions on founding rivaling parties.

As regards the democratization processes affecting Africa in 1993, these four exceptions are highly interesting. Mauritius deserves a place of honour on this list, since it is the only African nation where not only was a multi-party system permitted, but where governments voluntarily withdrew after being defeated at elections. Although Mauritius is geographically and politically part of Africa, its history and population have very little in common with the rest of the continent, so that in our context here, it plays a role of negligible significance (for a good account of political developments in Mauritius, see Wiseman 1990: 64-73).

Social scientists have focused a great deal of attention on the democratic experiment in Botswana, often evaluating it in a positive manner (see Wiseman 1990: 35-48). Holm and Molutsi, quite familiar with the political situation in Botswana, also clearly indicated that as regards democratization and economic development, the country compares favourably with most other African nations, although they did refer to some less positive aspects as well (see their separate and joint works). Holm (1988) described Botswana as a "paternalistic" democracy, and various of the contributions in Democracy in Botswana by Holm and Molutsi made critical comments as well. The same holds true of Parson (1991), who concluded that in Botswana, "the process of empowerment rises not from the bottom but rather trickles down from the top" (p. 186).

As regards Gambia, with the exception of Wiseman (1990), most political observers have expressed clear doubts as to the extent of democracy there. Sall (1991) and Sall and Sallah (1992) wrote at length about the more negative aspects of Gambian democracy, noting in particular its shortcomings in the field of economic development. For the rest, a relatively limited range of studies have been conducted in Gambia.

Most authors were also rather critical as regards the Senegalese experiment. In view of limitations which, in practice, impede the opposition parties, and in view of the
inability or unwillingness of the political elite to interest the people at large in the
democratic process, Coulon (1988) was only willing to call Senegal a "semi-democracy"
(see also on Senegal: Diop and Diouf 1990).

(2) Countries where a multi-party system has recently been reinstated and where ruling
authorities have been ousted by way of free elections. In chronological order: Benin, the
Cape Verde Islands, Sao Tomé e Principe, Zambia, the Congo and Mali. Of course they
too are highly interesting cases, but since these events took place so recently, there is
still very little relevant academic literature. In some cases, a few authors have already
ventured to formulate a critical evaluation, referring all the while to the perils threatening
these young democracies (on Benin see Allen 1992 and Daloz 1992, on the Cape Verde
Islands see Cahn 1991b, on Zambia see Bratton 1992, Constantin & Quantin 1992,

(3) Countries where the people in power permitted a multi-party system and then proceeded
to win the elections themselves. In some cases, the elections were relatively honest, with
at most some slight manipulations on the side, as in the Ivory Coast (see the excellent
article by Fauré 1991), Angola and perhaps in Gabon as well (see Gaulme 1991), in
other countries the elections were very probably won fraudulently by the incumbents, as
was very recently the case in Cameroon (see Mblembe 1993) and Ghana.

(4) Countries where the ruling regime has used or still is using whatever means are
necessary to defend itself against the multi-party system, and even after an ostensible
change of heart has done its best to undermine whatever concessions have been made.
Examples include Kenya (see Ajulu 1992), Zaire (see Braeckman 1992) and Malawi.

(5) Special mention should be made of Nigeria, where the present military rule has
permitted two political parties, one "a little bit to the right" and the other "a little bit to the
left," a solution most observers have been rather critical about (Agbese 1990, Ibrahim
1991, Uwazurike 1990). Zimbabwe is also a unique case, for President Mugabe clearly
defied popular feelings when he tried in 1990 to replace the multi-party system with a
unity party (for a recent study see Raftopoulos 1992).
1.2. A SHORT EVALUATION OF THE LITERATURE

As is clear from our bibliography, a great deal has been written about democratization processes in Africa. Since many of the events involved are extremely recent ones, no matter how good and scientifically correct the literature sometimes is, it is subject to severe limitations. Firstly, many of the publications are rather theoretical and tend toward generalizations, and virtually no original field work has recently been conducted. (The only exception being the Democracy Project recently implemented in Botswana under the supervision of Holm and Molutsi 1989, which did indeed include a relatively lengthy period of field work. To a certain extent the articles by Fauré 1991 and Simutanyi 1992 do go in this direction, but are not yet completed studies.)¹

Secondly, many of the authors are not completely neutral, and can not help but allow their feelings to affect their perspective, as is virtually inevitable, certainly where African authors are concerned. In the first period (1990 and early 1991), this led to a number of rather optimistic, extremely idealistic, voluntarist publications. With his petition for a "developmental democracy" in Africa, Sklar (1983) is a good and stimulating example, as is Joseph (1990), who wrote: "It has long been contended that the world is becoming a global village. In this village the fundamental principles of legitimate government are now universally recognized to be the entitlement of all people to freedom of expression, association and movement" (p. 63). If this were reality, there would no longer be many problems, either in Africa or anywhere else. In the same article, Joseph proposed a number of practical measures certainly worth thinking about, even if implementing them would be no simple manner. Another author wrote, "I must confess that I am less clear on how this can be done than I am convinced that it must be done" (Diamond 1989: 28). Recently, a more pessimistic tendency emerged, as was evident in an "interim (and mostly pessimistic) assessment" by Lemarchand (1992).

One positive development is that, as our bibliography illustrates, African authors have been responsible for a large part of the literature on democratization. They are interested in the subject, and contrary to the situation thirty years ago, most African intellectuals are now in favour of opener social frameworks and no longer believe in the single-party system (see Tetzlaff).

In the course of this overview, the relevant literature will be discussed point by point. At the end of this introduction, we would like to mention several important publications that can

¹At the very last moment we discovered the Codesria Bulletin 1992 (4), which includes excerpts of a number of papers presented by African authors at Codesria seminars in Harare (May 1992) and Lusaka (May 1992). These excerpts suggest field work to some extent in the course of 1992, but we still have no access to the papers themselves.
serve as background material for a rapid assessment of what is happening at the moment in Africa in the field of democratization and what the fundamental problems are. Good articles on the subject include: Bayart (1991a), Bratton (1989a), Clapham (1992), Copans (1991), Decalo (1992), Hamid (1992), Imam (1991) and Lemarchand (1992). The anthology edited by Diamond et al. entitled *Democracy in Developing Countries*, with a second volume (1988) specifically about Africa, is also of essential importance. The fourth volume, *Conclusions*, has been announced but as far as we know has not been published yet. We would like to refer readers interested in the experiences of committees of international observers at recent African elections to two articles written by insiders, Bakary (1991) on the elections in Benin and Bjornlund et al. (1992) on the elections in Zambia.
BASIC FEATURES OF AFRICAN POLITICS

In this part of our overview, we would like to address a few basic features of political life in Africa that can serve as a framework within which present-day democratization developments can be comprehended. This section mainly contains general discourses. Recent democratization tendencies will not be dealt with more systematically until the later sections, although it might be hard to avoid making a few references to them here.

2.1. THE PRE-COLONIAL AND COLONIAL POLITICAL LEGACY

The extent to which pre-colonial African political systems exhibited more or less democratic or predominantly authoritarian features is once again the topic of heated debates. These debates also took place just after independence. According to some of the first African political leaders (Senghor, Nyerere, Nkrumah), pre-colonial Africa was almost ubiquitously steeped in democratic traditions, which the new independent states would be able to, and indeed would have to draw from (see Memel-Fote 1992). This notion was backed at the time by various social scientists. Today again, some African social scientists like Ayittey (1990), and to a lesser degree Kodjo (1985 and 1990), formulate rather idealized descriptions of the traditional political systems, sometimes giving the impression they represent a specifically African form of democracy (Ayittey 1990: 47). Various Western researchers have defended this standpoint as
well, as Davidson recently did (1992), stating that political life in pre-colonial Africa was characterized by "participation" and referring on various occasions to "forms of democratic behaviour."

Other authors have determinedly refuted these notions. An extreme example is Bozeman (1976), who claimed that "physical violence in human relations has been and continues to be accommodated on a prodigious scale in Africa without offending customary values and norms (...). African societies are ready to accommodate the most extreme manifestations of coercive power on the part of their governing authorities without becoming either disorganized or demoralized, as long as it appears that those incidents of rule are sanctioned by the general belief system" (pp. 180-181). Needless to say, this author presents the traditional African political systems as 100% authoritarian and devotes no attention at all to the concept of democracy.

African authors have also expressed their doubts about traditional democracy in far more moderate terms, as is illustrated by this comment by Emeka Anyaoku, a Nigerian: "I do not know of any African language whose political lexicon includes the concept of a 'leader of the loyal opposition.' Instead there is a clear concept of a political enemy" (The Economist, 22 February, 1992). In an article entitled "The Democratic Myth in the African Traditional Societies," Simiyu arrived at the following conclusion: "In Black Africa, whether the political system was that of the highly centralized states or the amorphous non-centralized communities, it did not belong to a democratic tradition. There were rudiments of democratic principles and practices (...), but it would be dangerous to equate those practices with advanced forms of democracy" (p. 68). He was joined in this line of thinking by Albert (1992), Datta & Murray (1989) and Oculi (1990). All of these authors did however point out that although the African political systems may not have been democratic, they certainly were not dictatorial either. "Checks and balances" had been built into these systems in the form of advisors who could constitutionally force dictatorial rulers to resign. Certain forms of consultation had usually been provided for various segments of the population ("La plupart des sociétés africaines anciennes étaient des sociétés de délibération" ["Most traditional African societies were societies of deliberation"] (Bayart 1991a: 8)), and power distribution and decentralization were often prevalent as well (see Ngongco 1989: 44). In so far as deliberation played a role, decisions were made via consensus and not via voting; the notion of a political majority and minority is not part of the African tradition (see Coquery-Vidrovitch 1992). (See for more basic literature on pre-colonial political systems: van Binsbergen [forthcoming], and Simonse 1992.)

As far as the colonial legacy is concerned, there is not much to be said. All the authors agree that the colonial governmental tradition was based upon "autocracy, centralization and
paternalism" (Sandbrook 1988: 225). With the exception of several urban municipalities in Senegal (see Coulon 1988), the franchise was only gradually introduced after World War Two and the period from 1945 to 1960 is too short for a democratic tradition to have taken root. This is also in part because although colonial rulers did institute the franchise and allow for the formation of political parties, in many cases they continued to try to control elections and put as many obstacles as they could in the paths of the more radical political parties. The fact that we deal so briefly with this topic does not mean it is not important. On the contrary. As Coquery-Vidrovitch rightly noted (1992: 34-35): "Il est probable (...) que le modèle du pouvoir absolu (...) d'un certain nombre de dictateurs africains récents ou actuels doit beaucoup plus à l'héritage colonial qu'au pouvoir somme tout moderateur du chef précolonial." ["It is probable (...) that the model of absolute power (...) adopted by certain recent and current African dictators owes much more to the colonial legacy than to the power of the pre-colonial chief, whose role was ultimately one of moderation and restraint"]).

No matter how authoritarian the colonial state may have been, it was certainly not omnipotent. In an extremely important study on colonial Kenya, Berman & Lonsdale (1992) convincingly demonstrated that consciously or unconsciously, the colonial state did have to take the dynamics of African society into consideration, and that the colonial regime was constantly confronted with the fundamental dilemma between legitimacy and capitalist accumulation: how far could one go in allowing for capitalistic accumulation without losing all legitimacy in the eyes of the colonized people?

2.2 THE PRESENT-DAY SITUATION

The African state
In order to comprehend the political situation in independent Africa, we should first address the matter of the African state (interesting anthologies in the field include: Ergas 1987, Terray 1987, Rothchild & Chazan 1988 and Médard 1991). As Doornbos (1990) rightly stated, at the advent of independence there was "a strong belief, shared by many scholars and practitioners alike, in the scope for engineering social processes (...). Quite fundamentally, this belief was not unrelated to the pervasive notion that one knew the direction in which state and society would develop in Africa: that of modern secular frameworks (...). [Moreover] there were very high expectations about the role the state would play as the prime mover in all development efforts" (p. 182).
The central role of the state was preserved, at least until the start of the eighties, but it soon became clear that the state had not quite developed in the direction that was originally anticipated, i.e. in keeping with completely Western models. Although Davidson (1992) claims Africa's greatest affliction is that it is still plagued by the notion of the Western-style "nation state," other researchers work from the assumption that the African state can no longer be explained solely as the result of external influences: "En effet, les sociétés africaines se sont appropriées les formes politiques modernes et celles-ci sont enracinées dans des structures sociales locales" ["African societies have appropriated modern political forms, which have become established in local social structures"] (Geschiere 1990: 156). Geschiere based this deduction on L'Etat en Afrique, the fundamental work by Bayart (1989), who stated that in the past thirty years a process of "hybridization" has taken place, in which external influences and internal dynamics have created a new totality. According to Bayart, the African state should be studied in the "longue durée" as a process of development that may exhibit interruptions, but is based upon deeper lines of continuity.

Economic accumulation and the "zero-sum" syndrome

One major point of difference between the African state and the Western or other models lies in the fact that the African state has proved to be the main channel for economic accumulation, and thus played a central role in the process of class formation. At the advent of independence, there was no indigenous bourgeoisie in Africa and state power was appropriated by what was initially referred to as a "political elite" (see Lloyd 1966) and later as a "political class" or a "bureaucratic bourgeoisie." It mainly consisted of often well-educated top officials, party leaders and high-ranking officers. It was characteristic of this group that it generally did not exert control over the means of production, but utilized its position in the state apparatus to provide itself with an economic basis by setting up state and private enterprises and engaging in other economic activities. This specific situation of "straddling" is referred to in French as "chevauchement" (see Roitman 1990).

The "straddling syndrome" has exerted enormous influence on political events in Africa, and will continue to affect present-day democratization processes. In the words of Bratton (1989a): "Because the state has often been the only available vehicle for the personal accumulation of wealth and the formation of social classes, there is 'too much at stake in the competition for power' (...) As Diamond puts it: 'Democracy requires moderation and constraint. It demands not only that people care about political competition, but also that they do not care too much ... Throughout much of Africa ... everything of value is at stake in an
election, and hence candidates, communities, and parties feel compelled to win at any cost \( (...) \). Brutality, intolerance, and corruption can all be traced to the zero-sum nature of African politics in which the winner takes all and the loser is consigned to the political and economic wilderness" (pp. 421-422). This is a fundamental component of African political life.

The position of the African bourgeoisie has not remained completely static in the course of the past thirty years. At the beginning of the eighties, a heated debate was already being waged among Kenya specialists about whether the bureaucratic class there was a "comprador" bourgeoisie serving the world of international capital, or there were tendencies indicative of the gradual emergence of a "national" bourgeoisie (see Kitching 1985). Since the situation differs from one country to the next, there is no simple answer to this question. In some countries, such as Nigeria, Kenya, Senegal and Cameroon, it is clear that certain groups have gained some extent of autonomy vis-à-vis the accumulation channels that go via the state, and that in a sense a truly indigenous world of commerce is emerging (on Cameroon see Geschiere & Konings 1993), though this is less the case in other countries.

"La politique du ventre"
Another basic feature of African politics is that in most of the nations of Africa, the people in power do not behave as a "development elite" like the ones that existed and still exist in Japan and some other Asian countries, but rather as a group that is interested in "eating," as Bayart (1989) so bluntly put it in his analysis of what is referred to in Cameroon as "la politique du ventre" (which is also the subtitle of Bayart's book). Bayart did not give any clear definition of this term, but illustrated it by quoting from an editorial in the Cameroon Tribune on 6 April, 1988: 'Un décret présidentiel relève-t-il un directeur ou un préfet de ses fonctions, le petit cercle d'amis et l'entourage familial expliquent l'événement aux villageois en disant: 'On lui a enlevé la bouffe.' Au contraire, si c'est une nomination à un poste important, le commentaire triomphant devient: 'On lui a donné la bouffe' ["When a presidential decree relieves a director or prefect of his post, his small circle of friends and relatives explain the event to the villagers by saying: 'They've taken the food off his plate.' On the other hand, if he is appointed to an important post, the triumphant comment will be: 'They've given him plenty to eat.'"] (Bayart 1989:10).

Bayart's example is certainly not just one isolated case, it is typical of a certain mentality: "(...) politics turns, as the drafters of the current [1976] Nigerian constitutional proposals remind us, on gaining 'the opportunity to acquire wealth and prestige, to be able to distribute benefits in the form of jobs, contracts, scholarships, and gifts of money and so on to one's relatives and political allies'" (Dunn 1978: 133). In other words, in the opinion of numerous
participants in the African political game, how scarce economic goods are acquired and distributed is more important than how power is divided. Joseph (1987) summarized this phenomenon as "prebendal politics," thus referring to the "centrality in the Nigerian polity of the intensive and persistent struggle to control and exploit the offices of the state" (p. 1). Medard (1991) used the Weberian concept of "neo-patrimonialism," emphasizing that fact that many Africans fail to draw a clear distinction between the private and the public domain, or between private and state funds. Davidson (1992: 270) aptly described another aspect of this syndrome as follows: "(...) in Africa, the great ideal was not to do a job but to occupy a salaried post." In should be noted in this respect that not all the nations of Africa suffer from this syndrome to the same extent. Holm (1988: 207) claimed that the political elite of Botswana clearly deviates from this pattern and does not view the state as a way to increase one's personal wealth, and he is not the only one to hold this opinion (see e.g. Wiseman 1990: 36).

As is obvious from the passage by Dunn quoted above, African elites are not only interested in food, but adhere to the principle "eat and let eat" ("I chop, you chop," as West African pidgin has it). Many authors do indeed hold that the present-day systems in Africa are characterized by complicated networks of patron-client relations "which serve to link communities in a pyramidal manner" (Callaghy 1986: 43, see also Coulon 1988 and Davidson 1992). This clientelism, with a patron granting services in exchange for a client's political support, is based upon and reinforced by political and economic inequality, but at certain moments also has the effect of partially alleviating this inequality, because for the client, the patron always remains someone he can fall back on in times of need. Clientelism in this form is extremely widespread in Africa, and spreads out in waves from the central figure of the patron: relatives are among the first to be privileged, followed by fellow villagers and people from the same district, and lastly by everyone who belongs to the same ethnic group.

Ethnicity
This takes us to ethnicity, a topic a great deal has been written about and one that warrants careful scrutiny. First let us examine the problems demarcating the field of study. In the earliest studies, there was confusion as to the use of such concepts as tribe, race, ethnic group, ethnic identity and tribalism, and even today there is very little consensus about what the central features are of the ethnic group. Usually they include joint descent, a shared name, culture, religion and/or language, place of residence and most importantly an awareness on the part of the members that they belong to the same group (Isajiw 1974, Amselle 1985: 15-19).
As regards the disputes among dissenting schools of thought, we can best turn to Doornbos (1990: 194): "At the outset, differences in understanding of the ethnic phenomenon could hardly have been greater. Various liberal scholars, conceptually akin to Clifford Geertz, viewed ethnic identity as primordial, that is, a deeply-rooted existential given (...). Many Marxist scholars, on the other hand, first considered ethnicity as no more than an epiphenomenon; in other words, either a misunderstood or false consciousness, or a purely surface reflection of more basic, and more important class variables." Many neo-Marxist Africanists thus viewed the rise of ethnic consciousness within the framework of the colonial state (and missionary work). The state was then considered the architect of ethnic units via the formation of administrative units that were given an ethnic label. As Illife (1979) very concisely put it: "Europeans believed Africans belonged to tribes; Africans built tribes to belong to." Amselle took this approach much further, emphasizing that ethnic consciousness is an externally imposed idea: "Il n'existait rien qui ressemblât à une ethnie pendant la période précoloniale. Les ethnies ne procèdent que de l'action du colonisateur qui, dans sa volonté de territorialisier le continent africain, a découpé des entités ethniques qui ont été elles-mêmes ensuite réappropriées par les populations. Dans cette perspective, 'l'ethnie' (...) ne serait qu'un faux archaïsme" ["There was nothing resembling the ethnic group during the pre-colonial period. Ethnic groups have arisen solely from the actions of colonialists, who, in their desire to territorialisize the African continent, carved up ethnic entities, which were then reappropriated by the populations. This point of view regards the ethnic group (...) as nothing more than a false archaism"] (1985: 23). According to this author, pre-colonial Africa did not consist of clearly delineated and isolated ethnic groups, as most colonial ethnographic monographs would have us believe, but of chains of pluri-ethnic societies closely linked to each other. Vail (1989), who more specifically described the situation in Southern Africa, thought along the same lines as Amselle.

Views like these have rightly been criticized for overly viewing the start of the colonial period as an absolute transition in African history. They overestimate the influence of the colonial and post-colonial state on ethnicity and underestimate the continuity with pre-colonial processes of group formation. It certainly can not be denied that processes of ethnic group formation have continued in the course of the twentieth century — ethnographic examples include Dozon (1985), Peel (1988) and Ranger (1989) — but a number of ethnic groups with their own group consciousness had been formed before the arrival of the colonial state. This insight has best been formulated by Chrétien & Prunier (1989). One hazard of the notion that "traditional" groups are colonial creations is that it might present African society as too passive.
These discussions have made it clear that ethnic groups and ethnic identities are subject to constant alteration, a view that has also been elaborated upon with growing fervour by followers of the "liberal" school. As Doornbos (1990: 194-195) put it: On the liberal side, the primordial thesis was first criticized and qualified through recognition of much greater flexibility and variability of popular identities than was previously assumed to exist, and through the growing understanding of identity as a kind of multi-layered, multi-faceted phenomenon. Existing ethnic identities, first thought to be deep-rooted and immovable, were seen to acquire fresh meanings in response to new situations and challenges." This idea that ethnic groups are not static but are subject to change, and that they are not isolated phenomena but components of a much larger whole, i.e. the modern state, in which they develop and manifest themselves in interaction with other groups of a comparable nature, has been aptly expressed by Young (1976). In a later publication (1991b), Young noted that under the present circumstances, ethnic identity is frequently overshadowed by regional identity, sometimes with a religious undertone one might add. Young argued that ever since 1960, there have been very few ethnic separatist movements in Africa: "The most spectacular cases of armed insurrection by groups demanding independence have revolved not around cultural segments but around administrative regions; the four major instances were Katanga, Biafra, southern Sudan and Eritrea. The superior legitimacy of territorial divisions originating in colonial administrative boundaries was central to the separation effort" (p. 336). Another important factor is that ethnic groups are not always the monolithic blocs they are sometimes presented as in the literature or experienced as by their members. They often split up into various clientistic networks led by keenly competing political "entrepreneurs".

Despite the difficulty of defining ethnicity and the polemics on the concept, even today the rivalry for scarce government jobs and scarce development funding is perceived by many Africans in ethnic terms, and ethnicity thus remains an integral factor in African political life.\(^2\)

*Class formation*

This does not necessarily mean it is the only factor, as certain newspaper items would have us believe. Across the vertical ties via families, villages, ethnic groups, regions and religious affiliations, there is the horizontal process of class formation, a process not always consciously experienced by many Africans, but one that is nonetheless important, certainly in the framework of the democratization processes. An analysis of the process of class formation would give us

\(^2\)Two recent articles by African authors about ethnicity are Ekeh (1990) and Osaghae (1991).
greater insight into the role the various social classes will play in the struggle for an opener and more pluriform society, and the alliances that might emerge between certain classes in the democratization process, which in the end will also affect the outcome of the entire process.

Analysing the process of class formation in Africa is no simple matter. After all, the introduction of the capitalist system in Africa did not lead to the total destruction of pre-capitalist societies. This is why "old" and "new" forms of economic organization and power structures still often exist side by side. Moreover, there are considerable differences in the degree of incorporation of various regions and countries into the capitalist system. This has produced a wide range of variation as regards the process of class formation. (A great deal has been written about the articulation of modes of production. For a good summary see Konings (1986, "Introduction") and the anthology by Van Binsbergen and Geschiere (1985).

We have devoted attention here to today's ruling elite in Africa, the administrative bourgeoisie, and have demonstrated that in some countries, it has been developing into a national bourgeoisie that is less dependent on the state. Next to or under this group, there are also a number of groups that can best be called "middle classes." They are not only middle-level entrepreneurs and merchants, but also intellectuals, lawyers, physicians, journalists, clergymen and trade union leaders. These social groups frequently occupy an ambivalent position in between the dominant class and the "masses." As it is usually in their interest to maintain the status quo, they customarily support whoever is in power. In their aspiration to join the local bourgeoisie, middle-level entrepreneurs and merchants are generally dependent on state support, and in principle the intelligentsia has access to leading positions in the public as well as the private sector. Various of them have been regularly co-opted into the political power bloc, and are thus directly confronted with the zero-sum syndrome referred to above. More recently a number of factors such as the acute economic crisis and the growing authoritarianism of the rulers in office, have turned the middle classes into the opponents of the regimes in power (see Sandbrook 1982). Since the state no longer had anything to offer them, in their eyes the ruling elite lost all its legitimacy. One should bear in mind here that a number of these social groups, particularly where professional people are involved, are well organized and can easily mobilize and activate their members to participate in collective actions.

The working class is still relatively small in Africa. As there has not yet been significant industrialization, large numbers of workers are still employed at the mines, on the railroads and on the plantations. Ever since the fifties, working situations have become increasingly stable and many workers have been employed for years, sometimes their entire lives, in the capitalist sector. And yet most of the workers have not yet become completely proletarized: they still have
land rights in the non-capitalist society and often maintain close ties with their region of birth. This is certainly the case in West Africa, although in Southern Africa proletarization has already advanced much further.

Since the seventies, numerous studies have been conducted on the consciousness and actions of African workers (see Sandbrook & Cohen 1975, Freund 1988). A number of authors, such as Arrighi and Saul (1973), held that in effect, workers were "worker-aristocrats," who earned a much higher income than peasants and people employed in the informal sector, and consequently tended to identify with the semi-elite and the elite in society. On empirical and theoretical grounds, this "worker-aristocrat" thesis has been largely refuted (see Waterman 1975, Sandbrook 1982). Some authors referred to the petit bourgeois tendencies within the urban working class: because of the opportunities it provides to earn a higher income, many workers strive to become small producers in the informal sector (see Peace 1979). Moreover, a number of studies demonstrated that urban workers "have developed a populistic consciousness is the sense that they hold a corrupt and authoritarian elite responsible for the widespread inequality in society (see Jeffries 1978, Peace 1979).

The army of workers is small and not yet completely proletarized, but it is not powerless against the rulers. Many workers are concentrated in the cities and employed in strategically important sectors of the economy. They maintain close ties with the lower segments of the urban population. Moreover, they are often organized in trade unions. However, very few of the trade unions in Africa adhere to a radical or revolutionary ideology or praxis. On the contrary, most of them are reformist and try to promote the economic interests of their members within the status quo. They regularly find themselves in conflicts with the regimes in power, which have demanded more and more sacrifices from the workers in the developmental process, and have interpreted justified trade union actions as opposition activities. In a number of African countries, trade unions have been able to organize general strikes that were a severe threat to the people in power and, in some cases, even helped overthrow the government. In contrast to the army, however, trade unions turned out to be too weak to rise to power (cf. Konings 1992).

It is thus no wonder the political elite has tried in any number of ways to keep trade unions under control and co-opt trade union leaders into the hegemonistic alliance. It has not always been successful in this respect. In Zambia, for example, where the miners' trade union promoted the interests of workers in the most important economic sector, the copper mines, the political elite was never able to completely subjugate this trade union to the state. Due to the growing oppression, resistance on the part of trade union members mainly manifested itself in a
wide range of informal actions and sporadic collective actions on the local or regional level (cf. Cohen 1980).

In the case of the informal sector, it is possible to speak of a separate class. In essence it is an extremely heterogeneous social layer in which various strata are represented, varying from small producers with their assistants and apprentices, retail traders, day workers, criminals and parasitic vocational groups such as prostitutes, drug dealers, beggars and thieves, to "the unemployed" or "lumpenproletariat." Since these strata do not constitute classes that can be clearly distinguished, it is difficult for them to develop a common class consciousness, common organizational forms and group solidarity (see Hart 1973, Bromley & Gerry 1979, Sandbrook 1982 and Morice 1987).

The various strata are, however, more organized than is generally assumed, particularly in West Africa. Small producers are often organized in guilds and vocational associations. There are even organizations for prostitutes, thieves and jobless people (see Gutkund 1973), although they are usually weak, local organizations. The most powerful organization is the one for female market vendors, who exercise indirect political power in a number of West African countries by way of their control over the trade in essential consumer goods (see Robertson 1987). In general, the various organizations in the informal sector rarely operate as direct political pressure groups.

A great deal has been written about the political potential of the "lumpenproletariat" (see Cohen & Michael 1991). Some authors, particularly the followers of Fanon, have even attributed it with a revolutionary potential. Most authors have, however, emphasized the ambivalent nature of this social group, and rightly so in our opinion; although this group is frequently critical of the elite, it is often extremely dependent on this same elite for paid employment. One should not lose sight of the fact that under certain circumstances, the mushrooming ranks of unemployed people with a secondary school and even a university education can bring about a radicalization of this social segment. The violent conduct of many jobless people in the course of the struggle for democratization in some African countries is an expression of their great frustration and hopeless prospects.

Since they have no other common organization, many workers in the informal sector view the trade union movement as the mouthpiece for their political grievances (see Jeffries 1978, Peace 1979). The populistic ideology, which is also widespread among workers in the formal sector, also has a large following among workers in the informal sector (see Sandbrook 1982). Many jobless people took part in the general strikes of workers in Ghana and Nigeria, and female market vendors distributed food to the people who were on strike. At recent
demonstrations for greater democratization, there was also often evidence of cooperation between workers in the formal and in the informal sector.

Peasants constitute the large majority of the working population in Africa. There is usually a large extent of differentiation in this respect, ranging from poor peasants to rich large landowners (see Klein 1980). Particularly in eastern and southern Africa, where land was expropriated at an early stage by white colonists, there are large numbers of peasants who have little or no land and can only survive by engaging completely or partially in wage labour for larger landowners and plantations (see Isaacman 1990). A number of peasants, particularly richer farmers, invest in such sidelines as trade, transport and housing construction (see Kitching 1980).

There is ample literature about peasants as the most exploited class in Africa (see Bates 1981, Roberts & Williams 1991). A considerable portion of their surplus is siphoned off to the state. They are discriminated by the state as regards the supply of inputs, credit and agrarian services. In addition, the state often plays an instrumental role in the expropriation of their land by way of land reform laws (see Fisiy 1992a). The dominant classes benefit the most from these developments and engage to increasing degrees in capitalist agricultural production (see Konings 1986). Peasants are only rarely consulted when large-scale development projects are set up in rural areas.

Peasants are often organized in unions and cooperatives. These organizations are, however, often under the strict supervision of the state, and the leaders, usually richer farmers, have close links with the state (see Beckman 1976, Van Cranenbergh 1990). This does not necessarily mean peasants are not able to protest against exploitation and oppression. Although it has only been in a few exceptional cases that they resorted to armed action (see Buijtenhuijs 1991a), on various occasions they engaged in a wide range of formal and informal operations (see Scott 1985).

The state and civil society

From what has been noted above, we can conclude that the political arena has not yet completely crystallized, and is dominated by contradictory elements: vertical links in the form of clientelism and ethnicity side by side with horizontal groupings in the form of social classes, which are in turn often still in statu nascendi. In keeping with whatever the conditions might be, political participants will adopt new stances, sometimes as members of an ethnic group, sometimes as members of a social class or religious group. All things considered, the situation is an extremely
complex one. We shall nonetheless make an effort to summarize the relations between the African state and civil society.

In the first instance, the African state makes the impression of being an authoritarian leviathan, and to a certain degree this is indeed the case. In view of the "zero-sum" nature of the African political situation, the ruling elite will make every effort to maintain control over the state apparatus. As Bayart (1983: 101) observed, "the efforts of this elite to establish its hegemony over the state and society lead to an 'essai de tutelle globale,' and to resistance to autonomous organizations in any form on the part of the politically dominated groups." Thus attempts have been made all over to restrict the freedom of the press and incorporate such organizations as trade unions, women's, youth, and student associations and often even athletic clubs into the state or party system, although these attempts have not been equally successful throughout Africa. It has already been observed that in Zambia, trade unions succeeded in preserving their autonomy vis-à-vis the state (see Simutanyi 1992), whereas in other countries, particularly in English-speaking ones such as Nigeria and Kenya, a relatively free press has continued to exist.

In certain cases, these efforts to gain hegemony over the entire society resulted in harsh dictatorships, but even in the more moderate forms of the African authoritarian state, it still means very little respect for human rights, political freedom and democratic principles. There as well, a system has frequently developed in which political power is concentrated in one person, the President. This was often ideologically backed by a rather deceptive allusion to what is allegedly the African tradition: "Dès le départ, est affirmé un rapport génétique, qui fait du héros-fondateur le géniteur ou père absolu du nouvel ordre des choses (...). L'indépendance conquise, le père du parti devient père de la nation (...) De lui émanent tous les pouvoirs dérivés, toutes les fonctions, toutes les entreprises et oeuvres, bref la nation" ["From the very start, a tie of kinship is asserted that turns the hero-founder into the procreator or all-powerful father of the new order of things (...). Once independence has been won, the father of the party becomes the father of the nation (...). He is the source of all derived power, all posts, all enterprises and works — in short, he is the source of the nation"] (Memel-Fote 1992: 12). Botswana is one of the few exceptions to this omnipresent presidentialism. Although the head of state does have extensive authority in Botswana, his power is not personified and most of the important decisions are collectively made at meetings of the Cabinet (Tordoff 1989: 283).

At the same time, the authoritarian power of the African state is based in part upon appearances. As Bratton (1989a: 410) noted: "The African state is weak by any conventional measure of institutional capacity." The regime usually only has limited material means, and
certainly in countries that are more poorly organized and administered, the state has little or no control over peripheral regions and rural areas in the general. (Zaire is a good example of this. See Davidson 1992, Chapter 8.) This is why some authors rightly refer to the African state as "a lame leviathan."

So we are faced here with an odd dichotomy between a "strong" state and a "weak" one, a contradiction also manifest in the nature of African civil society, as is illustrated by the following comments by Bratton (1989a: 410-411): "In Africa the state projects upwards from its surroundings like a veritable Kilimanjaro, in large part because the open plains of domestic society appear to be thinly populated with alternative institutions. At first glance, African societies seem to possess few intermediate organizations to occupy the political space between the family (broadly defined by affective ties of blood, marriage, residence, clan and ethnicity) and the state (...) [Yet] I argue that political scientists should devote more attention to the associational life that occurs in the political space beyond the state's purview. Far from being stunted in sub-Saharan Africa, it is often vibrant."

Bratton would seem to have been clearly contradicting himself here, and yet his comments do reflect the reality of African civil society. Let us first try to define this term. According to Stephan, civil society is "an arena where manifold social movements ... and civic organizations from all classes ... attempt to constitute themselves in an ensemble of arrangements so that they can express themselves and advance their interests" (quoted in Bratton 1989a: 417). Bayart (1983:99) defined it as "la société par rapport à l'Etat (...) en tant qu'elle est immédiatement aux prises avec l'Etat," ("society in relation to the State (...) insofar as it is immediately in conflict with the State") thus indicating that civil society should not be viewed as a separate arena unlinked to the state, and that there is a dynamic, complex and ambivalent (though not necessarily conflict-ridden) relation between the state and society. Bayart also noted that civil society is not restricted to socially subordinate groups; groups that are socially dominant but excluded from direct political power, such as businessmen and religious leaders, are also part of it. Bayart observed that relations between the state and civil society were not always discordant, and Bratton (1989a) emphasized this as well: certain civil organizations support the state or ruling regime. In her definition, Chazan (1992: 281) touched upon another aspect of civil society: "Civil society, as distinct from society in general — although the two have all too frequently been used synonymously in recent literature — refers to that segment of society that interacts with the state, influences the state, and yet is distinct from the state." (See also Hyden 1989 for a more comprehensive inventory of what civil society entails, practically speaking, on the local level.)
Various authors, particularly those who ventured to draw comparisons between democratization processes in Africa and Eastern Europe, have noted that in Africa, civil societies are not nearly as strongly organized as in Eastern Europe (Mbembe 1990, see also Post 1991 for a more general view). This concurs with the first part of the passage by Bratton quoted above. If one delves a bit deeper into the matter, it appears that civil society in Africa is not all that weak, but its main feature is that essentially it tries to circumvent the state, or at any rate maintain an attitude of "indifference" toward it. This is the case, for example, with the widespread "associations d'originaires" or hometown associations, whose aim it is to promote development in the region the members come from. In a certain sense, these associations thus take upon themselves economic tasks that have been overlooked by the state, but by definition the scope of the associations is also restricted and local (see e.g. Barkan et al. 1991, Lachenmann 1992). The same holds true of the "vigilante" groups that do not focus on economic tasks, but take over administrative and to an even greater extent political tasks from governments that remain in default in this respect (see Hyden 1989).

Other groups, particularly the independent African churches and prophetic movements, which there are thousands of at the moment, are more frequently in the nature of "counter-societies" that make every effort to avoid contact with the state and "politics" in general (see Buijtenhuijs 1976 and 1985, Ranger 1986). In his discourse on the "uncaptured peasantry," Hyden (1980) went even further and held that in general, it was relatively easy for African peasants to withdraw from the state: "The peasants are the owners of the means of production (...) and thus they can always seek security in withdrawal (...) While it is true that in (...) contemporary Africa, peasants have few opportunities to use citizen rights to circumvent bureaucratic power, they do have the freedom to stay outside the state system. To use Hirschman's terminology, they have the option to 'exit' out of the system" (p. 25). In their comments on civil society, Rothchild and Chazan (1988) continued to reason along the same lines as Hyden. Although there has been sharp criticism of Hyden's "exit option" (Geschiere 1984, see also Doornbos 1990 for a summary of the objections to Hyden raised by Cliffe, Kasfir and Williams), in our opinion it should not be simply disregarded, for compared with peasants elsewhere in the Third World, those in Africa do have greater autonomy vis-à-vis the state.

This is what has been referred to by authors who held that in Africa, civil society was weakly constructed. In the words of Mbembe (1990): "Les forces d'indiscipline et d'insubordination prennent des formes totalement différentes de celles qu'elles ont empruntées en Europe de l'Est. Les pratiques qui en découlent se caractérisent par leur souplesse, leur
fluidité. La plupart de ces forces sont faiblement institutionalisées. Très souvent elles demeurent informelles (...) parfois sous des formes chaotiques et disparates (escapade, pratiques de détournement, dérision, dissidences d'inspiration religieuse ...). De telle sorte que le rassemblement des forces africaines d'indocilité en un mouvement social structuré est fort problématique" ["The forces of indiscipline and insubordination take on forms that are completely different from those they have assumed in Eastern Europe. The practices that arise from them are marked by flexibility and adaptability. Most of these forces have a weak institutional basis. Very often, they remain informal (...) sometimes in forms that are chaotic and disparate (misbehaviour, hijackings, mockery, religious dissidence ...), with the result that marshalling African forces of unruliness into a structured social movement is fraught with problems"].

This does not necessarily mean civil society is non-existent in Africa, in fact Bratton feels "it is often vibrant." Various authors such as Pradervent 1989 (in a book significantly entitled "Une Afrique en marche"), Dumont (1991) and Lachenmann (1992) have made it clear that particularly in the rural regions of Africa, it is teeming with social and economic organizations that sometimes work in conjunction with the state and sometimes develop side by side with it. Sometimes, even though these organizations often have a limited horizon and are not active on a national level, they very clearly restrict the power of the state (Bayart 1983: 102-103). What is more, we shall demonstrate that despite efforts on the part of ruling regimes to stifle them, such modern organizations as trade unions, vocational associations and official world-wide churches that are active on the national level, have nonetheless remained in existence and have been able to play an important role in the recent events related to the democratization process. Thus the hegemonic aspirations of ruling elites have only been partially successful.

Conclusions
On the basis of the analyses referred to above, it can be concluded that Africa is not the most ideal breeding ground for the multi-party system, let alone for democratic experiments in the broader sense of the word. This is why it is no wonder so many authors have commented in a pessimistic vein in the course of time on the possibilities for democratization in African countries. "To have expected democracy to flourish would have been historical blindness" Chabal observed in 1986 (p. 5). In the same anthology, Callaghys noted that the political culture in Nigeria "is destructive of democratic norms, or at least not supportive for them" (p. 45). And on the grounds of his disappointing experiences, the chairman of the committee organizing the 1983 national elections in Nigeria lamented that his country was not ready for free and honest elections (quoted in Ibrahim 1991: 132).
More recently, prominent Africanists have expressed their doubts in this connection. "The question of democracy," Bratton wrote in 1989, "hinges on whether national political leaders can be installed and deposed by popular will and held accountable while in office. At the moment this seems too big a question for Africa, too remote a prospect" (1989: 430). And in 1990 Molutsi and Holm, who implemented the Botswana Democracy Project, concluded in turn that "a pluralistic democracy cannot emerge in Botswana and in many parts of Africa except through a period of transition which most probably will be measured in decades" (p. 340).

In judging today's democratization processes, there is thus ample reason to exercise extreme caution. It is, however, equally true that ever since their independence, Botswana, Mauritius, Gambia and Senegal have all been able to maintain a certain extent of democracy, and that fatalism and defeatism do not necessarily lead to the most accurate insight. The events of the past four years have illustrated that in Africa there definitely is an enormous demand for opener, more pluriform types of societies. Holmquist (1989) was consequently right when he reminded us that "democratic forms are rare in Africa primarily because regimes do not allow them. Regimes are arbiters of institutional forms, not the citizenry who have been pushed to the margins of politics. It is regimes and dominant classes who must account for the absence of democratic forms — not society at large" (p. 60).
3.1. ACADEMIC DEBATES ON DEMOCRACY: 1960-1989

*Long-term view on African political history*

After three decades of "developmental thinking" at the national and international level, it can now be concluded that the development policies that ensued have not led to the anticipated result, i.e. that the African continent would become part of the modern world. Moreover, after thirty years of nation-building, what we see in many spots is the severe disintegration of society.

Observations like these have led many social scientists to step back and try to view developments in a long-term historical perspective. Despite their differences, from this position social scientists from each of the two major schools of thought, the modernization theory and the neo-Marxist dependencia theory\(^3\), share several common points of departure: (1) the pre-colonial socio-economic and political structures of Africa were obsolete, non-functional in modern times, and would disappear in time, and (2) the state would have to play a regulating, organizing and propelling role in the race the new African nations were on the verge of entering.

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\(^3\)In this paper, we shall adhere to this simple division of scientific theory into two main schools of thought. Of course there are also numerous sub-schools, and in the course of time there has been widespread cross-fertilization. It is not feasible to do justice to all these variations here. In interpreting the text, it is important however to bear in mind that no absolute dividing lines can be drawn. (See for a more comprehensive overview: Doornbos 1989, Mamdani et. al. 1988, Chazan 1988, Introduction.)
at the start of the sixties (Doornbos 1990: 182, see also Mamdani et al. 1988, Chazan 1988). At the moment, both these points of departure are subject to criticism.

(1) In the long-term view on African political history, the colonial and post-colonial era are seen as a relatively short period, during which traditional African structures have certainly not disappeared. This view emphasizes the large extent to which traditional structures inform present-day reality. Without insight into these structures, the contemporary situation can not be comprehended (Bayart 1991b: 53).

(2) The academic and political elites were so involved in disputes with each other about the role of the state — on a national as well as international scale, and only in retrospect has the extent become clear to which these polemics were part of the Cold War — that they totally disregarded the population. Today's widespread focus on civil society is a general as well as a critical reaction to this shortcoming.

It is in this theoretical context, in which the population is overlooked and African unity denied, that — despite lip service to democracy (Mamdani 1992: 24) — the academic discussion on democracy has led an essentially rudimentary existence for the past three decades. A retrospective examination of the democracy debate is nonetheless called for if we are to answer the following question: "How do we Africans prevent a repeat performance of the democratic pantomimes without democratic content that were characteristic of so many African countries in the 'independence decade'?" (Imam 1991: 5).

*Origins of the democratization debate in independence movements*

The democratization debate has its roots in the independence movements. It has been emphasized by numerous authors how instrumental a role the democratic ideal played in the independence struggle as a reaction to the extremely authoritarian nature of colonial regimes (Riley 1991: 3): "It is argued that one of the most inspiring ideals of the independence movement was democracy" (Anyang' Nyong'o 1992:2).

Here again, of course attention has been focused on the question:"What is democracy in the African context?" It was very tempting to idealize pre-colonial Africa and depict traditional African political culture as mainly egalitarian and democratic. African models for democracy were sought. L.S. Senghor referred for example to the palaver, where village elders did not make any decision until consensus was reached after lengthy consultations (Riley 1991: 3).
On the other hand, independence movements were confronted with demands made by French and English colonizers that a parliamentary democracy, following the Gaullist and Westminster model respectively, be instituted as a prerequisite for independence (Rijnierse 1992: 9). And yet to a certain extent, the upper ranks of the independence movements appeared to be willing to accept Western concepts of a multi-party democracy. The Zambian independence movement led by Kenneth Kuanda, for example, made every effort to become a "responsible" movement that colonial rulers would be able to negotiate with about the transfer of power (Baylies an Sefel 1992: 78). In the first instance, this acceptance of Western concepts was dominant, as is evident from the predominantly Western-style constitutions of the new African states and the general introduction of the multi-party system.

The failure of the Westminster / Elysée models
Despite the call for democracy from the independence movements, which largely constituted the basis for the parties that came into office after independence, and despite the introduction of a multi-party system fashioned after the British or French model, the new democracies barely acquired any true contents. Why did the Westminster / Elysée models fail?

In their efforts to answer this question, various authors have referred to (1) the legacy of the colonial state, (2) the function the African state fulfils in the African context, and (3) the role of the independence movement (see Munslow 1983).

(1) The colonial state was authoritarian and hierarchic by nature. The British in particular tapped into existing native authoritarian socio-political structures in order to be able to exert power via 'indirect rule.' Neither the indirect rule of the British nor the direct rule of the French gave the more democratic African forms of government much of a chance to survive or develop (Diamond 1988: 1-29). It was not until the last stage of colonial rule that the conviction spread that the introduction of a more democratic form of government would be desirable. The length of time that remained to consolidate the democratic institutions was too short (Cleaver 1992: 8).

The authoritarian nature of the colonial state had a direct effect on the new African states. "Given that the post-colonial state was the inheritor of the colonial entity's political, economic and social framework of rule, then it was not surprising that it would attempt to govern in the same way" (Haynes 1992: 12).

Moreover, when political parties were formed at the end of the colonial period, the colonial rulers took careful precautions to make sure they were not firmly rooted in
social organizations. In that case, demands for economic and social equality would have come to constitute a threat to the Western economic interests, and to the interests of the Western-educated African elites that had since emerged and collaborated with the colonial rulers. By severing the ties between political and social movements, the political parties developed into state parties (Mamdani 1992: 2-3, 20).

(2) In general, no class had developed with an independent economic basis. This means there was no group that could exert effective control over the state. Thus the state was essentially a haven where one could do as one wished with impunity (Clapham 1992: 3, Baylies and Seftel 1992: 77).

What is more, working for the state usually represented the only opportunity for social mobility and prosperity. Competition was thus so great that the multi-party system could no longer function effectively (Baylies and Seftel 1992: 77-78, see also section II, the zero-sum syndrome).

(3) The new political parties were usually rooted in the independence movements (Rijnierse 1992: 9-11). They were mass parties that, in a sense, constituted one and the same entity, especially since they had one common goal: independence. The struggle for independence had led to so much prestige that in most cases, these parties got the large majority of votes at the first elections (Baylies and Seftel 1992, 78). These sweeping victories were mainly thanks to the protest votes against colonialism, and not to the votes in favour of any specific platforms. Once the common goal had been attained, a great deal of dissension ensued about the political line to be followed.

Elections thus amounted to a consolidation of the power of the people who had led the struggle for independence. They often had a following within certain ethnic groups. This did not produce in any sense a fair division of power (Clapham 1992: 4). Since the large majority of votes all went to one party, in effect there was a single-party state, making it possible throughout the following years to easily eliminate opposition parties (Baylies and Seftel 1992: 78).

An essential point cited by Mamdani in this connection was that the point of departure for colonial reforms in the period after World War Two was a limited interpretation of democracy, purely defined in terms of political rights, and not in terms of civil rights and socio-economic rights. He cautioned against the tendency in today's debates to once again interpret democracy in the narrow sense of the word, viewing it as the equivalent of the multi-party system, in which case there is a great risk that once again, no essential changes will occur (Mamdani 1992: 3).
The legitimacy of the single-party state

Virtually all the nations of Africa developed into single-party states in the course of the first ten years after they gained independence. It has been noted above what obstacles there were to the effective functioning of a multi-party system. These problems led to fundamental criticism of this form of government.

It is important to draw a distinction between the arguments used by politicians and the theories formulated by social scientists. The role of the politicians at the time is evident. It was in their interest to undermine the democracy in order to consolidate their own position. At the moment, however, there is also serious criticism of the role many social scientists played in the sixties and seventies in legitimizing the single-party state. Marie Louise Eteki Otabela is of the opinion that social scientists of the modernization as well as the dependencia school not only camouflaged the totalitarian nature of the African state, but even reinforced it by supporting post-colonial regimes. Both of these schools viewed the state as the only possible vehicle for development, and were therefore willing to overlook many of its shortcomings (Tadesse 1992: 13). Another example is the criticism Mamdani (1992:23) expressed of social scientists whose "sense of reality" made them feel that in the African context, democracy was not (yet) feasible (see for example Bienen & Herbst 1991: 28).

The following criticism of the multi-party system was formulated: (1) The Western state models were externally imposed and were not in keeping with African reality. (2) A multi-party system causes instability and is therefore an obstacle to rapid development (see Healey & Robinson 1992: 127). This in turn means that first a certain extent of economic development is called for before political participation can ensue. (3) The multi-party system hinders the process of nation-building. (4) As long as the nations of Africa are economically dependent on Western countries, democracy is not feasible.

(1) In the first instance, it was the political leaders who defended the concept of the single-party democracy (Anyang' Nyong'o 1992: 2-3). With an allusion to the consensus model in traditional African forms of democracy, it was stated that a single-party system was a more appropriate form of government than a multi-party system. In the framework of resistance to the continuing influence of former colonizers and in the pursuit of an alternative, this argument was also used to defend the model of the socialist
single-party state⁴ (Healey & Robinson 1992: 127). Some social scientists later expressed similar criticism.

An argument emphasizing the unique identity of the African society was formulated by Julius Nyerere from Tanzania as follows: "... in contemporary Africa (the 1960s) (...) as in the traditional egalitarian societies," he felt there were "not yet any real class conflicts, so that the multi-party system had no reason to exist" (Buijtenhuijs 1991b: 321).

Another example of this was the comment by Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia. When Kaunda officially adopted the single-party system in 1972, he was very clear about his motivation for rejecting the multi-party system: "The One-Party Democracy will help us to weed out political opportunists (...). It has been fashionable in the past for any Party member to threaten to quit, or indeed quit, the Party to join the opposition; [It has been fashionable in the past] for any civil servant to threaten to quit the Party (...) [or] for any businessman denied a licence or a loan on perfectly legal grounds to run to the opposition in the hope that, if they formed the Government, he would be favoured. This era, in which the politics of patronage has been a feature of life, is gone" (Gertzel et al. 1984: 17).

And yet according to Anyang' Nyong'o, it is probably historically inaccurate to conclude that the first advocates of the single-party system had a hidden agenda from the start. The explanation should be sought instead in the historical concurrence of such circumstances as the failure of the multi-party system, the continuing influence of the former colonial powers, the dependence on the outside world, and the internal African socio-economic structures (Anyang' Nyong'o 1992: 2-3). Anyang' Nyong'o thus indicated that under the given circumstances, the criticism was well founded. It was not until a later stage in history that the arguments in favour of a single-party state were to be misused in the political rhetoric.

Moreover, at a later stage the Western version of democracy was criticized in academic circles because the social conditions for its proper functioning, such as a certain extent of urbanization, a good educational level and industrialization, were not felt to be in evidence (Healey & Robinson 1992: 126).

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The argument that unity is a necessary prerequisite for rapid development has been used by politicians and social scientists alike. In this connection, Peter Anyang' Nyong'o quoted the following statement by political leader Tom Mboya of Kenya: "An argument is therefore advanced for the single-party system headed by a strong national leader not only to safeguard unity in the face of adverse threats to independence (East-West rivalries, personality clashes etc.) but also to ascertain the discipline necessary for rapid development" (Anyang' Nyong'o 1992: 9). Tom Mboya's line of reasoning is one more illustration of how the transition from mass mobilization for the struggle for independence to a single-party system in the independent state was taken for granted as a very logical step.

A clear example of the reasoning of social scientists was given by S. Huntington in 1968: "Who says development, therefore, must say less political participation in developing societies, as participation leads inevitably to political decay under such conditions." This led to the conclusion that "(d)emocracy, in other words, is somehow antithetical to development in such societies, hence the concern in Africa was for the State to be judged by its development performance and not by the niceties of sustaining a democratic society" (Anyang' Nyong'o 1991: 3).

Voho Sahi put more of an emphasis on the ubiquitously adhered to growth-oriented development strategy, whereby democracy was no more than a luxury, which also led many social scientists to adopt the "quiet, we're developing" approach (Stetter 1990: 7) This attitude was particularly in evidence among modernization theorists (see also Doornbos 1989: 182, Anyang' Nyong'o 1991: 2, Kühne 1992: 10, I. Gendzier 1985).

The attention focused on the process of nation-building contributed in various ways to the transition to a single-party state. One of the arguments was that a multi-party state would inevitably lead to the emergence of ethnic, regional or religious parties. At a moment when joint efforts were needed to address the common problems, this would divide the political scene into improper groups. It would hinder the process of nation-building (Buijtenhuys 1991b: 321). (See also Tetzlaff 1991a: 26-28, Anyang' Nyong'o 1992:2, Chazan 1988: 13).

Moreover, the one-sided emphasis on nation-building turned civil organization and every manifestation of ethnicity into something suspicious (Doornbos 1989: 193). Bayart put it in even sharper words when he noted that the party was assigned the function of preventing "any form of autonomous organization within civil society"
(Bayart 1986: 110). Stetter summarized Voho Sahi as follows: "In the name of national unity and economic development, the authority to exercise government power was transferred to a single party which, with an 'enlightened leader' or a 'father of the nation', degraded the majority of citizens to the status of accomplices and underlings without any opportunity for political and economic participation" (Stetter 1990: 7).

At a later stage, the dependencia theorists came to the conclusion that democracy would not be feasible at all in the perpetually dependent position of peripheral nations (such as the African ones) vis-à-vis the Western countries.

Many of the points referred to above have been brought up again in the present-day debates. However, there have been far-reaching changes in the economic and political context. In addition, the experiences of the past three decades are not apt to give rise to optimism. On the grounds of these experiences, in the present-day debates a different significance will have to be attributed to these arguments.

Transition from a single-party state to a no-party state
In the course of time, increasingly restricted notions of democracy have come to be adhered to, and to a growing extent they have proved to be a rationalization for various forms of "presidential authoritarianism." The party as a forum for discussions faded into the background, and repression escalated. (See for a general analysis of this process: Wallerstein 1966). In actual fact, there was consequently no longer a party that could be legitimated in terms of the arguments referred to above. The state form that thus gradually emerged in Africa can be referred to as the "no-party state".

It has been noted above why political rhetoric adhered to the democratic ideal, and why it led to "democratic pantomimes". A quote from Chihana, a trade union leader and at the moment the most important opponent of President Banda of Malawi, once again illustrates the pain of bygone ideals: "The one-party state in Malawi is the outcome of the misfortunes of what was the nationalist movement (...) greed for power, narrow personal interest and personal aggrandizement. Basic freedoms have been muzzled in the name of nation-building and national unity" (Venter 1992: 20). (See for a more detailed description of this process in Benin: Allen 1992: 42-45, and more in general: Anyang' Nyong'o 1992: 11-12.)
Arguments in defence of democracy
Of course the growing repression and stagnating development did not escape the notice of the entire academic community. In the seventies, social scientists grew concerned about the dominance of the African state and its exploitation of its citizens. Concepts of the newly emerging state class were formulated (see for the course of this discussion Doornbos 1989: 183-186).

Within these debates, attention remained focused upon the state. It was not until the eighties that more attention came to be concentrated upon civil society. Yet as early as 1981, Bayart formulated the following fundamental criticism of the one-sided attention focused upon the state in academic analyses (Bayart, J.-F., 1981, 'Le politique par le bas en Afrique noire. Questions de methode,' Politique africaine, no. 1, pp. 53-82). In the following years, he proceeded to analyse African civil society (Bayart 1983, 1986). In 1983, Richard Sklar was the first to argue in defence of a kind of democracy in Africa that would be liberal, social, participatory and "consciational." In later years, he further elaborated upon this point (Sklar 1986, 1987). In 1987, Anyang' Nyong'o joined him in this respect.

Despite growing dissatisfaction with the functioning of the African state, very few people had anticipated — let alone foreseen — the astoundingly rapid developments that have taken place ever since President Kerekou agreed to organize a national conference in 1989. The extent to which these developments appealed to the public imagination is evident from the enormous numbers of articles since published about the recent developments.

3.2. Present-day debates

Ideological changes
Under the influence of recent political developments, people outside as well as inside Africa now attach far greater importance than a few years ago to democratic institutions as a way to enlarge the participation of the population and the legitimacy of the regimes. Very few authoritarian leaders can still rely on the support of "intellectuals." In assessing this change, one should bear in mind that for years, many of Africa's intellectuals were subjected to repression for criticizing the arbitrary and dictatorial regimes (Healey & Robinson 1992: 130).

The sudden interest in democracy in the academic debates that have been and still are held outside of Africa has turned many an observer to cynicism: "There has been a dramatic turnaround in Africanist perspectives recently. The same circles who used to argue only
yesterday that democracy was at best a developmental luxury, today uphold democracy as a developmental necessity! But the consensus in these circles is more apparent than real: though they employ a common vocabulary — democracy as accountability — there is no clear agreement amongst developmentalists as to what this single catchword signifies" (Mamdani 1992: 25, see also Healey & Robinson 1992: 130 and Ake 1990b).

**Democracy a Western concept?**

The fundamental question of whether democracy is a universal or a purely Western concept has once again emerged, certainly now that democratization is being stipulated by donor nations as a prerequisite for the continuation of financial aid and for the granting of loans.

In an effort to arrive at a good definition of democracy, in the first instance Comi Toulabor took "the people" as his point of departure: "pouvoir du peuple, exercé par le peuple," ["the power of the people, exercised by the people"] and observed that he had thus returned to the semantic meaning of the word democracy (Toulabor 1991: 58). One might also go back to the definition President Abraham Lincoln gave on 19 November, 1863: "Government of the people, by the people, for the people." By taking this as a point of departure, a distinction can be drawn between the value of the concept of democracy and its practical application in a given context (Rijnierse 1992: 8).

Mamdani drew a comparable distinction when he wrote about the concept of human rights. Although it is true that the "rights of man" were first formulated and presented as a political item during the Enlightenment and the French and American Revolutions, the West is not the only place where people are aware of human dignity and of oppression. In the course of history, however, Western countries have developed a political consciousness, a legislative framework and a jurisprudence as regards human rights (Mamdani 1990b: 359-360).

This line of reasoning also pertains to the concept of "democracy," which is closely linked to "human rights." Various authors have stressed the universality of democracy, and democracy as an expression of human dignity. In the words of Meyns (1992: 5): "Indeed, democracy has come to be accepted as a universal value." As Bade Onimode (1992: 6) observed: "The supremacy of the human person and the dignity of creation must imply that all social systems that dehumanize are morally and politically unacceptable." And in the words of Anyang' Nyong'o: "Political liberties need not be sacrificed in return for economic benefits. In other words, authoritarianism (...) is ultimately unjust (1987: 20, see also Post 1991: 36, Sall & Sallah 1992)."
In so far as the concepts of "human rights" and "democracy" as such have been imported from the West, one can counter by observing that the authoritarian state is similarly a Western product, which was imported to Africa in the colonial period (Bayart 1986: 110). In the same book, Bayart noted that such concepts as human rights and democracy were integral elements in the African political philosophy (Bayart 1986: 110). This is in keeping with his later statement that the contemporary African state is the result of an intertwining of Western and African elements ("Il [the state] ne peut pas être tenu pour une simple structure exogène" ["The state cannot be regarded as a simple exogenous structure"] (Bayart 1989: 27)).

Nowadays the arguments referred to above lead many people to feel that democracy is a desirable goal in itself, which requires no further legitimation (Ake 1990a, Holmquist 1989). Mkandawire supports the same standpoint: "Democracy is good in itself." This is where the discussion goes on where it left off before 1989, because Mafeje and Mandaza can not conceal their doubts as to how realistic this "absolutist" standpoint might be. With Gramsci in mind, Mkandawire defends his standpoint as follows: "Too much political realism often leads to the assertion that the man of the State must work only within the spheres of 'effective reality' and not interest himself in 'what should be,' but only in 'what is.' This would mean that the man of the State must have no perspectives longer than his own nose (...) 'What should be' is therefore concrete, and moreover is the only realistic and dynamic interpretation of reality" (Mkandawire 1991a: 11).

Now that wide academic circles acknowledge the desirability of democratic development and the question is no longer whether democracy should be instituted, but how (Kühne 1992: 25), the struggle to effectuate it can begin.

Definitions of democracy
Definitions of democracy vary from extremely narrow to extremely wide interpretations, from institutional changes to socio-economic emancipation and the development of a democratic culture. As has been noted above, yesterday's academic debates on democracy did not take place in a political vacuum. In the first instance, the parties in the debate worked from the widest definitions. Affected by reality's day-to-day developments, in the course of time they were chipped away bit by bit. Nor are today's debates taking place under laboratory conditions. The trick is to explore and discover this political field of force, which also encompasses social scientists.

From the point of view that democratization is a lengthy process that minimal conditions have to be created for, a limited definition might be opted for. This definition might be chosen
by policy-makers for practical reasons, because they "have to start somewhere". This does not necessarily mean these policy-makers have completed their task as soon as these minimum demands have been met with. A narrow definition of this kind can also be selected because, unlike such intangibles as "promoting a democratic culture", holding elections or respecting human rights are tangible matters that can be verified. Out of necessity, nowadays this interpretation is used in international political negotiations, where decisions about granting credit are linked to democratization demands. But in the course of the very same negotiations, this narrow interpretation can be used by African leaders to legitimate a certain regime, even if as they speak, the democratization process is impeded in every possible way (Founou-Tchuigonua 1992: 4).

Democracy can be defined either in behaviourist terms (true competition and participation and effective civil freedom) or in structural terms (election systems, political institutions appropriate to a multi-party system and independent legislation and jurisprudence) (Bratton 1989a: 421). The tangible features in keeping with the structural approach are a prerequisite for the emergence of a truly comprehensive democracy. This is why the two approaches often overlap in the analyses, which can make matters extremely confusing.

Riley, for example, used Sandbrook's definition of democracy, which illustrated a structural approach: "A political system characterized by regular and free elections in which politicians organized into parties compete to form the government, by the right of virtually all adult citizens to vote, and by guarantees of a range of familiar political and civil rights" (Riley 1991: 7).

Another way to draw distinctions between various definitions is by way of the stages in the democratization process. The process of political liberalization, as distinct from democratization, can be defined as: "(...) one in which the fear of repression is relaxed and there are constitutional guarantees of a range of political freedoms (especially the recognition of the right of opposition groupings to function and to express dissent) in which there is greater independence for legislative assemblies where they still exist, and freedom of the press" (Healey & Robinson 1992: 151).

A process of growing political accountability was viewed by Healey & Robinson as "a move towards more inclusive politics, even within a single-party system, through the introduction of measures to extend societal participation in political decision-making (Healey & Robinson 1992: 151, see also p. 128)."
Lastly, the democratization process "involves the introduction of universal suffrage and genuine political competition with free and fair elections to decide who will take power" (Healey & Robinson 1992: 151).

The importance of the distinctions between the three terms cited above is also evident from Lemarchand's interpretation: "For, if by 'liberalization' is meant the dismantling of dictatorships, there are good reasons to agree with Bratton and Van de Walle (1992) that 'liberalization can occur without democratization, and (that) in some parts of Africa the disintegration of authoritarian rule may be followed by anarchy or intensified corruption'" (Lemarchand 1992: 178).

The definitions of democracy that come from all these different ways of addressing political developments do not necessarily move on the scale from the basic value of democracy at one end to the "tangible" definitions, concrete in form and contents, at the other. The fundamental definitions are often highly abstract, and the contents of the more concrete ones are often (too) limited.

In the first instance, since he assumed that at any rate there was general consensus about it, Toulabor worked from a fundamental definition: "La démocratie peut être appréhendée comme un système politique dans lequel les citoyens disposent de mécanismes formels et/ou informels leur permettant de demander des comptes à des gouvernants préalablement choisis par eux" ["Democracy can be perceived as a political system in which citizens possess formal and/or informal mechanisms allowing them to call to account the rulers they have previously chosen"] (Toulabor 1991: 58). This definition is still very close to the "basic value" referred to above, whereby the governed occupy a central role, as does the concept of control. Later in his argumentation, he became more concrete: in order for there to be control, it is necessary for people to have a right to express themselves. This assumes the existence of a strong civil society and a constitutional state that guarantees the individual civil rights. Toulabor also viewed the multi-party system and regular elections ("nerfs d'acier de la démocratie" ["democracy's nerves of steel"] as prerequisites for a democracy, but "la démocratie n'est pas réductible au multipartisme" ["democracy cannot simply be defined as the multi-party system"] (Toulabor 1991).

Toulabor had a wide conception of democracy, although he did not define it, as was evident from the fact that he did not want to call today's transition situation in many of the nations of Africa a transition to democracy but, more cautiously, to more pluralistic systems. Chazan agreed with him in that: "(...) the recent wave of political liberalization should not be confused with democratization" (Chazan 1992: 301).
Nyangabayaki Bazaar used a wider definition of democracy, in which he explicitly drew a link between democracy and economics: "Democracy should not be understood in the narrow sense of elections held every four or five years. Democracy means access to resources. This means that Africa would need to carry out institutional reforms, in particular land redistribution, democratization of marketing institutions and the creation of political institutions that would give popular masses the power to make their states responsible." However, he also emphasized that at the moment, the most important element in democracy is "the right to hire and fire their leaders" (Stetter 1990: 17).

Like Toulabor, in the first instance Imam also worked from a fundamental definition of democracy: "(...) people's right to participate fully in the discussions and decisions on issues that affect them and take control of their own lives." He later tried to put the wider interpretation into words as well: "(...) democracy must include the right of people to live their own aspirations and programmes, not only in political life, but also in economic, cultural, religious and other aspects of life. In other words, democracy includes ending the crisscrossing networks of oppression (...), exploitation (...), and discrimination (...)]" (Imam 1991: 5).

The definitions referred to above led to the following points of discussion, which are at the core of the present-day debates:

- The state and civil society
- The function of the multi-party system in the democratization process
- Good governance
- Democracy and jurisprudence
- Democracy and development

The state and civil society

Depending on the assumptions one makes as to the nature of society, the role of the state and the relation between the state and civil society can be addressed in a number of fashions. Taking Keane (1988a) as his point of departure, Meyns (1992: 9-10) examined the normative perspectives of three of the classical political theory authors. In this theoretical context, today's political developments can be viewed in an extremely clear perspective.

Hobbes worked from the premiss that by nature, society is in a state of perpetual warfare. It is the task of the state to impose order upon this violent competition among individuals. Keane saw Hobbes' position as the establishment of order "through the near-total subjection of individuals to unlimited power" (Keane 1988a: 37).
Paine formulated a view that was virtually the opposite. Keane described Paine's position as "the minimal state." Here "the state is deemed a necessary evil and natural society an unqualified good" (Keane 1988a: 42).

Locke presented an alternative perspective in which, according to Keane, he sought an equilibrium between the unlimited power of the state and individual rights. Here the idea of the constitutional state came to the fore (Keane 1988a: 39). Like Hobbes, Locke saw it as the responsibility of the state to settle conflicts in society. The state did not occupy a position opposite to that of society, but was viewed as its complement. "The institutionalization of the rule of law and its application to all alike gives greater weight to the basic rights of individuals and creates a new balance between state and society" (Meyns 1992: 10).

The debates on civil society that will be described in section V can be interpreted within this theoretical framework. The authoritarian state can be seen as the practical consequence of the Hobbesian image of man and society. As is evident from the one-sided attention that has been focused for the past thirty years on the role of the state in the development process, social scientists and politicians do not expect much good to come of civil society. In contemporary reactions to the state's excesses and its exercise of unlimited power, more than ever a great deal of value is now attributed to civil society and every effort is made to reduce the role of the state to a minimum. This idea is mainly expressed in the liberal theory, and manifests itself in the policies of the IMF and the World Bank. Meyns cautioned against tipping the scale, and propagated "the golden mean" formulated by Locke (Meyns 1992: 11, see for example also Killick 1989: A Reaction Too Far). Putting less of an emphasis on the harmonious nature of civil society is also a sign, as will become clear in section V, that social scientists are cautioning against a model like Paine's, in which the role of the state is reduced to a minimum and the potential of civil society is idealized.

**Multi-party systems and democracy**

- The multi-party system as basic requirement
  It is widely believed that although a multi-party system is a basic requirement if a democracy is to be built up, in itself it is not enough. Ben Yahmed illustrated this point as follows: "Le multipartisme n'est pas la démocratie, tant s'en faut. Il est à la démocratie ce que le sel est à la cuisine: un ingrédient nécessaire et dont, au surplus, il est facile d'abuser" ("The multi-party system is not democracy, far from it. It is to democracy what salt is to cooking: a necessary ingredient
and one that, in excess, is easy to misuse"") (Ben Yahmed 1990: 5, see also Toulabor 1991: 59, Imam 1991: 5).

- Multi-party system no guarantee for democracy
  In an article on Gabon, M'Ba demonstrated that the multi-party system did indeed leave ample room for manipulation and consequently should not be viewed as synonymous with democracy (M'Ba 1991). The same holds true for Cameroon: "This debate on democracy assumes that pluralism will produce greater accountability and consequently lead to the emergence of a democratic system (...). In the Cameroonian context, the discourse has become purely normative (...). The December 1990 Parliamentary session (...) introduced legislative reforms on the freedom of political association which were expected to set the pace for multi-party politics. However, the laws were so laden with bureaucratic controls and authorizations, so much so that one wondered whether this was not simply a 'bureaucratically imposed democracy'" (Fisiy 1992b: 1).

  Mamdani cautioned that, despite numerous examples of what can not be interpreted as anything but outright fraud and manipulation, the limited notion of democracy as a multi-party system was still widely adhered to among liberal social scientists. He cited Sklar (1987) as an example (Mamdani 1992: 25). For the rest, the notion of the multi-party as a basic requirement for further democratization was not refuted by Mamdani.

  Healey & Robinson, however, even doubted the validity of this notion. After presenting an overview of recent political developments in Africa, they concluded that counting the countries that had adopted the multi-party system did not reveal much about the extent of democratization on the African continent. They felt it is very possible that a single-party system might continue to exist in any number of countries, but with a more liberal organization of the party, or with populist features (Healey & Robinson 1992: 136).

  This led Healey & Robinson to the following conclusion: "It is possible that a single-party system with scope for open debate and representation of minority interests may actually be more democratic than a multi-party system where there is minimal public consultation and accountability" (1992). In their "realistic" assessment of the present-day situation, they were backed by Anyang' Nyong'o, who noted that "(...) in the absence of a political culture of participation and accountability, multi-party democracy is likely to remain confined to competition among the political elite to the exclusion of the masses. Enfranchisement does not necessarily lead to empowerment, since universal suffrage does not guarantee access to political decision-making" (Anyang' Nyong'o 1988: 74).
• Multi-party system as legitimation
Some authors went even further and noted that in various countries, the present transition to a multi-party system is nothing more than a cosmetic change to legitimize the existing regimes (Ellis 1991): "Les expériences ivoiriennes et gabonaises sont les témoignes éloquents d’une démocratisation qui n’a servi qu’à relégitimer les régimes d’Houphouët Bogny et Bongo" ["Events in the Ivory Coast and Gabon testify all too clearly to a form of democratization that has served only to relegate the regimes of Houphouët-Boigny and Bongo"] (Niandou Souley 1991: 263). The authorities need legitimacy internally to placate unrest, and externally to get foreign credit.

Good governance
The terms "good governance" and "good government" are often used interchangeably. As far as we know, the definitions of these terms in the literature do not differ in any essential way. In this paper we prefer the term "good governance", since it is the one most widely used in the literature.

One of the reasons for the ample political attention suddenly focused upon good governance has been the emphasis placed on it by the IMF and the World Bank. According to Mahmood Mamdani, the IMF's and the World Bank's interpretation of what good governance entails is a limited one. "An influential interpretation of 'accountability' as a necessary ingredient for 'good governance' has been put forth by the World Bank. But the accountability the Bank speaks of is limited to an anti-corruption drive; its terms of reference are for accountants and managers. Its concern is with efficient management, not with self-management; neither the Bank nor any of the architects of 'Structural Adjustment' ever think of suggesting that African leaders be accountable to their peoples not just for the funds they receive and spend but also for the policies they implement!" (Mamdani 1992: 25, see also Mamdani 1991: 15 and Mkandawire 1991b and 1992: 9). In this line of reasoning, Mkandawire (1992: 19) made the following observation: "The political conclusion of this perspective is that good governance in the poor countries would demand freeing of the state from the demands of different domestic groups or where this is not possible, dramatically reducing its role in the economy."

It is clear from what has been noted above about the multi-party system that theories are not always applicable to the actuality of everyday practice. The pursuit of some way out of this impasse is often the aim of academic debates in this field. One potential solution would seem to be to shift the focus from the multiparty system to the concept of "good governance". The multi-party system would also seem to be no more than an arena for the struggle among elites for
access to the state's sources of revenues (such as import taxes and donor funds). So in itself, the struggle for the multi-party system does not seem to have much of a point.

As early as 1986, Chabal tried to bring the concepts of "accountability, representation and good governance" back into the discussion on contemporary African politics. In these efforts, he thus anticipated the developments that are taking place today. In his contribution to Chabal's book, Dunn explained why he felt these values were barely in evidence in Africa: "What particularly marks Africa out amongst the areas of the modern world is not the turpitude or clumsiness of its rulers. It is the combination of its historical economic weakness (and its consequently painful susceptibility to misgovernment within the modern international political economy) with the comparatively weak institutionalization of its civil society at the level of the territorial state" (Dunn 1986: 160).

In 1986, Dunn described good government as follows: "Good government is, of course, to be interpreted not in terms of the intentions of the rulers, which tend (...) to be excellent in most societies at most times, but rather in terms of the consequences of their rule for those over whom they rule" (Dunn 1986: 161). And in the same volume, he later commented: "It implies (...) a high level of organizational effectiveness; but it certainly does not imply the choice of a particular ideological model of state organization. (...) In principle, heavily repressive regimes may on occasion exemplify good government. (...) The presence or absence of effectively guaranteed civil and political liberties does not in itself ensure the prevalence of good or bad government. But any set of repressive practices (...) is in itself a direct contribution to human suffering" Dunn 1986: 169).

Dunn thus concluded that "good governance" in the sense of organizational effectiveness was also feasible under repressive regimes. In today's debates, where an outspoken preference for a democratic regime is no longer suspicious, this possibility is excluded, as is clear from the following remark by Kühn von Burgsdorff: 'the demand for 'good governance' is essentially concerned with respect for civil rights, political accountability and public transparency" (1992: 61).

Influenced by the renewed focus on "good governance", in 1992 Etienne Le Roy made a new effort to achieve greater clarity as regards this concept. Le Roy felt the concept of "good governance" was applicable to all public organizations, and not exclusively to the state. In his opinion, it includes the following aspects. A) The organization has to take complete responsibility for the tasks assigned to an organ of this kind. B) The organization has to stipulate and execute its own rules and regulations. C) Supervision is required to ensure that the stipulated aims are achieved. D) Conditions have to be created to make it possible to reach these
aims. E) All the relations that emerge from these activities have to be maintained in terms of rights and obligations (Le Roy 1992b: 298).

After this general description, Le Roy referred to the definition of good governance formulated by Robert Charlick (1991), which is applicable to authoritarian and democratic regimes alike: "Il conçoit la governance comme la gestion impartiale et transparente des affaires publiques par l'intermédiaire de la production d'un ensemble de règles acceptées comme constituant une autorité légitimée en vue de promouvoir et de renforcer les valeurs sociales partagées par les individus et les groupes" ["He conceives of governance as the impartial and transparent management of public affairs by means of the creation of a set of rules accepted as constituting a legitimated authority for the purpose of promoting and reinforcing social values shared by individuals and groups"] (Le Roy 1992b: 299). This definition refers to a legitimate authority. Le Roy distilled the following six factors from Charlick's definition (Le Roy 1992b: 299-300):

1. legitimacy of authority
2. public responsiveness
3. public accountability
4. tolerance of other actors with a public character
5. information openness
6. public management effectiveness.

Without any further elaboration, Le Roy noted in this connection that an approach of this kind goes much further than the already "classical" views of the World Bank or American or European politicians. He unfortunately failed to explain why he felt that way. In addition, he observed that Charlick does not associate the concept of good governance with democracy. This is not, he felt, because good governance does not bear any relation to the multi-party system, free elections and constitutional procedures for replacing the people in power, but because the notion of good governance is of a different nature, sometimes as regards the legal system, sometimes as regards ethics (Le Roy 1992b: 300).

In this connection, he explicitly remarked that "... it is unclear that the elements of that environment require specific democratic institutions and procedures historically associated with European and North American political development to achieve success in the medium term, or even to be sustainable" (Le Roy 1992b: 301). However, according to Charlick, in a situation of good governance the important thing is not only to organize public affairs in one way or another. It is important to organize them in a specific manner based upon a certain legitimacy.

This confronted Le Roy with the question of how a legitimate public administration could be set up in the African context, and he referred to the cultural dimension of good
governance. He quoted Denis Martin (1991) as follows: "it is a function of the 'ensemble of ideas' constituting codes through which general orientations of an ethical nature are related to authority and institutions: Max Weber's Wirtschaftslehik ..." (Le Roy 1992: 302).

In conclusion, it can be noted that in abstract terms, as in the case of the above-mentioned "basic values" of democracy, there is some clarity as to the definition of good governance: It pertains to the legitimate — in the political theory sense of the word — exercise of power, and it means taking full responsibility for the execution of the tasks assigned to the organization in question. However, as regards the concrete interpretation of good governance in the African context, a great deal of thinking remains to be done, and the required experience remains to be acquired.

**Democracy and jurisprudence**

As has been demonstrated above, legitimacy is essential to good governance. The concept of legitimacy basically pertains to jurisprudence and power (Healey & Robinson 1992: 165). Legitimacy can be defined in two ways. In a general sense, something is legitimate if it is "lawful, proper, regular" (Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English). In political science literature, it pertains to the voluntary acceptance by the people of the exercise of power by the state. Healey & Robinson (1992: 165) described it as follows: "In modern society the state derives legitimacy from the social acceptance of government authority. Legitimacy depends on the tacit assent of the governed, and a state is only legitimate to the extent that its subjects perceive it to be so." In the ideal case, a government is legitimate in both senses.

In Africa, as in former colonies elsewhere, the concurrence of political and judicial legitimacy is an enormous problem. The constitutional history of Africa presents a picture of a wide variety of structures and power modes, going from historical forms such as segmentary systems, small autonomous units and tributary empires, via various versions of the colonial state and the political movements inspired by independence, to more or less parliamentary democracies, single-party systems, military regimes and dictatorships. In the course of the past two years, sometimes subsequent to national conferences, new constitutions have been drawn up in many of the countries of Africa. In view of African history, it is understandable that it should be difficult for Western-educated legal specialists to draw up a constitution that not only meets with present-day (Western?) norms as regards democracy, but is also appropriate to the relations in African society and the entirety of values and norms that prevail there. When African nations gained independence thirty years ago, their constitutions were modeled after European ones. At the moment, more conscious efforts are being made to draw up models that are better
attuned to African society. It has not been until the last two or three years that there was ample space for this process to ensue, so that in this field as well, in the most favourable situation of lengthy political stability, with civil society experiencing a relatively large extent of freedom, it will still require decades of research and experience before a satisfactory balance can be attained.

The view widely adhered to by legislators and politicians is that the best way to implement whatever changes are desired in the social and political structure is by passing laws. For years, this instrumentalist view has been criticized by social/judicial scientists. Cyprian Fisiy (1992a) gave a concise summary of this criticism in an article on Cameroon. Studies in the anthropology and sociology of law have shown that the state is certainly not the only norm giver. In the sociology of law, Galjart noted with respect to developing countries in general that, although the influence of the state as law giver can not be denied, it is only to an extremely limited extent that the state has at its disposal the means to successfully implement judicial innovations (Galjart 1991). In another article, he also discussed the overestimation of the state's capacity to restrict rent-seeking (Galjart).

The findings referred to above are indicative of an incongruity as regards the authoritarian regimes that have ruled Africa for the past three decades. On the one hand, the state has been considered extremely ineffective. In the sixties and seventies, it was referred to in African literature as the "soft state". Its characteristic features included the limited extent of its control over society and an undisciplined and corrupt state administration with a minimum obedience to the law and to the rules and regulation of the administration (Jackson & Rosberg 1985). On the other hand, there have been some extremely tough and severe regimes in Africa in the past few decades. One of the paradoxical aspects of the "soft state syndrome" in Africa is felt to be that no matter how "tough" the state may look, authoritarian state intervention might well be a source of political ineffectiveness (Van Cranenburgh 1990, proposition 11).

Now that it is feasible that in the next few years, as a result of the struggle for democratization, there will be greater freedom of opinion and of movement for civil society, perhaps there will also be adequate latitude for new and more appropriate jurisprudence. Research will be called for into the state's restricted capacities to arrive at effective legislation, the effectuation of constitutional justice and the changes in the legal system via numerous bureaucratic and legislative channels. Studies will also have to be conducted on the influence of trade unions, political parties, church organizations, the army and African non-governmental organizations on the formative process of constitutional law.

As was noted in the Foreword, this paper does not include references to literature on South Africa, where this discussion has been going on for more than two years. Although this
literature contains some extremely interesting ideas, it was unfortunately not feasible for us to include it in this overview.

**Democracy and development**

- Is democracy a prerequisite for development, or development a prerequisite for democracy?

Until recently, the predominant opinion was that a certain extent of economic development was necessary if democracy was to have any chance of success. At the same time, however, it was also felt that an authoritarian regime was needed in order to bring about economic growth (see above). Under the pressure of day-to-day reality, the relation between democracy and development is once again being debated. It is first and foremost the failure of the authoritarian regimes to effectuate any measure of economic development and the enormous dimensions of the economic crisis in Africa that have caused the old regimes to lose their legitimacy and make way for democratic reforms (see section IV).

Once again, Africa is faced with the task of putting democratic ideals and principles into practice under poor economic conditions, in some countries perhaps even poorer than when they first became independent. As regards the relation between democracy and economic development, the same question has to be posed as thirty years ago: Is democracy a prerequisite for development or is development a prerequisite for democracy? The big difference is that today Africa has learned from its experiences of the past thirty years. This is what Anyang' Nyong'o tried to express as follows: "After thirty years of independence, there is no convincing correlation between dictatorships or authoritarian regimes and higher levels of economic growth or development in Africa. If anything, the more repressive regimes have done much poorer than the more liberal ones" (Anyang' Nyong'o 1991: 3).

There is no room for academic doubts of this type in the international political arena. *Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth*, a report published by the World Bank in 1989, cited a causal relation between political liberalization and successful economic rehabilitation. To a large extent, it was this report that made it feasible to link political requirements to economic aid, as is now an integral component of the policy of Western donor nations (Chazan 1992: 280). This political stance has made the debates all the more relevant.

As to the central issue of whether democracy is a prerequisite for development or development a prerequisite for democracy, there is very little consensus of opinion in the academic world. With reference to Latin America, Terry Lynn Karl concluded that: "Patterns of greater economic growth and more equitable income distribution, higher levels of literacy and
education, and increases in media exposure may better be treated as the products of stable democratic processes, rather than as the prerequisites of their existence" (Karl 1991: 168). Kankwenda (1992: 22) similarly concluded that democracy is a prerequisite for development. He proceeded from the assumption that greater participation by the population can not help but effectuate some extent of change.

Kühne (1992: 13) held, however, that democracy has not proved to be a guarantee for economic development. In his opinion, the link is far more complicated. He referred to the paradox that although democratization gives rise to many expectations in the economic field, the short-term prospects — unlike the long-term ones — are usually poorer (see also Mkandawire 1992: 24, Healey & Robinson 1992: 157).

Rainer Tetzlaff worked from the opposite assumption: "Dreißig Jahre postkoloniale Entwicklung in Afrika geben keinen Grund für die Infragestellung der berühmten These des US-amerikanischen Soziologen Seymour Martin Lipset aus der Jahr 1960: je wohlbhabender ein Volk, desto grösser dessen Aussicht auf Entfaltung der Demokratie" ("Thirty years of post-colonial development in Africa give no reason for calling into question the famous thesis of the American sociologist Seymour Martin Lipset in 1960 that the more prosperous a people becomes, the greater the prospect of democracy developing") (Tetzlaff 1991a: 37). And yet he did not conclude that in the first instance, democracy ought to be sacrificed to economic growth: "Da die Menschen in Afrika mit der vollen Herstellung demokratischer politisch-institutioneller Verhältnisse nicht warten können und wollen, bis endlich (wann und wie?) die massenhafte Armut überwunden sein würde, ist mit dem Naheliegendsten anzufangen" ("Since the people of Africa cannot and will not wait until mass poverty has been overcome (who knows where, who knows when) to see the full restoration of democratic political structures, it is best to begin with the obvious") (Tetzlaff 1991a: 38, see also Weiland 1991: 14). The point of departure remains that economic growth is a favourable condition for the development of democracy.

Onimode adhered to the standpoint that a certain extent of economic prosperity is a condition for the development of democracy, although at the same time he rejected any form of dictatorship: "(...) it seems clear that general and sustained prosperity (...) is not only conducive for the democratization process, it is a necessary though not a sufficient condition for it" (Onimode 1992: 7, see also Southall 1991: 114). The fact that economic prosperity does not automatically lead to political liberalization and democratization has been plainly illustrated by the Gulf states of the oil sheiks: "In such cases, the economic prosperity is highly concentrated so that it is an initial autocracy that is used for generating extreme economic inequalities" (ibid.: 8). Clapham’s argument was along the same lines. He referred to the one-sidedness of the
state's revenues, so that the political elite does not have the slightest inclination toward democratization and makes every effort to restrict the economic ramifications of institutional changes (Clapham 1992: 6).

Founou-Tchuigoua (1992: 4-7) went even further. His point of departure was that economic growth always precedes the development of democracy, and that there is no other viable sequence. He is cynical about recent events in the sense that he views free elections imposed from outside as an attempt to legitimate the political developments without necessarily guaranteeing any check on the people in power. So for him, the question of whether the establishment of democratic institutions can lead in the end to economic growth is quite irrelevant.

Peter Meyns, unwilling to be caught in the "which comes first" trap, commented that: "In short, it does not make sense to define development as the prerequisite for democracy, nor will it do to call for democracy as a condition for development. Both assertions have some truth in them, but they need to be seen in the dialectical relationship based on reciprocal dependence. The achievement of socio-economic development and the consolidation of democratic institutions can then be identified as tasks which both need to be given considerable weight in the overall process of development" (Meyns 1992: 23-24).

Sirovy and Inkeles (1990) recently conducted an important study on the effects of democracy on economic growth and inequality. Since Africa has had so little experience with democratic governments, the study included more data from Latin America and Asia than from Africa. As a supplement to this study and in the framework of the debates described above, the questions Anyang' Nyong'o feels should now be addressed with respect to Africa are whether:

- 'prenature' democracy acts to slow economic growth
- democratic regimes are largely unable to implement effectively the kinds of policies considered necessary to facilitate rapid growth
- the uniqueness of the present world-historical context requires pervasive State involvement in the development process, which is in turn unduly fettered by political democracy, in other words, first growth, then democracy" (Anyang' Nyong'o 1991: 3).

• Independent economic bases within civil society

Debates on the link between economic development and democracy tend to take either of two tracks. One is that the growth of the economy as a whole is a favourable condition, since it means there is a larger "pie" to be divided. "From the viewpoint of the state, a stable and strong
economy will infuse a measure of flexibility in dealing with social discontent, dissent and opposition or challenge" (Ninsin 1992: 8).

The other is that the division of wealth within the state is of crucial importance to the development of democracy, as is illustrated by the example of the Gulf oil states. Ninsin (1992) commented as follows: "Strengthening the economic base of society and the state naturally means creating independent opportunities for social groups to establish their relative autonomy from the state in the realm of the economy and politics. It will also enhance the capacity to consolidate the emerging tradition of independent struggle against anti-democratic tendencies. Inevitably a society that has virile and fearless social forces could easily maintain the independence and autonomy of those key social and political institutions which can easily restrain arbitrariness in government, and guarantee liberty" (see also Bratton 1989a: 418).

All the authors who commented on this second point agree that the existence of groups with an independent base, separate from the state, is a necessary prerequisite to counterbalance the exercise of power by the state. Opinions differ, however, as regards which groups will, should or can have these economic bases. The most well-known comment in this framework was made by Barrington Moore (1966): "no bourgeoisie, no democracy." Harry Goldbourne (1987: 37) couldn't agree more.

Southall expressed quite the opposite view: "Representative, or parliamentary, multi-party, single-level constituency — in a word — bourgeois democracy is not the only version. Among other alternative forms is pyramidal, non-party, multi-level democracy, which was in fact the Soviet type, as Lenin intended, but it never came off, which (...) has recently raised its head again, as in Museveni's Uganda. (...) Bourgeois democracy is the necessary counterpart of the capitalist mode of production. (...) Bourgeois democracy was denounced and rejected by Lenin because it ignored the workers and peasants. The point still has to be taken seriously" (Southall 1991: 114).

Bratton reviewed the book by Diamond, Linz and Lipset (1988). They elaborated upon Moore's line of reasoning, and viewed it within the African context: "(...) Nor has an indigenous productive bourgeoisie emerged to counterbalance the expansion of the state and to lead a movement in support of individual rights. Instead these historic tasks must be initiated from a different source. In this regard, Diamond reveals in his introduction that a 'rich and vibrant associational life has developed in many African countries independent of the state' (Diamond, Linz & Lipset 1988: 23). This pluralism in civil society 'has become the cutting edge of the effort to build a viable democratic order' (ibid.: 26)" (Bratton 1989a: 422).
Although he referred to "associational life," a term coined by Diamond et al., rather than "bourgeoisie", in his conclusion Bratton would indeed seem to confirm Southall's conviction that bourgeois democracy is the counterpart of a capitalist mode of production: "As a working hypothesis I would suggest that associational life is likely to be most developed in economies that have undergone the greatest degree of indigenous capitalist industrialization. In these situations, social classes are most likely to have constructed an economic base independent of the state and a set of shared interests that are best defined by autonomous political action" (Bratton 1989a: 427).

Chazan similarly sought the potency of democracy in an economically strong, independent civil society. However, she did not expect the most good to come from organizations that had developed totally outside the state's sphere of influence, but from organizations that were separate from the state and nonetheless in contact with it (see section II): Over the past decade, however, voluntary organizations have been most active and visible in the economic, not the political sphere. Throughout Africa, groups have established elaborate methods to evade the state, lobbied governments for better wages and work conditions, and expanded their involvement in the informal economy. Although the informal economy is associated with some negative consequences (...), it contributes directly to the fortification of civil society by increasing the resources at its disposal and broadening its geographical scope (...). While these activities may weaken the power of the current regime, they paradoxically serve to promote linkages between social groups and state agencies, and therefore have an important bearing both on the redistribution of power and the creation of entrepreneurial groups whose positions do not depend on access to state resources" (Chazan 1992: 298).

- Are the free market and democracy each other's natural "counterparts"?

This discussion has been briefly referred to above by way of the quotes from Southall and Bratton who, each approaching from a totally different angle, nonetheless both arrived at an affirmative answer to this question. Other authors, however, have explicitly refuted this notion. Shivji (1990c: 9), for example, made the following remark: "Too often in our debates there is a tendency to equate liberalism and its associated ideas and concepts with democracy, i.e. the struggle for human equality."

Imam (1991: 6) also had a hard time referring to these two concepts in the same breath: "The debate on 'democratizing' the economy has centered on the call for dismantling State machinery and administrative planning, and its replacement by economic agents acting in a deregulated (free) market. Many questions are posed by this definition of economic democracy.
Must this process be accompanied by widespread privatization (...), massive unemployment, national currency devaluation and the escalation of prices as the IMF and IBRD insist? What is democratic about this policy? How does one consider the market-place as a democratic forum (given that players come to the game with unequal strengths)? Are there no other forms of democratic processes which might be advocated in the economic sector?"

Hutchful (1992: 21) elaborated further upon this question in a theoretical manner: "One of the myths of the new economic fundamentalism that today dominates the international discourse on development is the natural compatibility of democracy and the market. (...) This notion of the necessary harmony of markets and democracy, far from being an orthodox wisdom of liberal democracy, is on the contrary a transparent (and fairly recent) piece of revisionism. Both Macpherson and John Stuart Mill before him have argued convincingly that capitalism and democracy belong to different genealogies and structural logics, and require to be brought consciously into some compatibility with each other. (...) Sustaining democracy required some state intervention into markets. (...) With the possible exception of the United States, all mature capitalist democracies are highly managed economies; none correspond to the 'free markets' envisaged in World Bank literature."

- Is the dependent position of Africa within the international world economy an obstacle to democratization?

In the past few years, the emphases in development literature have shifted from external to internal causes of under-development. The main argumentation in Anyang' Nyong'o's book *Popular Struggles for Democracy in Africa* (1987) is still an example of the old line of reasoning. Bratton summarized it as follows: "According to the latest version of this thesis, a peripheral state within a world capitalist economy performs principally as an instrument of 'adjustment' to the changing demands of global accumulation. The state's weakness in Africa derives from its subordination to stronger external institutions and, while the state has sponsored the formation of a bureaucratic class, it acts fundamentally as a collaborator on a project led by international capital. Internally, state elites seek to monopolize economic activity and prevent the formation of social constellations with an independent base" (Bratton 1989a: 418-419).

In the same period, Bayart expressed his opposition to this well-known but one-sided theorization and tried to find a balance: "The question of democratic governance cannot, therefore, be fully analysed in only institutional terms. Nor is authoritarian rule to be explained solely by Africa's dependence" (Bayart 1986: 110). His hypothesis was that the dependent
position of the African nations did serve as a serious obstacle to the chance of a transition to a democratic regime, but that it was not the only factor that determined it, nor was it an absolutely restrictive factor.

With the recent political changes, there has been a turnaround and the emphasis is now on institutional under-development, which is thought to be the great restrictive factor for democratization in Africa. "As the emphasis in the development literature has shifted from external to domestic and political factors, political and policy reform (good governance and adjustment), not restructuring the global economic system, are seen as the solution" (Hutchful 1992: 20).

This shift to the other extreme has in turn given rise to critical responses on the part of various authors. Onimode still used the old theoretical framework: "(...) the disarticulated neocolonial economy is a strong barrier against the unfolding democratization process across Africa. The symbiotic collusion between the domestic petty bourgeoisie and its imperialist mentors that defines the power of the neocolonial state is central here" (Onimode 1992: 14). As regards Africa's dependence on the Western countries due to the debt crisis and the Structural Adjustment Programmes, he commented that: "These are the current dominant imperialist strategies of recolonization or the New Colonialism of finance capital" (ibid.: 15).

Hutchful's opinion on the current turnaround was also quite clear: "In many influential quarters democracy is seen as a substitute for, not a complement to, the reorganization of the international economic order; countries in economic distress are asked to adopt 'democracy' and 'free markets'. In this situation, both Africa and the former Soviet bloc can look forward in the foreseeable future to a global economy characterized by unstable and declining commodity prices, through conditionality, capital export, and discriminatory debt treatment" (Hutchful 1992: 20-21).

The fact that this concern was widely shared was evident from how Lemarchand summarized these rebuttals: "The global dimension of economic development is also cited as a major constraint on democratization. In the words of the Secretary of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), Salim Ahmed Salem, 'while Africa must democratize, our efforts will be hamstrung by the nondemocratic international economic system in which we operate.' Adding to Salem's lament, Richard Joseph warns that serious handicaps are likely to arise from 'a world trading system, now directed by transnational companies, into which the continent has been integrated for centuries as a supplier of raw materials and agricultural products.' In short, given the facts of economic dependence, and regardless of their ability to institutionalize the
formal trappings of democracy, Africans will still have little or no say in shaping their economic destinies” (Lemarchand 1992: 179) (see also Kankwenda 1992: 27).
THE RECENT POLITICAL CRISIS
AND THE CALL FOR DEMOCRACY

4.1. INTRODUCTION: WERE INTERNAL OR EXTERNAL FACTORS DECISIVE?

Since the end of 1989, political developments in Africa have accelerated. An enormous amount of pressure has since been exerted on numerous African leaders.

Has it mainly been external factors that — as the Western press often suggests — have led to these developments? Have they been ramifications of the decline of the single-party state in Eastern Europe, and the hope of escaping the kind of fate that befell President Ceausescu? Or have the end of the East-West conflict and the sudden interest on the part of international donors in promoting the multi-party democracy been crucial factors?

Or has it been pressure from inside, due to the hopeless economic situation in most African states, which has resulted in the increasing tension among large segments of the population? Dissatisfaction with the regimes in power has led to "bread riots" and political demands for more freedom and democracy.

Peter Meyns (1992: 2) gave what we feel is a satisfactory answer to these questions: "(...) it has been the combination of external and internal factors which created such effective pressure for political change. International events, the end of the Cold War and all the implications that ensued, no doubt initiated the process, but it might not have occurred if the internal social forces demanding change had not already been there waiting for a suitable moment to raise their voices. The crux of the matter is that the established powers in African
states — with only few exceptions — face a crisis of legitimacy based on economic failing and
their autocratic rule." (see also Clapham 1992: 8-11).

4.2. INTERNAL CAUSES

Economic crisis
The internal pressure exerted upon the African political leaders has largely been a repercussion
of the severe economic crisis. As Tedga (1991) wrote: "La donnée majeure de l’Afrique noire à
l’aube du troisième millénaire, c’est la faillite totale et impressionnante de son économie
formelle." ["The most important fact about Black Africa at the dawn of the third millenium is the total
and spectacular bankruptcy of its formal economy]. In the case of Benin, Chris Allen gave a detailed
description of how this crisis, which began years ago, suddenly became extremely visible in
1989, for example in the bankruptcy of banks throughout the country and in the inability of the
state to pay the salaries of its civil servants (Allen 1992: 46-47).

The second crisis facing the legitimacy of the state in Africa is directly related to the
economic crisis. Bratton explained this link as follows: "Since the leaders of the postcolonial
state claimed their right to rule on the basis of promises of improved material welfare, a loss of
distributive capacity is predictably met with a reduction in popular legitimacy" (Bratton 1989a:
410, see also Healey & Robinson 1992: 131).

Mkandawire also cited a link with the Structural Adjustment Programmes. He did not
attribute an undividedly positive role to the SAPs: "(...) the adjustment programmes have led to
losses of post-independence gains in welfare which were part of the populist-nationalist
programmes. (...) The various coalitions that have provided a modicum of peace in much of
post-colonial Africa were based on a complex web of redistributive policies — food subsidies,
pan-territorial pricing, regional planning, subsidized social welfare services, etc. The political
significance of these measures has been denigrated through being lumped together under
something that is tantamount to corruption ('rent-seeking', clientalism, patronage, etc.)"
(Mkandawire 1992: 6-7).

There is a wide range of literature on the nature and dimensions of the economic crisis.
However, it is not only outside our competence as political scientists, much of it has already
been the focus of adequate attention. We would just like to refer here to such authors as Mbaya
Kankwenda (1992), who examined in greater depth the links between the economic crisis, the
structural adjustment programmes and the process of democratization, and Peter Gibbon, Yusuf
Bangura and Arve Ofstad (1992), who together produced an anthology with the results of the
international symposium "The Social and Political Context of Structural Adjustment in Sub-Saharan Africa" that was held in Norway in October 1990.

**Popular resistance**

The economic crisis, combined with poor management, political repression, and a lack of respect for human rights, gradually led to a general political crisis. As Bratton (1989a: 410) wrote: "In many African countries, ordinary people are ceasing to regard the state as their own and are refusing to comply with official injunctions. The loss of legitimacy is manifest in numerous ways".

The extent to which the friction under the surface had intensified was evident from the heated reactions to seemingly insignificant incidents. In Kenya, for example, in September 1990 the fact that a Presbyterian minister had issued a call for a multi-party system led to widespread riots. In May 1990, the sudden and inexplicable death of one of the leading opponents of President Bongo of Gabon outraged the people to such an extent that enormous damage was done to shops and public buildings. The authorities were also excessive in their reactions, and in Somalia tens of people were shot to death at a football match in July 1990 for shouting anti-government slogans (Riley 1991: 14).

Despite numerous examples of the severe oppression of pro-democratization protests and of intimidation behind the scenes, many activists and social groups stuck to their demands. Riley cautioned however against overly idealizing this kind of protest "It would be wrong, however, to idealise those involved. While many have genuine motives, often resulting in personal sacrifice, others, including nascent politicians, want to join a bandwagon that they did not start, but hope to benefit from. Politics, after all, still remains one of the surest routes to personal wealth in Africa (...)" (ibid.).

In an article soon to appear in the journal entitled Africa, Schatzberg alludes to the state's loss of legitimacy and observes that this legitimacy crisis also has an ideological component, which is rooted in the African man in the street's perception of the world around him. In Schatzberg's view, many ordinary Africans perceive modern-day political rulers in terms of the fatherly authority prevailing in the African extended family. In this perception of the world, in principle the authority of a father is absolute and thus largely unimpeachable. Ultimately, however, certain limitations are imposed upon this authority. The father of a family has obligations to support his children and show respect to the women who belong to his family. These relations can be viewed as an African version of the social contract described in Western political theory. In the past fifteen years, many political leaders in Africa have clearly failed to
fulfill these obligations, and Schatzberg feels this is an essential element in the present political legitimacy crisis.

Protest not new

It is important to bear in mind that the democratic demands emerging all across Africa since 1989 did not simply appear out of the blue. As has been noted earlier in this report, the debates among African intellectuals on the issue of democracy have never stopped, nor have the more practical actions of African politicians and (potential) voters. Bayart (1991a) noted, for example, that the younger generation of African civil servants was already petitioning for democracy at the end of the sixties, and on the grounds of his own research, Wiseman (1990) drew the same conclusion. There are numerous examples to illustrate this. In Gabon, the first public demonstrations of Morena, an opposition party that is still active today, date back to the end of 1981 (Doey 1983). In Zambia, the opposition of the trade unions to the Kaunda regime date back to 1974 (Simutanyi 1992) and the single-party system was openly condemned as early as 1980 (Constantin & Quantin 1992). In Zaire, the opposition party led by Tshisekedi, the present prime minister, was founded as far back as 1980 (Tedga 1991), and the first pro-democratization demonstrations were held in Mali in 1977 (Champaud 1992).

In more general terms, Bayart observed in 1986 (p. 113) that: "(...) the subordinated social groups have not been as passive as they are thought to be (...). In Africa (there is) little revolutionary potential. The precarious equilibrium is maintained. Nevertheless, the state has been damaged by the constant pressure of those social groups and their everchanging tactics: revolts, refusal to grow certain crops, declining productivity, strikes, abstension from elections, migrations, religious revivals and even the creation of theocratic communities outside state control, smuggling, the flourishing of informal exchange, distribution of information outside the official media, satirical, religious messianic or revolutionary attacks on the legitimacy of the state, and sabotage of the instruments of political control".

The rise of social organizations in the eighties

The rise in the number of social organizations in the past decade has been very clear. Although opinions differ as to the causes of this growth, it is widely assumed that these organizations played an important role in the democratization process and will probably continue to do so (see section V).

For a number of countries, Fowler cited growth figures varying from 60% to 260% over the past ten years (Fowler 1991: 54). Fowler mainly viewed the rise in the number of
NGOs as the result of the increased funding that changes in the policies of donor countries made available (ibid.: 55).

Chazan attributed this sudden growth to the increasingly urgent necessity to become organized in order to survive: "By the late 1970s, the dissipation of state resources by unaccountable rulers and the growing competition for increasingly scarce essential commodities immobilized formal institutions and contributed to an economic crisis (...) throughout sub-Saharan Africa. With state agencies unable or unwilling to assume responsibility for the welfare of their citizens, individuals and groups had to devise methods of fending for themselves in conditions of growing impoverishment" (Chazan 1992: 285).

Mkandawire approached this situation from a somewhat different angle: "During the last years there has been an upsurge of movements which not only protest against the effects of adjustment policies, but also call for greater democratization of their societies, greater accountability in the management of national affairs, and an end to corruption and waste, leading some to talk of an 'African Spring'" (1992: 4).

Bratton emphasized that the economic crisis made it necessary for the state to withdraw from "overambitious commitments. (...) the retreat of the state will create, willy-nilly, an enlarged political space within which associational life can occur (...) Under these conditions, groups within civil society will enjoy greater opportunities to attract a following, develop a bureaucratic form, and formulate policy alternatives" (Bratton 1989a: 412).

4.3. EXTERNAL INFLUENCES

The end of the Cold War

International relations underwent enormous changes in the eighties, and as has been noted above, this did not fail to affect the political developments in Africa. When Gorbachov came to power in the Soviet Union in 1985, this was a turning point that not only heralded the end of the Cold War, but also a new Soviet policy toward Africa (see Shearman 1987 and Light 1991).

It is a well-known fact that during the Cold War, in their struggle for military, technological and financial aid, African political leaders did not hesitate to play the two sides of the Iron Curtain off against each other. "It has been argued that 'the division of states into rival ideological groupings, one espousing socialism and nonalignment with an Eastern tilt and the other embracing capitalism and alignment with the West, was never very firmly rooted in African soil' (Clough, 1991). But it is important to remember that some African states did
receive substantial amounts of military assistance from both camps over relatively lengthy periods of time, and this enabled them to prosecute internal wars against their secessionist populations as happened in Angola, Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan" (Riley 1991: 8).

Not only did this make it feasible for civil wars to go on indefinitely, it was international support that kept the regimes in power whose corruption, malpractice and violations of human rights are now universally frowned upon. In 1987 Anyang' Nyong'o put it as follows: "(...), the problem of the international linkages that keep weak states, even ones which terrorize their own people every day, in the business of being legal sovereign states which have the right to do whatever they do because nobody should interfere 'in their own internal affairs'. (...) (E)xternal forces keep such states in business by giving them loans, providing them with arms, signing friendly treaties with them, and so on" (Anyang' Nyong'o 1987: 21, see also Ake 1991b: 32-33).

The New World Order had significant ramifications for the African states. The withdrawal of the Soviet Union meant that the Western countries and the international organizations they controlled exerted more influence than ever on the governments of Africa, "even more than the usual client-dependent relationships that characterized the 1970s and 1980s" (Riley, 1991:9). "The fallout from Eastern Europe (...) has made clear the extent to which Western policies in Africa had previously been constrained by Cold War considerations. Now that these no longer apply, Western-supported dictatorships in states such as Kenya, Malawi and Zaire have been subjected to a level of external pressure, notably from the United States, that would have been unthinkable before 1989" (Clapham 1992: 10-11).

In an ideological sense, Gorbachov's new thinking also served to discredit the nations of the Soviet bloc: "As the Soviet Union liberalized, it pressured its allies to do so as well. The loss of faith in the command economy model of economic development also meant that Africa's erstwhile 'Marxist-Leninist' or 'African Socialist' regimes, such as Benin, the Congo, and Mozambique faced an ideological, as well as an economic, crisis" (Riley 1991: 8-9).

One striking aspect of Gorbachov's new thinking and the political developments that ensued was the fact that economic and political liberalization appeared on the agenda simultaneously, which was in sharp contrast with developments in China, where only economic liberalization was officially encouraged.

*Changing political climate*

In 1989 Doornbos noted changes in the attitude of donor countries to the African state. Influenced in part by the ideological crisis in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, after a
lengthy period of bridled criticism the functioning of the African state itself increasingly became a point of discussion: "it appears that the global organizations and the donor communities have now embraced wholesale the critique of the 'overdeveloped state' which was earlier espoused by radical scholars (often no doubt, to the irritation of those same organizations)" (Doornbos 1989: 187).

In the opening lecture at a seminar on "Good Governance" in June 1992 (organized by the African Studies Centre in Leiden, the Centre for Non-Western Studies at the University of Leiden and the Institute for Social Studies in The Hague), the background of this change was formulated as follows: "The failing performance of African state regimes is now generally considered to be the main cause of the present crisis in this continent. This is relatively new. In the seventies and even the early eighties, the international dependencia and the continuing 'post-colonial' relations with the former metropolis were put forward as final explanations. In those days, institutions like the World Bank saw the state as the self-evident partner for attempts to bring about development and consistently defended the state elites against attacks by marxist or 'marxisant' authors. Since then there has been a drastic change of paradigm. The World Bank is now one of the main critics of these state elites and the state is seen as a major obstacle on the way to development".

Western countries were now in a strengthened position of power, and this was one of the factors that enabled them to link more and more policy demands and political demands to their aid or loans. "Out of impatience with the poor formulation and implementation of plans by African states, various donor organizations and governments have sought engagement in 'policy dialogue' — a process which is based less on equal status of discussion partners than the name may suggest" (ibid. 189).

Mkandawire made it clear that this change, particularly as regards the SAPs, seemed to be a bit suspicious: "The most direct expression of foreign pressure on African states has been in the realm of economic policy. (...) While in the early years of the imposition of SAP it was taken for granted that these programmes would be unpopular and would therefore require regimes that were insulated from popular pressures or had the 'political will' (…) there has been a sudden shift towards a position that links structural adjustment to democratization. (...) It is important to emphasize that the external view on the necessity or appropriateness of democratic rule is very recent" (Mkandawire 1992: 8) (see also section V).

Another important development that contributed toward establishing the relation between giving aid and respect for human rights in the recipient country was the growth of human rights movements in the donor countries. This has not just been something that occurred in the past
few years. In general the election of Jimmy Carter in 1976 is viewed as the moment when human rights appeared as an issue on the agenda in international politics (Clapham 1992: 10). Gonçalves also emphasized the increasing importance of human rights movements with respect to Angola: "La démocratisation en Angola n'est pas le résultat d'une vaste conscience démocratique, mais plutôt le produit de l'équilibre entre les diverses forces politiques et sociales et de l'effet du mouvement mondial des droits de l'homme, qui s'impose de plus en plus comme facteur de mobilisation social et de pression diplomatique" ["Democratization in Angola is not a result of widespread democratic awareness, but rather a product of the equilibrium existing between various political and social forces and of the influence of the global human rights movement, which is asserting itself more and more as a factor of social mobilization and diplomatic pressure"] (Gonçalves 1992: 14).

One last point is that more and more statistical analyses are becoming available that demonstrate that there is no direct relation between the type of regime and economic growth (see for example Sorensen 1991 and Galjart 1992). This negates the claim that an authoritarian regime is needed in order to implement economic improvements. From the point of view of the World Bank: "On the whole the evidence suggests that the democratization-authoritarian distiction itself fails to explain adequately whether or not countries initiate reform, implement it effectively or survive its political fall-out" (World Bank 1991: 133). Mkandawire added the following comment: "It is, from the point of view of intellectual history, interesting to note that this 'evidence' is evoked and has apparently become most persuasive during the current political climate when it was most urgently needed" (1992: 11).
DEMOCRATIZATION: FAVOURABLE DEVELOPMENTS AND OBSTACLES

5.1. AN INTERIM BALANCE

After four years of democratization experiments, what can we say at the moment, early in 1993, about the present-day situation in Africa? What progress has been made and what are the obstacles still facing democratization? Will the achievements turn out to be lasting ones, or are they only temporary victories that will remain subject to perpetual threats? In its present form, has democratization led to essential changes in power and prosperity relations?

In the first place, one can conclude that at the moment, the wave of democratization would seem to have come to a standstill, at any rate a temporary one, even if one uses the term democracy in the narrow sense pertaining to multi-party systems and free elections. As was noted in the Introduction to this report, the various nations of Africa did not always develop at the same pace in this respect. In the initial stage, a number of regimes were overthrown, and usually quite easily. They were regimes that had either lost all faith in themselves, and Benin is a good example of this, or were unrighly convinced they would win free elections with a landslide, as was the case in Zambia (Bratton 1992) and the Cape Verde Islands (Cahen 1991b), and then respected the election results and the defeat it meant for them. In the second stage, which commenced at the end of 1991, the democratic opposition was faced with ruling regimes that went to any extreme to defend themselves and win time, as was the case in Kenya, Togo
and Zaire. The extent to which these last-ditch resisters will be willing to adjust to a changing situation remains an open question.

In the second place, even in instances where democratic regimes have come into power, it can still be concluded that very few essential changes have taken place in either the political or the economic field. In 1983, Bayart noted that political changes at the highest level did not necessarily penetrate into the lower local levels: "Les détenteurs du pouvoir politique, administratif, judiciaire ou policier restent fidèles, dans les régimes représentatifs, à une pratique musclée de leur autorité, directement héritée de l'ordre colonial et qui contredit le respect élémentaire des libertés démocratiques et des droits de l'homme" ["In representative regimes, the holders of political, administrative, judicial, or police power remain faithful to the muscular exercise of authority, which is a direct legacy of colonialism and conflicts with the notion of elementary respect for democratic freedoms and human rights"] (1983: 96). As an example, he mentioned the extremely rough conduct that nowadays still accompanies the collection of taxes in the rural areas of Senegal. More recently, several African authors have also referred to the limited nature of the present-day democratization processes (Bathyly 1992, Ossebi 1992, see also the debates cited in section III). Some authors also wonder whether the new democratically elected regimes will not develop in turn into de facto single-party systems (as regards Zambia see Kibble 1992 and Constantin & Quantin 1992). Thus the prognoses are not undividedly favourable. And yet it can not be denied that far-reaching changes have taken place. This is why we will conclude this overview of the literature with an analysis of the positive developments, the weaknesses of African democracy today, and the obstacles that still stand in the way of opener and more pluriform societies.

5.2. THE DEARTH OF POLITICAL PLATFORM

One question that dooms large is: Do the present-day opposition parties, some of which have by now risen to power, have any clear political platforms? The response to this question by virtually all the authors we studied was a negative one. In early 1990, Mibembe already noted that — unlike the situation in Eastern Europe, where opposition groups represented a markedly alternative view of society — the African social movements had no clearly formulated programmes. The African opposition groups usually confined themselves to vague slogans about more freedom and economic development, and have certainly produced no thinkers comparable to Havel or movements comparable to Solidarnosk. This even holds true of the
countries where democracy has had more time to become embedded, such as Botswana: "The opposition parties have not developed programs which appeal to emerging social groupings. They appeal either on the basis of minor ethnic identifications or with a form of Marxism which is highly irrelevant to the social context" (Holm 1989: 37). In this case, it is only by way of an exception that there is any political platform at all, and it is one that has been developed based upon foreign models by intellectuals who no longer have any link with African grassroots support. Fauré (1991: 46) commented that African opposition parties, in the Ivory Coast for example, are often extremely poorly informed, particularly as to the economic situation in their own country, and sometimes therefore made demagogic promises pertaining to specific limited issues which, in practice, they would not be able to keep. Le Roy (1992a) observed the same phenomenon in Mali. As regards Malawi, Venter (1992: 23) summarized the critical comments formulated above as follows: "But, even the agenda of the democratic movement is ambiguous beyond the immediate objective of removing the incumbent ruling regime. The programme on economic reconstruction is neither coherent, nor well thought through or articulated. Different social interest groups within the opposition movements could thus be pitted against each other over issues of economic liberalization and social redistribution. Unless and until the opposition groups draw up a more coherent programme with respect to economic democratization, there will be little or no structural change in Malawi after the crumbling of the present regime".

This dearth of political platforms has sometimes led to tragi-comical situations, as in Gabon or Zaire, where at a certain moment there were more than a hundred political parties (see e.g. Toulabor 1991: 63), or in Benin, where after the elections that brought today's President Soglo to power, for fear of missing out on some of the advantages linked to being in power, none of the political parties wanted to belong to the opposition (Daloz 1992), or in Nigeria, where in the first instance, some prospective politicians would join both of the political parties in the hope of having the best chance of a political career (Agbese 1990: 38). So it is no wonder Martin (1991: 28) posed the following question: "si ce qui est revendiqué est un accroissement de la participation populaire à la direction du pays ou, simplement, un remplacement de l'équipe gouvernante, un changement d'élite?" ["whether what is demanded is more popular participation in the running of the country or simply a replacement of the team in power — a change of élite?"] And it is no wonder Ossebi (1992) cautioned against "a multi-party system with no real parties".

As has been noted above, the authors we consulted were virtually unanimous in their standpoint on this question, and there were very few exceptions. A recent issue of Jeune Afrique, for example, published a portrait of Tévoédjré, "l'opposant béninois qui a un programme" ["the Beninese opponent with a programme"] (Kpatindé 1992). The striking thing here
was that no matter how full of praise the article might have been, barely a word was devoted to his political platform.

Perhaps other examples could be found of opposition leaders who did have a real political platform. It is striking in this connection that most of the authors who referred to the dearth of any clear views on society did so on the grounds of rather superficial observations rather than on the grounds of real field work. More research would be definitely advisable. As Toulabor (1991: 65) put it: "On connaît mal les oppositions africaines, et encore moins leur projet ou programme politique. Quel est le discours idéologique que développe l'opposition? Quel projet de société présente-t-elle comme alternative? (...) Des analyses fouillées sur les oppositions dans les pays en voie de transition démocratique est nécessaire pour mieux comprendre le processus, mais il nous semble que la science politique africaine est en train de bégayer sur ces événements". ["African opposition parties are not well-known, and their plans and programmes even less so. What sort of ideology is the opposition developing? What plan for society is it presenting as an alternative? (...) Detailed analyses of opposition parties in countries on the road to democracy are necessary for a better understanding of the process, but it seems to us that African political science is groping about in the dark here"].

5.3. WHO SUPPORTS THE DEMOCRATIZATION MOVEMENT?

Urban middle-class groups

To this question as well, the authors we consulted were virtually unanimous in their response: the urban population, particularly the urban middle classes (see e.g. Tedga 1991: 52 and Healey & Robinson 1992: 129-130). This includes the members of the intellectual professions, who clearly played a vanguard role in some countries, and later continued to play a leading role. In Ghana, for example, associations of barristers and physicians organized a political strike as far back as 1977 to reinforce their demands for the return of a civilian regime (Wiseman 1990: 122). In Cameroon as well as in Togo and Mali, solicitors engaged in active resistance (Tedga 1991: 52), and in Zambia as well, representatives of the intellectual professions have similarly played an active role (Kibble 1992).

In other cases, it were the trade unions that took the initiative, as in the Congo (Tedga 1991: 85-86), in Zambia (Bratton 1992: 85) and in part in Mali (Bertrand 1992: 16). It should be noted here that in Africa, where the working class is not numerically strong, trade union members are mainly recruited among civil servants, in other words members of the middle
classes. One of the few exceptions is Zambia (see section II). As regards Zambia, Simutanyi (1992: 25) pointed out an odd paradox that might give rise to some doubts as to how alive democratic ideas really are within the trade union movement itself: "While others have argued that the involvement of the ZCTU in the democratization process was aimed at seeking political power, so as to achieve union objectives, I would argue to the contrary that it was in furtherance of individual ambitions of trade union leaders. The unions did not consult its members on the question of whether to revert to multi-partyism or not and their affiliation to MMD as associate members did not receive membership approval".

The personal interests of trade union leaders are thus felt to have played an important role in the recent stance of the trade unions on democratization. It might be added here that according to some authors, in their efforts to set up a multi-party system, the trade unions as organizations have often been mainly promoting such group interests as wage increases (as to Mali, see Bertrand 1992). Bertrand (1992) addressed the same reproach, i.e. of striving for narrow group interests, to secondary school and college students, another urban group that, by way of strikes and demonstrations, contributed towards effectuating the democratization process. In the case of Mali, Bertrand (1992) noted the close links between general political demands and "des mots d'ordre corporatistes" ["corporatist watchwords"]. In our opinion, the question is whether there is anything wrong with it if various social groups, purely striving to promote their own group interests, contribute towards the democratization process.

Some authors have felt that unrest and campaigning for democratization on the part of secondary school and college students is not confined to this group, but pertains to much larger segments of the younger generation in the cities, including the unemployed and young people who work in the informal sector. Coquery-Vidrovitch (1992: 39), a well-known specialist in the sociology of African cities, observed that this development also implies certain risks. She noted that the nature of these youth movements is not always a positive one: "La dérive fasciste est tout aussi conceivable que l'avancée démocratique, et les risques sont grands" ["A drift towards fascism is just as conceivable as the advance of democracy, and the risks are great"].

Another predominantly urban group that has played a role in the democratization movement is the "national" bourgeoisie (on Zambia see e.g. Bratton 1992). As regards the specific case of Kenya, the reader is referred to an interesting article by Ajulu (1992). Ajulu largely analysed the democratization movement in Kenya in terms of national classes, viewing it as a reaction of the national bourgeoisie — mainly consisting of members of the Kikuyu tribe who had had every opportunity to better themselves under President Kenyatta — against the regime of President Moi, during which they had largely lost their hold on the centre of power.
As Ajulu emphasized, here again group interests played a major role. Although this is a rather one-sided picture of the situation in Kenya, in itself this approach, emphasizing conflicts between various segments of the bourgeoisie, is an interesting one. Perhaps a parallel between Kenya and Cameroon, where a national bourgeoisie has emerged among the Bamiléké (Geschiere & Konings 1993), might produce some useful perspectives.

Churches

Lastly, quite a separate role has been played by the churches. First and foremost, it is not the African independent and prophetic movements we are interested in here, but the local representatives of the world-wide churches. In the first instance, some of the most prominent leaders of these churches have played a rather ambivalent role by establishing close ties with the regimes in power (Togo, the Ivory Coast), but in the more recent past, this stance has largely come to an end. Almost throughout Africa, catholic bishops and leaders of the protestant churches have expressed their support, and countless pastoral documents have been issued on the subject of democratization (Aurenche 1992). In various French-speaking countries, catholic bishops have even been elected to chair the national assemblies (Benin, Togo, Zaire). In part this has also been because they occupy a relatively neutral political position and are not linked to any specific party, and although not a single religious leader has totally opted for a political career instead, they have exerted a great deal of influence on the democratization process (see Tedga 1991 for a concise overview, and as to the specific case of Zaire, see Boyle 1992 and many issues of the journal Zaire-Afrique).

One reason why this stance on the part of the churches is so important is because of the groups referred to above, which are the only ones with any "legitimacy" and with links to large segments of the population (Hyden 1989, Soudan 1990). The Catholic Church in particular has an extensive network of parishes. What is more, it has a hierarchic organizational structure. This means it might be able to play a role in interpreting democratization ideas for people at the basis, in raising consciousness and perhaps even in mobilizing the people.

In addition to the large Christian churches, at many spots in Africa the spiritual churches play an important role as well. These churches emerged in protest to the rejection of the traditional African religions by the world-wide churches and to the Victorian views of European clergymen. At these churches, European norms and values are mixed with African cultures. Some of these churches played an important role in the independence movement in the fifties and sixties. In a few cases, they combined the struggle for their own religious and cultural identity with political demands. In other cases, the situation was the other way round, and
religious symbols were used by nationalistic movements in the political struggle against white oppression. What occurred even more frequently, however, was that many people rejected Western political and cultural domination by withdrawing into these spiritual churches (Haynes 1992: 15-23).

Ever since the seventies, the spiritual churches have witnessed rapid growth. Sometimes these churches supported authoritarian regimes, as was the case for example in Zaire: "The Kimbanguist church [...] was transformed from a popular expression of opposition to the colonial order, into an institutional vehicle expressing the ideology of the regime" (Haynes 1992: 18). This church preached the "authentic Zairese nationalism" that Mobutu's regime was supported by, and this continued to be the case until 1990.

In Haynes' opinion, the continual growth of the spiritual churches is of political significance because the followers of the charismatic churches are not focused upon founding political parties or creating political solidarity. They thus remain outside the political arena, believing as they do that everything that happens on earth is part of the constant battle between God and the Devil. Viewed from this angle, political leaders can not really be held responsible for whatever might go wrong. The great economic hardships and the disappointments that will inevitably result from the excessively high expectations that have been raised in the modern-day "wave of democratization" make it quite probable that for the time being, these churches will continue to grow. This is good news for the political elite, who thus are not apt to be subjected to all that much supervision and criticism (Haynes 1992: 26-28).

The role described above of the spiritual churches in the democratization process is solely the one that has been formulated by Jeff Haynes. As far as we know, other authors have barely published on this subject. This is why one should be cautious about adopting these notions. Haynes' publication did however make it clear that it is extremely important to devote attention to these developments (as to the relation between spiritual churches and the state in Africa, see Schoffeleers 1991, Van Binsbergen 1993 and Koster 1993).

In the literature we studied, it was not clear what the role was of Muslim spiritual leaders in today's democratization process. And yet Islam is a major factor in such countries as Somalia. In Sudan and Mauritania, there is clear evidence of a fundamentalist tendency. In Senegal, Mali, Niger, Chad and Nigeria, where Islam is similarly important, no such tendency is visible (for an interesting background article, see Cruise O'Brien 1986).5

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5At a recent meeting of Codesria, Chafe (1992) submitted a paper entitled "Religious Movements and Democracy in Africa: Islamic Religious Movements in Nigeria in Historical Perspective." Unfortunately we do not have this paper yet.
Last but not least, it is important to devote attention to the African religions. Modern-day literature on democratization barely mentions these religions. And yet there is good reason to assume that these religions have always exerted quite a bit of influence on political developments and still continue to do so whether the population officially believes in Christianity, Islam or one of the African religions. The modernization school of the past three decades has implicitly assumed that African religions were "traditional", and that as Africa developed, they would disappear. This does not seem to have been the case. If we are to comprehend contemporary political developments in Africa, we will have to examine the contents of these religions and their influence on the political culture.

Women
In the literature we studied, very little was written about the role of women in the recent political developments. It is not that women have not taken part in the political process, for huge numbers of them often attended recent demonstrations in various African cities (Bayart 1991a), and an author in Botswana noted that they constituted the majority of the political rank and file, in any case in his country (Nengwekhulu 1989). The only exceptions were Nzomo (1988), who demonstrated in a classically Marxist analysis that women in Africa are politically and socially discriminated, Allen (1991) who, using examples from the days of the struggle for independence, demonstrated that in certain cases, women then opted for the most radical forms of political action, which might now happen again, Dumont (1991), who held that no true democracy can exist as long as rural women are treated as slaves (but unfortunately did not elaborate upon this view in connection with recent events), and Daloz (1991), who showed in a short article that quite a few women ventured into the political arena as candidates at the recent local elections in Nigeria. So women do occupy a place in the political scene, but not in the literature.

Peasants
As to peasants, and rural people in general, the situation is somewhat different. They are referred to now and then in the literature, but most of the authors hold that they never played much of a role in the various campaigns for democratization. This is evident from the disappointingly low turnout of voters at some of the recent African election. In Zambia, for example, only 45% of the people who were eligible to vote actually cast their votes (Bratton 1992: 93), a percentage that was still far higher than at the presidential elections in Mali, where the turnout was barely 20% (Le Roy 1992a: 138). In both cases, the poor turnout was mainly
blamed on the rural districts, although here too there were exceptions. In the Ivory Coast, where the turnout at some of the elections held in 1990 and 1991 was also under 50%, in the poor urban districts the turnout was even lower than in the rural districts (Fauré 1991: 43).

We are thus probably dealing with a more general problem that is not only related to place of residence (urban or rural), but even more so to social status and educational level. The link to educational level was clearly illustrated in the results of an extensive opinion survey held in Botswana in 1987. Of the almost 1300 respondents, only 47% were of the opinion that Botswana ought to have more than one political party; only 35% of the respondents who had not had any schooling at all felt this way, as did 51% of the respondents who had completed primary school, whereas among the respondents who had completed secondary school or college, the percentage was as high as 80%. Thus the level of education was the main variable here (for more details see Somolekae 1989). It should be noted here that on the grounds of his own (subjective?) observations and on the grounds of a survey conducted in Nigeria by Peil (1976: 110-111), Wiseman (1990: IX-X and 100) arrived at a different conclusion: 'Democracy was not only valued but well understood [by more humble folk] (...) the supposed 'ignorant masses' are in fact remarkably well informed about what is going on'. He is however virtually the only author to hold this opinion.

Various authors have sought explanations for the low election turnouts in rural districts and/or poorer parts of the cities and for the lack of interest in the democratization movement that they reveal. Each of them have formulated their own hypotheses. As regards Zambia, Bjornlund et al. (1992) confined themselves to several statements of a "technical" nature: imperfections in the ballot lists, intimidation and rumours that riots were going to break out on election day. This might have been true as far as Zambia is concerned, but in most of the other cases, authors have sought deeper causes. Writing about Senegal, several years ago Coulon (1988) came to the conclusion that "democracy had not become part of everyone's belief system in Senegal. It is identified with the intellectual and professional elite of the country. A large percentage of the people do not play the game at all. They are not interested in partisan competition" (p. 159). This was all the more so in view of the fact that the Senegalese democratization experiment failed to bring about any essential changes in the conditions of their daily lives (p. 173). Similar reports have come from Tanzania, where villagers were questioned about the desirability of introducing a multi-party system in their country. A widely posed rather sceptical rhetorical question was: "Would that make any difference in our daily lives?" (see Tetzlaff 1990: 336).

On the grounds of his research in the Ivory Coast, Fauré (1991) elucidated another aspect of the problem. In the first place, Fauré noted that a comparative study of all the elections
held in the Ivory Coast since 1946 produces a bizarre result: the greater the competition among the candidates and the parties, the lower the voter turnout! According to Fauré (1991: 44), this paradox can be traced back to a deeply rooted traditional political culture "qui valorise le leadership exclusif et la séniorité. On peut notamment se demander — et tel est le sentiment retiré lors d'entretiens effectués sur le terrain — si les citoyens-électeurs ne sont pas troublés et rendus indécis par la multiplicité des choix qui leur sont soudain proposés" ["that holds exclusive leadership and seniority in high standing. One might particularly wonder — and such is the sentiment expressed in discussions in the field — whether the citizen-electors are not troubled and confused by the multiplicity of choices suddenly put to them"]).

Lastly, Sall and Sallah traced the "passivity" of much of the rural Gambian population back to a more recent phenomenon, the dominant clientelist relations that control village life. Villagers "are poor and indebted to local usurers and to the government owned Gambia Cooperative Union (...). Identification with dissent or opposition therefore easily results in disqualification for the subsistence or production credits distributed by the GCU, or even food aids (...). Moreover, poverty and illiteracy have created a situation where rights are seen as government favours. Aldo Benini (1980) cites the case of poor peasants in the Eastern part of the country who do not even dare approach medical dispensers unaccompanied by their local patrons" (1992: 12).

It is difficult to say which of the factors referred to above was decisive, and further research in this field would certainly seem to be required (for an initial step in this direction, see the article by Schilder [1993] soon to appear in Politique africain, which provides insight into how the recent national elections in Cameroon were experienced in the rural parts of one of the northern districts). At any rate, it will not be easy to break through this complex entirety of factors and incorporate the rural population and the uneducated city dwellers into the democratization process to a greater extent. As a representative of the rural districts stated at the Mali "conférence nationale", which was largely dominated by urban representatives, "Nous sommes sans voix et nous le resterons" ["We are without a voice, and we will remain so"] (quoted in Bertrand 1992). This pessimistic statement describes in a nutshell one of the great weaknesses of today's democratization movement: the lack of a broad social basis. In the following part of this section, we shall try to say a few things about how this shortcoming might be remedied.
5.4. HOW IS DEMOCRACY TRANPOSED TO THE BASIS?

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)
Various authors have held that social movements in general, and NGOs in particular, would be able to play a role in transposing democracy to the people at the basis (see e.g. Lachenmann 1992). Others have however had their doubts in this respect, and the picture that emerges from the literature is certainly not unambiguous on this point.

In section II, we described how every effort has been made in the past three decades to either co-opt social organizations into the political system or to oppress them. In Bayart's view, the primary function of the party was "to prevent any form of autonomous organization within civil society" (Bayart 1986: 110). In instances where the official authorities were either not interested in acting or unable to do so, however, organizations nonetheless emerged that sometimes took over the tasks of the government authorities and often functioned completely separately from them. Bratton's conclusion about these organizations was that "the amount of space allowed to NGOs in any given country is determined first and foremost by political considerations, rather than by any calculation of the contribution of NGOs to economic or social development" (Bratton 1989b: 572-6).

As has been demonstrated above, various authors have repeatedly emphasized that by definition, a strong civil society combined with effective participation in politics on the part of the people are the crux of every democratic form of society. The crucial question now being posed is whether, ever since 1989, structural adjustment processes have been put into motion that will make it possible to meet with these two conditions — the strengthening of civil society and the participation of civil organizations in the political decision-making process — so that the potentials can be effectively enlarged for spiritual and material well-being for large segments of the population.

Many authors have emphasized the possible role of NGOs in changing the African state structure in favour of democratization and greater institutional responsibility (Hyden 1983: 119,

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6 There is widespread dissatisfaction with the term NGO, with no commonly agreed term to replace it or to distinguish between different types of organization. NGO will be used to mean non-profit-making development agencies which are not initiated or controlled by the intended beneficiaries of their activities. These are predominantly, but not exclusively, organizations which raise funds from the general public for developmental purposes or which provide development services as sub-contractors in the aid system. In distinction, the people's organization (PO) will be used for those institutions set up and controlled by (poor) people themselves for their own advancement and to serve their own interests. Examples would include women's groups, self-help groups and artisan groups. Such groups could clearly have profit-making purposes. Together, NGOs and POs make up the voluntary sector (Bratton, 1989a: 572).
1989: 150, Timberlake 1985: 215, Berg 1987: 21, Franz 1987: 121, Wim 1989: 28, Durning 1989: 154, World Bank 1989: 61). Diamond formulated the reasons for these expectations as follows: "Although the compliance of political leadership must ultimately be obtained for any project of democratisation, it cannot be expected that the pressure for regime transformation will come from above. The most likely and most effective initiative will come from below, outside the decrepit, authoritarian state, in civil society. Civil society is a crucially important factor at every stage of democratisation. The greater the number, size, autonomy, resourcefulness, variety and democratic orientation of popular organisations in civil society, the greater will be the prospects for some kind of movement from rigid authoritarianism, and for subsequent movement towards semi-democracy and democracy" (italics added) (Diamond 1989: 25) (see also Fowler 1992).

In this approach, a positive influence is attributed to civil society in general. The following question are being increasingly posed: To what extent are the NGOs and POs democratic themselves? To what extent do they reflect the personalistic power patterns that are also evident in the political centre, and to what extent are their values based upon moderation and a willingness to compromise?

Bratton (1989a: 43) posed these questions as well, but did not formulate any clear answer, though he did suggest that "the prospects for democracy in Africa depend on the answers to these questions" Bayart's answer was more pessimistic, which was why he emphasized the need for "médiation politique (...) susceptible d'amplifier cette avancée de la société civile, de l'orienter et de l'institutionaliser" ["political mediation (...) capable of developing this extension of civil society, of directing it and institutionalizing it"] (Bayart 1983: 108). Fowler was of the same opinion (Fowler 1991: 79, note 9). Chazan backed this point of view as well: "It may also be possible (...), that these groups [grass-roots organizations] far from supporting democratic tendencies, foment particularism, fundamentalism and ethnic nationalism" (Chazan 1992: 283).

A second objection to the generally positive role attributed to the NGOs and POs is that to a growing degree, they are being incorporated by the governments of Africa: "Increasingly, NGO's are required to fit into non-participatory systems of development administration. To ensure that their priorities and endeavours conform with national development priorities, they are increasingly obliged to have their activities approved through the bureaucratic procedures used by the government itself" (Fowler 1991: 67, see also Shivji 1990c). Another problem is that political elites can also benefit from political measures that stimulate the growth of the voluntary sector. For individual politicians, it can be advantageous to found one's own NGOs
or POs and then proceed to utilize one's political power to benefit these same organizations within the official policy framework (ibid.: 68). "Overall, the repertoire of state responses would suggest that the existing elites are both consolidating themselves within the voluntary sector and limiting its political impact by external controls" (ibid. 74).

And yet none of the authors have allowed these negative observations to undermine the notion that in the end, the interests of the people as a whole will have to be transposed into government policy, and that this is something the people themselves are going to have to fight for. They have come to the conclusion that sharp distinctions will have to be drawn between the various voluntary organizations. It is only the manners in which these distinctions are to be drawn that differ.

Chazan expects the most from NGOs that are close to the state rather than from POs, which she has attributed with the above-mentioned negative properties (fundamentalist etc.) because their aims are so focused upon promoting their own interests. She has made a comparison here with the independence movements that also emerged from small elite groups that were closely linked to the colonial state. "These groups also constituted the nucleus of the anticolonial movements in Africa" (Chazan 1992: 285). A similar process could also take place today (see also Barkan et al. 1991: 463, who described a similar development in Nigeria, although they also described how it has been misused).

It is evident from the emphasis Fowler put on how the NGOs, more than any other organizations, were subjected to state control that he had a somewhat different view: "Those wishing to assist NGOs in the cause of democracy must therefore adopt measures that can counter regime responses and promote democratization within NGOs themselves" (Fowler 1991: 74). He did not draw an explicit distinction here between NGOs and POs because, in his opinion, the POs have also long been incorporated into the aid circuit either via the state or in some other manner (ibid.: 70) (see also Fowler 1992).

The problem in the debate described above is that it has been almost solely conducted from the perspective of the donor countries and the question of which organizations can be supported in what particular manner in order to promote the democratization process. However, this gives a distorted picture of the internal dynamics in so far as it develops independently of the donor countries.

Decentralization

In their discourses on democratization processes in Africa, various authors have propagated decentralizing and granting greater autonomy to local agencies that are closer to the people
(Coulon 1988, Diamond 1989). In most of the countries of Africa, so far not much has come of this. It is true that Nigeria is a federal state, but most of the authors expressed doubts as to whether this has actually given people on the local level a greater say in matters directly affecting them (for studies on Nigerian federalism see Oyovbaire 1985 and Bach & Ricard [eds.] 1988). In Mali a decentralization project has been widely discussed, but up to now no concrete steps have been taken to effectuate any concrete plans (Le Roy 1992a, Coulubaly & Hesseling 1992, CILSS 1989).

For the rest, a few of the African regimes that were viewed at the start as being more or less revolutionary have ventured to launch experiments similarly focused upon decentralization, i.e. the Rawlings regime in Ghana with "local government reforms" and the Museveni regime in Uganda with local "resistance committees." Davidson (1992: Conclusions) expressed a positive assessment of these experiments, but his evaluation was not shared by all the authors. As far as Uganda is concerned, Oloka-Onyango (1991) observed that in actual practice, the system of grass-roots democracy that the resistance committees stood for did not amount to much: "The most prominent feature of the Resistance Councils and Commitees Statute is the extensive political and administrative control exercised by government officials over the resistance committees, despite the veneer of autonomy" (p. 134). In the final instance, the councils mainly functioned as channels for implementing government policies on the local level, and were never consulted about important decisions pertaining to the economic policies that were imposed in part by the IMF. In fact Oloka-Onyango came to the conclusion that "the involvement of the masses in the machinery of government in Uganda today is still marginal" (p. 141). As to the Rawlings regime in Ghana, some authors expressed more temperate opinions (Jeffries 1992), but here again they did have their doubts (Haynes 1992). All things considered, the nations of Africa still have a long way to go.

**Neo-traditionalist solutions**

At regular intervals, the literature contains complaints that African regimes often draw up gigantic development projects without consulting the local population in any way whatsoever (Senegal and northern Nigeria are notorious examples of this phenomenon, see also Konings 1986 on northern Ghana). One exception in this respect has been Botswana, where the ruling Botswana Democratic Party reverted to neo-traditionalist methods to get the population more involved in development projects than the authorities had initially proposed: "The BDP has been most assiduous in preserving the tradition of the kgotla, a community meeting in front of the chief's or headman's residence and presided over by him. Traditionally these leaders did not
take major decisions without (...) achieving a consensus. The BDP has (...) amplified on this tradition in that government officials — both civil servants and politicians — discuss all new policies with the local community in kgotla before any local implementation. They also seek to get a consensus behind their proposals" (Holm 1988: 195).

Opinions differ as regards the extent to which these kgotlas truly contributed toward embedding the democratization idea on the local level. Holm (1988: 195) was undividedly positive, for if politicians do not succeed in getting the population to support them, then government plans are adjusted accordingly or sometimes even cancelled. In an article he collaborated on with Molutsi, Holm was however a bit more cautious and the limitations of the kgotla system were clearer; in essence, the kgotla is mainly an instrument to get support afterwards for decisions that have already been made by the political elite (Molutsi & Holm 1990). An even more unfavourable evaluation was expressed by Molomo (1989), who demonstrated that in the case of the tribal grazing land policy, which was important in the day-to-day life of every Tswana, barely any grass-roots consultations had taken place. Lekorwe (1989) added that an opinion poll in Botswana showed that more than 75% of the respondents did not have the impression they could convey their opinions to the political leaders via the kgotla.

In practice, this experiment has certainly not been totally successful, though it has unmistakably had positive elements, as Molutsi and Holm (1990: 340) observed: "The instructive aspect of the Botswana experience is the possibility of making use of community based institutions of popular influence during a period of transition to democracy. At the minimum these institutions can establish a tradition of popular control". Perhaps it would be feasible to work on democratizing constructions elsewhere in Africa that would be a synthesis of traditional political practices and modern forms of conducting politics. At least this is what was suggested by Oculi (1990: 10-11) with an allusion to certain traditions of the Nigerian Hausa, and by Simiyu (1988: 68), who in more general terms called upon "scholars to delve a little into the study of these societies so that they can bring out what we may be able to blend with the present political structures, institutions and practices". Maybe it is indeed a good suggestion for solving the communication problems referred to above between government authorities and the population at large.7

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7 In the Netherlands, the studies conducted by Rouvroy (1987, 1991) on the relations between traditional and neo-traditional chiefs and the modern state go in the direction suggested by Simiyu.
5.5. DEMOCRATIZATION AND THE REVIVAL OF ETHNICITY

In section II, we noted that in modern-day Africa, ethnicity is still a factor of political importance. The question is thus: To what extent do present-day democratization processes entail the risk of reviving regional, ethnic and religious differences? In view of the recent events in the Balkans and the former Soviet Union, these fears are not unfounded. One reason why the single-party system was introduced in the early sixties was that it was felt to be the only way to maintain national unity, since the multi-party system would open the door to ethnic, regional or religious interest groups under the guise of political parties. Chabal was still using this argument in 1986 (p.58).

It is no wonder certain authors still feel the need to express words of caution. Young, an international authority in the field of cultural pluralism, commented that: "(...) there are undeniable perils and risks in the path ahead (...) politicization of ethnicity is a universal possibility — even, to some degree, a strong probability" (1989: 24, see also Decalo 1992). Another important author in this connection is Gurr (1991), who noted that in the past thirty years, Africa has been torn asunder by civil wars and other conflicts more than other continents, and gloomily concluded that: "The worst may be yet to come. In a recent global survey of minorities at risk of involvement in future conflict, and at risk of victimization, James R. Scarrat and I identified 72 such communal groups in Africa. In the aggregate they make up about 45 percent of the total regional population, a proportion far higher than in any other world region" (p. 154, see also Gurr 1990).

It should be noted that up to now, nowhere in Africa have democratization movements led to outbursts comparable in any way to those in the former state of Yugoslavia (the civil wars raging today date back to the pre-democratization period), although there are certainly indications of latent friction. Ossebi (1991) observed that in the Congo, the introduction of the multi-party system was accompanied by the return of the "old demons," i.e. traditional discord between the north and the south. In Kenya, the ruling regime tried to stop the advent of the multi-party system by instigating ethnic riots, and even before the actual elections the opposition had already been divided into various factions based in part upon ethnic differences (Hornsby & Throup 1992). Lemarchand (1992: 182) referred in this connection to the questionable role of the state: "One revolves around the manipulation of ethnicity for purposes of creating social unrest, so as to demonstrate that there is simply no democratic alternative to the status quo. Kenya is a prime example (...). Togo, Zaïre and Rwanda offer similar examples of ethnic manipulation. Nor is South Africa an exception to the rule. (...) In each case ethnicity emerges
as a major vehicle of state-instigated violence, designed to intimidate the opposition and/or thwart all attempts to effectively challenge the status quo”.

One of the reasons the present military regime in Uganda has not wanted to permit more than two political parties has been the fear that unrestricted democracy might kindle the regional and religious conflicts that have been smouldering for years (Agbese 1990, Uwazurike 1990). In their book, Healey and Robinson (1992: 140-142) discussed how passages have been included in the laws of Botswana and Mauritius to prevent ethnic conflicts from interfering with the functioning of a multi-party system. Hansen (1992) described how solutions to this problem are now being sought in Uganda. These examples, scarce though they might be, are certainly deserving of further study.

Despite the problems referred to above, in the more recent literature there are very few instances of authors propagating a return to single-party or no-party systems on the grounds of ethnic arguments. In fact authors who address this issue, particularly some of the African authors, are more apt to be in favour of allowing the principle of ethnicity to serve as a basis for party formation, or at any rate to be in favour of a more positive attitude on the part of the regime toward the ethnic factor. In 1983, the president of Morena, the opposition party in Gabon, was in favour of setting up a "conseil communautaire" ["community council"] in his country, a kind of Senate "où des représentants de chaque ethnie, élus par la base, viendraient porter au niveau de l'instance politique les aspirations, les projets, les ambitions de chaque ethnie" ["in which representative of each ethnic group, elected by the rank and file, would present the aspirations, plans, and ambitions of each ethnic group to the political authorities"] (Politique africaine, no. 11, September 1983: 19). Ideas in much the same vein have since not only been propagated by African social scientists (Prah 1992, Monkotan 1990, Toulabor 1991: 64), but by non-African social scientists as well (Holmquist 1989, Cahen 1991a). Their main argument has been that ethnic or religious unity are factors that can not be suppressed, no matter what happens. As Sandbrook (1988: 245) remarked: "Equally suspect is the claim that regimes based on electoral competition among parties are more likely than single-party or military regimes to foment ethnic and communal divisions and political instability (...). The more serious post-colonial instances of internal war and communal rioting have occurred overwhelmingly in countries governed by autocracies". Or in the words of Holmquist (1989: 58): "suppression of ethnicity and other forms of social pluralism (...) buys little time for regimes and usually exacerbates the problem". These are arguments that should definitely be taken seriously. A certain extent of democracy and greater freedom of opinion can lead, it is true, to the expression of ethnic and regionalist
desires, but at the same time they can also eliminate much of the animosity from potential conflicts.

It might also be noted here that many of the ethnic groups in the Balkans and the former Soviet Union have had a longer history than most of their counterparts in Africa, so that in Africa there is less age-old resentment, and the somewhat alarming analogies to the situation in Eastern Europe are not necessarily valid (Buijtenhuijs 1992, see also Doornbos 1991). However, sentiments of an ethnic, regional or religious nature remain difficult to predict and easy to manipulate, and the risk of a revival of ethnicity under the influence of democratization processes should certainly not be underestimated.

5.6. STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT PROGRAMMES (SAPs) AND DEMOCRACY

One of the problems the experiments with multi-party systems and political liberalization will be faced with in the near future, and sometimes are already confronted with at the moment, is that the people who demonstrated against the autocratic ruling regimes demanded more than just political freedom. They also wanted higher wages, more jobs, higher scholarships, better schooling opportunities and so forth. The problem however is that, certainly on a short-term basis, the new democratically elected governments are not apt to have much to offer in this respect.

Sandbrook (1988: 257) referred in this connection to the instability of the world market economy, which African political reformers have little or no control over. African politicians are well aware of these problems. Nicéphore Soglo, the new president of Benin, commented for example: "People think that once you have got a democracy, everything is going to be free of charge. The danger is impatience" (Jeune Afrique, no. 1632, 16 — 22 April 1992). In certain cases, such as Benin and Zambia, this impatience is already starting to make itself felt and it can be a real danger for the newly elected governments. In social science literature, the debates are mainly focused upon the question: Can structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) and democratization exist side by side?

It is striking that in a large number of African countries, in the past decade the implementation of the SAPs has coincided with the rise of political movements. Is this a mere coincidence, or has there been a causal relation? Does economic liberalization lead to political liberalization? "Do the spirits of Adam Smith and John Locke shake hands?" (Beckett 1991: 153).
Beckett noted that in the literature on this relation, up to now many authors have worked from the assumption that the two phenomena reinforce each other. However, he countered with some questions of his own: "But we need to ask whether — conversely — structural adjustment actually could represent a threat to successful democratization, and whether the installation of functioning democracies may threaten the maintenance of structural adjustment. More specifically, can the 'pain' inevitably resulting from structural adjustment be sustained only under authoritarian auspices? Would that same 'pain' — especially as it is experienced by influential urban groups — disastrously handicap new democracies, leading to democratic collapse and resumption of authoritarian rule" (Beckett 1991: 153-4)?

In an effort to answer these questions, in the first instance various authors referred to the historical course of these developments.

**SAPs and democracy in a historical perspective**

One major historical point of view was formulated by Emmerson (1991). He emphasized that today's democratization process in Africa has not been the result of the lengthy and simultaneous development of capitalism and democracy, as was the case in Europe. In Africa, the present-day political and economic liberalization has been an emergency measure, the only road that remained for economically powerless governments to take. "It is not that capitalist development in diversifying society created a middle class endowed with a civic culture that by valuing property rights and predictable returns on investment created a constituency for voting rights, freedom of speech and assembly, and governance by law not decree -- a constituency strong enough to bring good things into being. (...) Far from the one being somehow causally responsible for the other, economic and political liberalization may have been simultaneous recourses of last resort" (Emmerson 1991: 12, see also Young 1991a: 13). It is essential to consider this difference in the genesis of democracy in Europe and in Africa if one is to be able to estimate the chances for the further development of democracy in Africa at the moment.

The role of the SAPs in this process is a topic of debate. At the moment, the IMF and the World Bank are both extremely interested in doing what they can to promote democratization. There is indignation as to the ease with which these institutes have associated the idea of democratization with the SAPs. Mkandawire (1992: 8) referred to the historical course of events in this connection: "While in the early years of the imposition of SAPs it was taken for granted that these programmes would be unpopular and would therefore require regimes that were insulated from popular pressure or had the 'political will', to use the current
euphemism for political callousness and insensitivity, there has been a sudden shift towards a position that links structural adjustment to democratisation".

Anyang' Nyong'o (1991: 12) explained this as follows: "While (...) the structural adjustment programmes came in the midst of the blossoming of authoritarian regimes, the advocates of the SAPs have now realised that popular pressures have been mounting against the consequences of these programmes. Rather than pick up their bags and go, these people are smart enough to try and see how SAPs can be implemented in the context of democratic politics".

Beckman (1991) held that SAPs did not play a positive role in the democratization process by linking political demands to the granting of loans, nor did they play a more or less neutral role, as Anyang' Nyong'o suggested in the passage quoted above, but quite a controversial role: "(...) it is resistance to SAP, not SAP itself, that breeds democratic forces. SAP can be credited with having contributed to this development, not because of its liberalism but because of its authoritarianism".

It has been largely taken for granted that political and economic liberalization could be viewed as extensions of each other, but if only in view of what has been noted above, this attitude is now a subject of debate. The question however is not only who can be held responsible for which developments in the past. As has been noted in the Introduction, it is also important to know what influence SAPs have had on social relations within the African countries and what this means as regards the prospects for democratization in the future.

**Effects of SAPs on class structure and democratization prospects**

For years, the majority of the countries in sub-Saharan Africa have had to cope with sizeable financial deficits in the state budget and increasing debts to other countries. The aim of the loans granted by the World Bank and the IMF was to remedy these two "imbalances" in the (internal and external) economy. Generally speaking, policy measures have been focused upon reducing government expenditures and consumer expenditures alike. At the same time, efforts are being made to restructure the economic sectors in order to increase productivity and strengthen the competitive position on an international level. For this purpose, investments are increased with a view to enlarging market production, particularly for export purposes.

The financial and monetary measures of the SAPs are focused upon re-allocating means. The measures have an effect on the government and on the various (formal) economic sectors: the trade and industry sector, and the farming sector. The effects on the informal sector, which occupies an extremely important position in Africa, will not be dealt with here. Up to now, we
have not found any information on these effects in the literature, although this does not necessarily mean they are not important.

The line of argumentation adhered to by the IMF and the World Bank is that by cutting down on government expenditures and privatizing public companies, a significant contribution can be made towards reducing consumer expenditures (mainly caused by civil service proliferation and corruption or rent-seeking) and towards increasing investments (see Hutchfull in Campbell & Loxley 1989). The SAPs are also felt to benefit the farming sector, since the producer prices rise.

How does this affect the democratization process? A widely adhered to line of argumentation that supports the IMF and World Bank policies is the following: the formation of a large private sector with an independent economic basis serves as the kind of counterbalance to the state that the ruling authorities have to acknowledge. Once their incomes have risen and they have become less centrally regulated by the state, farmers will also come to constitute an important factor that the authorities will have to take into consideration. This will make control over the state possible, which is an essential aspect of democracy. And vice versa, the IMF and the World Bank are interested in promoting democratization because resistance on the part of the people to a poorly functioning state only serves to reinforce the measures of the SAPs, particularly as regards reducing the consumer expenditures of the state elite. These IMF and World Bank ideas are supported in part by some authors, although they do have their own comments to make, whereas other authors express more radical criticism. Criticism has been expressed pertaining to a number of points.

The first point of criticism pertains to the strict division of the State and the separate economic sectors in this analysis model. It is a well-known and important characteristic of the African state that the political elite is also active in trade and industry, or even in the informal sector, or has large interests in agriculture (see the subsection on "Economic accumulation and the zero-sum syndrome" in section II). Now that money is becoming available for investments, funds that hitherto came into the hands of civil servants via rent-seeking are now thought to be apt to wind up in the very same hands in the private sector. Insufficient data is at hand to make it clear just exactly how this process takes place.

The second questionable assumption is whether investments are really being made with the funds that are becoming available for them. The line of reasoning here would seem to have been inspired by the history of the bourgeoisie in Europe, which did indeed make investments, thus accelerating economic development. One historical difference, however, is that the bourgeoisie in Europe had no one to rely on but themselves, and had to focus on their own
market. There were no such phenomena as capital flight or brain drain at the time, because there was no other wealthier continent they could head for. Entrepreneurs in modern-day developing countries do have opportunities of this kind, and it is only logical that they should look outward rather than inward (see e.g. Brown 1990).

The third point of criticism has to do with the approach to the various sectors as a whole. Via the SAPs, the government is felt to be subjected to budget cuts, which is thought to benefit the private sector and the farmers. No attention has been focused on the dynamics within the sectors. Various authors have expressed criticism in this connection.

Lemarchand commented on the assumption that the SAPs severely cut down on clientelism within the state. He quoted Bienen and Herbst (1991: 225): "even if the structural adjustment reforms are adopted, the state will still play a major economic role," precisely because "many resources from the outside, including most of the foreign aid flow, go through the state". He added that due to the efforts of the SAPs, some of the former "clients" would be excluded, whereas for others, the SAPs would create opportunities for restructuring patronage relations around informal connections between the public and the private sector (Lemarchand 1992: 183).

The opposite would seem to have been stated by Beckett (1991). After his study in Nigeria, he came to the conclusion that it is mainly the state elite that undergoes the effects of the SAPs. He completed the picture however by observing that for the poorest segments of society, the effects can even be life-threatening (Beckett 1991: 155). Lemarchand (1992: 183) disagreed and observed that Nigeria is not a good example of "the African countries" because Nigeria has a larger population, more resources of its own, and is less dependent on the international world.

As regards the private sector, Beckett confirmed that in the case of Nigeria, it was rapidly growing. In his comments, the intertwining of the public and the private sector was clearly demonstrated: "This new private sector bourgeoisie is positioned to benefit from many aspects of SAP (above all, from the sale of public assets via privatization) while being largely insulated from most of the painful personal effects experienced by most other urban groups" (Beckett 1991: 158). We were not able to find much data on the effects of the SAPs on the private sector in other African countries.

Lemarchand expressed his doubts about the chances for growth in the private sector, be it on totally different grounds. He quoted Bienen and Waterbury (1989: 624): "(...) privatization is likely to mean, in the short term, outside Nigeria and a few other countries, foreign ownership or citizenship ownership which is politically unacceptable because the citizens are of
Asian or Middle Eastern extraction or may be indigenous but from the 'wrong' ethnic group (...)" (Lemarchand 1992: 183).

Whether farmers as a group are going to benefit from the SAPs is an extremely questionable point. In many cases, the prices farmers receive for export products have indeed risen. If there were only small farmers in a country, this would be favourable for all the farmers. However, the total export farming produce is often grown by only 30% of a country's farmers. So it is these farmers, mainly with large plots of land, who really benefit. The smaller farmers are in a worse position than before, because the prices of farming inputs, such as fertilizers, seeds and pesticides, rise just as rapidly as the prices of export produce. This leads to greater inequality within the agricultural sector. An important World Bank aim, reaching and supporting the poor, thus failed to be reached. On the contrary.

On the grounds of an article by Van der Walle (1989: 606), Lemarchand also refuted the standpoint of the World Bank that it is mainly the farmers who benefit from the application of the SAPs: "In the agricultural sector, private input distribution and marketing agents may pay less attention to smallholders than did public institutions, and concentrate instead on the bigger commercial farmers".

It should be clear by now that the debate on "who stands to gain and who stands to lose" has yet to be settled. The next question is what the effects are of the changes in social relations on the democratization process.

*SAPs and democracy: short-term and long-term expectations*

Even in the Nigerian context, Beckett (1991: 159) came to the following conclusion: "In the short term (...) neither the outlook for democracy in the context of SAP, nor of SAP in the context of democracy, seems encouraging". He made this statement on the grounds of the fact that in the public debate in Nigeria, the SAP was clearly rejected. The state then reacted by exerting more and more control over intellectual as well as public debates, and then by suppressing discussions altogether. Despite repressive measures, the debate in a country like Nigeria still goes on. And it is indeed from this debate that Beckett has distilled the following points of criticism on the part of the population of the SAPs: the reduction of the public sector by way of privatization, and the rigorous lowering of the salaries of civil servants. After these findings, he came to the conclusion that giving the people more of a say would probably weaken the SAP measures. "In my opinion it is likely that, one way or another, a democratically elected regime will provide at least some of the relief that is demanded" (Beckett 1991: 159).
As a result of the changes he assumed would occur in the class structure, he assessed the long-term prospects in a slightly more positive manner: the state elite would be dealt with, and private entrepreneurs would thus be given an opportunity to set up an independent power basis. Since he felt the evidence had yet to be produced, he himself was however extremely cautious in his conclusion: "If structural adjustment turns out to represent nothing more than a process of adjusting to national poverty on a semi-permanent basis, the prospects for democracy seem nil" (Beckett 1991: 160).

In Benin, a nation that, as such, went bankrupt in 1990 and is now completely dependent on donor countries, with a former World Bank functionary as president, no debate on the SAP is plausible at the moment. There are public meetings all over and the government is certainly willing to negotiate, it just has nothing to offer and is restricted in any number of ways. This situation has led to new strikes and social unrest (Allen 1992, see also Diop 1991: 10). A similar situation is also developing at the moment in Zambia (Constantin & Quantin 1992, Simutanyi 1992).

The considerable dependence of the African countries on the donors, as is particularly manifest in the SAPs, thus greatly restricts the political leeway of the governments involved. In addition, Mkandawire noted the ambivalent attitude of the donor countries. Depending on the economic or political interests of the donor country, the demands can exhibit varying degrees of severity.

Moreover, the democratic level of the political and international organizations and the donor countries is frequently extremely low. "On the inertia side, there is in Africa what is euphemistically known as the 'informal governance' by international institutions which has been intensified by the loss of sovereignty by African States due to the exigencies of SAP. Key ministries have been literally hijacked by these institutions, placing them out of reach of domestic politics. (...) There is concern about public scrutiny of aid programmes and the behaviour of aid agencies" (Mkandawire 1992: 12). The not very democratic methods of the IMF itself have also been hard for Mkandawire to swallow (1992: 13, 21).

With his doubts as to the effects of the SAPs on class relations in nations so totally dependent on donor countries, Lemarchand has clearly been more cautious in his conclusions on the long-term as well as the short-term prospects for democracy: "Yet another unknown in the political equation concerns the impact of structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) on newly emergent power configurations, and how these in turn may affect the prospects of democracy. Although there is no gainsaying the short-run contribution of SAPs to the overall process of
economic and political liberalization, their long-run consequences on the structure of civil society are very much in doubt" (Lemarchand 1992: 178).

5.7. CONCLUSIONS

In view of the numerous above-mentioned obstacles on the road to democratization, it is no wonder most authors have not been very optimistic about the future. In the concrete case of Benin, Allen (1992) and Daloz (1992) noted the shortcomings of the democratic experiment there, and comments of the same ilk are evident in the recent literature on Zambia (Bratton 1992, Kibble 1992, Simutanyi 1992).

Pessimism is expressed in more general discourses as well, certainly by authors who define the concept of democracy in a broad sense to include a social and an economic dimension. Amin (1989: 17) stated: "S'arrêter aux formes démocratiques occidentales sans prendre en considération les transformations sociales exigées par la révolte anti-capitaliste de la périphérie, c'est s'enfermer dans une caricature de la démocratie bourgeoise, condamnée de ce fait à rester étrangère au peuple et par conséquent vulnérable à l'extrême" ["Simply adopting western democratic forms without taking account of the social transformations demanded by the anti-capitalist revolt on the margins is like enclosing yourself in a caricature of bourgeois democracy, condemned as such to remain a stranger to the people and consequently extremely vulnerable"]). However, even authors who used a more restricted definition of democracy and would be satisfied with only a stable multi-party system tended to remain non-committal.

Decalo's conclusion (1992: 35) was thoroughly pessimistic, whereas Diamond commented that: "if progress is made towards developing democratic government, it is likely to be gradual, messy, fitful and slow, with many imperfections along the way" (1989: 25). The most optimistic author was Wiseman (1990), and it is with his standpoint that we would like to close this report: "The overly pessimistic view that competitive democracy cannot exist in Africa has been shown to be contradicted by the evidence: democracy can exist, and it does. Democracy is not the rule in Africa, but neither is it so very exceptional (...). To predict the moderate persistence of democracy in Africa is more realistic than to predict its total eclipse. It is surprising how often the collapse of a democratic government is interpreted as definitive proof that democracy is not a viable form of politics in Africa, whereas the equally frequent collapse of a single-party state or military government is not interpreted in the same way. The future of African democracy is likely to be patchy and changeable but persistent" (p. 191).
RESEARCH SUGGESTIONS

According to the initial terms of reference, in the first instance it was our intention to draw up a literature overview about democratization processes in sub-Saharan Africa, and not an extensive report with research suggestions. While perusing the literature on the subject, however, we were struck by various gaps and shortcomings in this field of research. It is not with any pretence of compiling a complete list, but just to stimulate further discussion that we would like to briefly present a few suggestions.

1. **The democratic reservations.** These early and lengthy African experiments in democratization might serve as lessons for the future. It is striking that Botswana was so positively assessed by most of the authors on this point, whereas Senegal met with far less approval. Is this difference in evaluation warranted? If not, how did these different impressions come about? And if so, what then are the essential differences between the two countries? The literature we studied gave only partial answers to these questions, but no decisive ones, so that an in-depth comparative study would be recommended.

2. **The new democracies.** As was noted at the beginning of this report, in the past three years new governments have come into office in various African countries via free and open elections. One of the important questions now is: To what extent have these new governments succeeded in implementing essential changes in the broader field of social and economic policies as well as in the narrower field of political practice? This is a point that is certain to influence future developments in Africa, and research on this
matter would surely be advisable. One might think in terms of a comparative study focused on an English-speaking country (Zambia), a French-speaking country (Benin or Mali) and a Portuguese-speaking country (Cape Verde Islands).

3. Multi-party system and ethnicity. The demand for the multi-party system has clearly brought the ethnic question to the fore. Can political parties be organized along ethnic lines, or does this enlarge the problems? Can terms be stipulated by laws that make it possible to keep ethnic rivalry in check? In Ethiopia, the foundation of political parties on ethnic grounds was permitted, but ended in a fiasco. In Nigeria, the whole idea behind founding two parties was to prevent problems. This too failed to lead to promising results. In Mauritius, however, positive solutions seem to have been found. Further research into problems of this kind would be extremely useful.

4. Democratic culture. What organizations can and do play a role in the spread of know how and awareness regarding human rights and civil rights? Are they national NGOs or churches? What role do schooling and training play in this connection?

5. Religion and democracy. Ever since Catholic bishops chaired various national conferences, the role of the churches has been in the limelight again. It is however not desirable to solely devote attention to the Islamic and Christian world-wide churches on the national level, and perhaps more importantly, on the local level because of the often extremely comprehensive networks of parishes and congregations. Attention should also be devoted to the role of the syncretic churches which are mushrooming in Africa at the moment, and to the role of the African religions. The very existence of the African religions is often denied or overlooked, but they have not disappeared and would also seem to be playing an important role in African politics.

6. The media. It is only natural that growing communication, internationally as well as nationally, should have also affected the African political scene. A great deal is often expected from the new freedom to gain access to information, which political liberalization has brought to Africa. However, opinions, many of which are still far from clear, greatly differ as to the task of journalism. What forms of censorship are also applied in a multi-party democracy? Do the media exercise self-censorship? Why?
7. **Civil society.** An increasing amount of attention has been devoted to civil society, but the descriptions given above of the present-day debates have made it clear that there are still more questions than answers. Does the state appropriate social organizations, or do social organizations appropriate the state? What kind of interchange takes place between the state and society, or do each of them develop far more independently of the other?

8. **Forgotten groups: peasants, women and young people.** As has been noted above, it is probably true that African peasants in particular, and perhaps poorly educated Africans in general, have less interest in democratization movements than other segments of the population. Since these categories usually include the large majority of the population, first and foremost it is important to determine the extent to which the suggestion distilled from the literature is correct and, if so, how this can then be explained. What do democracy, multi-party systems and so on mean to villagers? How is the idea of democratization presented transposed to the rural regions?

We have also noted that in debates on democratization, scarcely any mention is made of women. This is a serious shortcoming, and further research, preferably conducted by female researchers, would contribute greatly toward a better understanding of African democratization processes.

Young people constitute a totally separate force. The legitimacy older politicians derived from their role in the struggle for independence does not mean anything to the younger generation. All their lives, young people have seen nothing but African leaders who are treated with the greatest reverence, but fail to come up with impressive results. Particularly among the better educated young people, there is a great deal of frustration and a realistic awareness of the situation. Churches sometimes seem to be organizing multifarious activities for young people in order to keep them away from the state organizations (Malawi). Research into these developments would be extremely advisable.

9. **The role of the armed forces and the police** (which is not necessarily one and the same thing) was largely overlooked in the literature we studied. The dynamics of conflicts of interests and the struggle for power, the stipulation of their position in the constitutions, and the opportunities to keep a check on the exercise of their powers can be instrumental in the course of the democratization process. International loyalties, overlapping
interests and treaties (for example between France and Togo) can be of decisive importance to the outcome.

10. **Relations between political and social movements** are crucial to the nature of a democratic regime. It has been demonstrated above that for the time being, these relations are assumed to be largely non-existent, but it is also clear that very little concrete research has been conducted in this connection up to now. What is the power basis of the political parties? How do they function? What are their platforms and how are they drawn up?

11. **Participation of the people.** Since democratization has been accelerated by external developments, the whole process seems to have mainly taken place in the cities, and even there entire segments of the population seem to have been left out. Detailed research into possibilities for government decentralization and into neo-traditionalist forms of government would therefore be highly recommended.

12. **Democratization, the last resort.** Present-day democratization is not the result of a lengthy development of a middle class that has its own economic basis and voices demands for political power. Instead it is the last resort for the bankrupt nations of Africa. An entirely new question that emerges here is how democratization can take place under extremely difficult economic circumstances.

13. **Zero-sum syndrome.** Numerous problems, such as the over-developed state, are due to the fact that the state is the only possible source of income. There are no segments of society that can adequately counterbalance the state in this sense. Is this gradually changing nowadays, for example via privatization? Or — given the financial dependence of the African countries — does the state, as channel for development funds and loans and as import and export supervisor, remain the sole source of income? Do greater supervision and "good governance" provide sufficient guarantees here? What role do the development policies of the international community play here?

14. **The international community.** International organizations, transnational enterprises, national governments and international NGOs have all come to have more and more influence over African governments. It is extremely important to gain insight into the
changing interests of these actors, so that here as well, supervision can be exercised. Related to this issue, and referred to at various points above, is the question of how democratic the international political scene really is.

15. **Structural adjustment programmes.** It would seem as if the SAPs are apt to lead to sizeable changes not only in the division of income and the sources of income, but also in the development of human resources. There are ample conjectures about the long-term as well as the short-term effects they might have on the development of the African states and on the democratization process, but so far very few research results have been made available.

16. **Sovereignty.** At the moment, the concept of sovereignty is a topic of debate in international politics. The democratization process in Africa has added a special dimension to this debate. The borders set down in the colonial period have caused specific problems, which are now once again a focus of attention. The rights of minorities, refugees and migrants, all of whom are numerically very much in evidence in Africa, need to be defined once again. In this connection, the discussion on pan-Africanism has also been revived.
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