

THE FUTURE OF REVOLUTIONS IN AFRICA: RETHINKING RADICAL CHANGE IN THIS AGE OF GLOBALISATION

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Abstract

Scholarly conclusion seems to be in favour of the fact that the age of revolution has ended. This contention is informed by the fact that democracy has become globalised and many hitherto autocratic and authoritarian governments have now adopted democracy. It is believed that with democracy and democratic government, reasons for revolution has now being overtaken. However, Third World scholars have argued that globalisation coupled with democracy, rather than bringing about the much needed relieve and development has actually accentuated underdevelopment and mal-governance. The paper interrogates the fact that the age of revolution has not expired. The paper contends that this age of globalisation has call forth new versions of the broad coalitions of alliances that have made revolutions in the past possible, especially with global inequality and impoverishment it has engendered. All that may be needed for the future African revolutionaries are (1) to find a strong ideological base with a language that is capable of uniting diverse forces, articulating and expressing their mutually compatible desires for change, (2) to find the necessary organisational structure that is capable of lending action (praxis) to these expressed desires both locally and across borders, (3) to articulate an economic alternative to neoliberalism and capitalist dependent development relationship that can sustain against the systemic weight and counter pressure of the past and the pervasive but hostile reach of the present global economic system, and (4) to sustain the impetus to make all this happen at all levels (local, national and global), working with both the deep strengths and frailties of the experiences and emotions of human liberation.

Introduction

Virtually all parts of the world today are facing one form of conflict or the other. This would seem to negate Kacowicz (1995) two zoning formula; “the zones of peace” and “the zones of war,” with countries formerly in the zones of peace now embroiled in one form of conflict or another. The occurrence of global jihadism has globalised terrorism, making it a concern for every nation on the globe. The African continent has not been immune to conflicts which can be divided into two broad epochs. The first epoch is delineated as the period preceding and ending with the East-West Cold War. Within this epoch, three variants of conflicts can be discerned. The first variant consists of the various anti-colonial insurrections and wars of national liberation. Most notable of this period were the Mau Mau uprising in Kenya, and the various national liberation wars in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea Bissau. The second variant was the anti-apartheid wars in South Africa, Namibia and against the racist regime in Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). These wars were waged

through the 1970s and in the case of Namibia, all through the 1980s until eventual independence in 1990. The third variant was the major conflicts of the 1970s that were East-West Cold War related, in which African nations acted as proxies and provided the battle grounds for conflicts that were basically the East confronting the West. A good example of this was the conflict between Ethiopia and Somalia (1976-83), the Angolan civil war (1975-88) in which the East took side with the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) against the West-backed National Union for the Total Liberation of Angola (UNITA).

The second epoch took its root from the post East-West Cold War of the 1990s. The nature of conflicts during this epoch is radically different, basically because it is more internal, directed at the state and specific ethnic group seen as controlling or monopolizing the state apparatus to its benefit and to the detriment and exclusion of other ethnic groups. As Wallenstein and Axell (1995:331-46) have reported, the pattern of conflict during this period was on challenging the existing state authority including secessionist movements which threaten the territorial integrity of the state and pose challenges to the central control leaving no one in overall command. Liberia and Somalia provide us with good examples. Furthermore, Ibeanu (2003) has classified these conflicts as; (1) conflicts that arise as a result of struggle for political participation or over political space, (2) conflicts caused by the contest for access to resources, and (3) conflicts caused by the struggle over identity. To these, Kahler (2002:1) has added a fourth one: conflicts caused “by persistent attachment to territory”.

Conflicts in contemporary world have taken many forms or combination of forms; irregular or unconventional wars such as revolution, coup d’etat, guerrilla war, terrorism, strikes, riots and “intifada”; a term that has gained recent publicity in reference to the Palestinian uprising in the Israeli-controlled territories. Using the variables of initiator of violence and the targets of violence and distinguishing between states and citizens, the universe of political violence has increase to include violence perpetrated by states against states, states against citizens, citizens against citizens and citizens against states. This therefore, is a reflection of events in Africa; especially North, East and West Africa where religious sectarian differences have turned the entire sub-regions into a zone of war. Although this religious motivated conflicts and terrorism cannot be refer to as political revolution (perhaps as a form of religious revolution?), nevertheless, the salience of these conflicts have convulsed the society such that one wonders whether they will ever know peace again.

In terms of revolution, Africa has had a history of successful revolutions (Iran, 1977-79), more of anti-colonial revolutions (Algeria, 1954-1962; Angola, 1960s-1975; Mozambique, 1960s-1975; Zimbabwe, 1960s-1975) making the 1960s the year of African revolution. There have been quite a number of attempted revolutions in Africa that failed, notably among which are Algeria in the 1990s, Congo to Zaire, Iran, Iraq and Egypt, just to mention the obvious ones. However, since the 1970s till now, there have been a false sense of normalcy within the political terrain and this in spite of the numerous challenges posed by globalisation on the social, economic and resources of African nations, have made us to wonder whether revolution is still possible. Put differently, why are there no more political upheavals and social revolutions in African nations in spite of the hardship imposed on the political, economic and social fabrics of African nations by globalisation. Are we saying that the age of revolutions has passed? An enquiry into this issue is the agenda that this paper has set for itself. The path of enquiry necessitates that we first attempt to explain and put the concept of revolution in historical perspectives, look at the various trajectories which the academic and scholarly focus of globalisation have taken, situate our perspectives within a theoretical

framework, assess the impact of globalisation on the future of revolutions in Africa and before concluding, take a futuristic look at how future revolutions in Africa might end. The paper is solely a theoretical one.

Historical Perspectives on Revolution

Foran (2005:1) opened the 'Introduction' to his seminal work by proclaiming that "the twentieth century, as much as any before it, must be judged an age of revolutions. The locus of these revolutions, with the important exceptions of Russia in 1917 and the startling events in Eastern Europe in 1989, has been firmly rooted in the Third World, on the continents of Latin America, Asia and Africa." Given this startling revelation and conclusion, the concept is still much debated especially in terms of what constitute a revolution and what it actually is. Neumann (1949:335-336) and later Griewank (1971) have muted the idea that the term 'revolution' entered into the Political Science lexicon from astronomy where it is used to describe the oscillation of a planetary body around another and later return to its starting point. Predictably, the reactionary and conservative usage of the term became popular amongst early political scientists who were the first to adopt the term (Leiden and Schmitt, 1968:4). The reactionary usage of the term referred to a revolving return to a starting point and by implication, to a pre-ordained order. Neumann pointed out that the term took a new meaning in the 18th century when the term revolutionary implied an individual whose actions can alter the course of history. Thus, the later conception of revolution as renovation and transformation in the "basic principles of good government" by Machiavelli became popular (Griewank, 1971:20). Marx and Lenin, however, refined this usage giving it a scientific dimension when Marx explicitly stated that;

the next French Revolution will no longer attempt to transfer the bureaucratic-military apparatus from one hand to another, but to **smash it**, and this is the precondition for every people's revolution....(emphasis his) (Marx/Lenin, 1975:247)

Durotoye (1989:20) in trying to explain the above statement by Marx, states that "a revolution takes place when a socio-economic formation is smashed and replaced by another which represents an advancement of society to a higher level of social development". The imperative to replace the smashed socio-economic formation with a new one distinguishes a revolution from anarchy but the charge of nihilism arises primarily because of this insistence to smash and destroy the existing system. A revolution is distinguished from a reform, again, because of this insistence. As Majola (1988:100) puts it, "a change or development that takes place within one and the same socio-economic formation is called evolution or reform". As far as Neumann (1949) was concerned, a revolution is to be regarded as a sweeping, fundamental change not only in the political organization, but also in the social structure, economic property control, and the predominant myth of the social order. Johnson (1964:10) has defined it as "the acceptance of violence in order to bring about change." Black (1964:4) has equally seen it as "the wide range of circumstances – from mere threats of force to major civil wars – in which illegitimate violence is employed within a country to effect political change." Meyer (1966:275) has couched his definition in terms of three distinct processes: the destruction of an *ancien regime*, a period of chaotic disorder, and the creation of a new order or political system. The commonality in these definitions is that revolution has been seen as resulting in change induced through violence or threat of violence and force.

Amman (1962:36-53), on the other hand, has adopted the realist perspective by emphasizing a power relationship when he defined a revolution as "a breakdown, momentarily or prolonged, of the state's monopoly of power, usually accompanied by a lessening of the habit of obedience....a revolution prevails

when the state's monopoly of power is effectively challenged and persists until a monopoly of power is re-established." Since change and power have become a common denominator of a revolution, Gross (1958:xx-xxi) had had to distinguish between two kinds of forced change in government; the transfer of power from "above" constituting a coup, and the fundamental social changes carried out from "below" that constitute a social revolution. Huntington (1968:264) has defined a revolution as a;

rapid, fundamental, and violent domestic change in the dominant values and myths of a society, in its political institutions, social structure, leadership, and governmental activity and policies. Revolutions are thus to be distinguished from insurrections, rebellions, revolts, coups and wars of independence.

While Huntington's definition points us to the numerous dimensions which a social revolution may take, it however, substitutes violence for the seizure of state power and/or mass participation. Skocpol (1979:4-5) has proffered us with a better definition by pointing out that;

social revolutions are rapid, basic transformations of a society's state and class structures; and they are accompanied and in part carried through by class-based revolts from below... What is unique to social revolution is that basic changes in social structure and in political structure occur together in a mutually reinforcing fashion. And these changes occur through intense socio-political conflicts in which class struggles play a key role.

This definition tallies in great details with Trotsky's (1930) famous formulation that "the most indubitable feature of a revolution is the direct interference of the masses in historic events.... The history of a revolution is for us first of all a history of the forcible entrance of the masses into the realm of rulership over their own destiny." By juxtaposing these two definitions, we can ably state that the presence or salience of three major factors – political change, structural transformation and mass participation - distinguish a revolution from every other violent acts. This is in spite of the obvious drawbacks in Skocpol's definition which did not stipulate how much political and social transformation is required to qualify as a social revolution, nor does it define what "rapid" is, nor does it stipulate how long a revolutionary government should remain in power to constitute a successful revolution. In addition to all these however, the literature on revolution also reflects those who believed and have argued so, that a revolution is more than violent conflicts but that it also entails deep seated and permanent "change in social attitudes and values basic to the traditional institutional order" (Yoder 1926:441). Equally, Hopper (1950:271) is of the opinion that a revolution must bring about "that kind of social change which occurs when the basic institutional (that is, legally enforced) values of a social order are rejected and new values accepted." Calvert's (1967:1) simple but concise definition sums up revolutions as "forcible interventions, either to replace governments or to change the processes of government **by smashing the former and replacing it with a qualitatively better one**" (emphasis and addition are mine).

To simplify this much debated concept, Johnson (1964:27-28) had offered us a typology of a revolution by using four criteria to distinguish between types; (1) the targets of revolution, whether the regime, the form of government or the community; (2) the identity of the revolutionaries, whether they are elites, masses or masses led by the elites; (3) goals or ideology, and (4) timing, whether spontaneous or calculated. On the basis of these, he identified six types of revolution; (1) the Jacquerie (the mass peasant uprising); (2) the Millenarian rebellion (the Jacquerie plus charismatic leadership); (3) the Anarchistic rebellion (the attempt

to restore an already shattered society as in the Vendee rebellion, 1793-1796); (4) the Jacobin-Communist revolution (spontaneous social revolution as in France or Russia); (5) the Conspiratorial coup d'état; and (6) the militarised mass insurrection (calculated nationalist and social revolution utilizing guerilla warfare as in China 1937-1949, Algeria 1954-1962, and North Vietnam 1945-1954).

An excursion into academic and scholarly works on revolution identified five main historical genres. The first generation comprised of the works of comparative historians such as Edwards (1927), Brinton (1938) and Pettee (1938) which focused on finding common patterns among the major revolutions of the French, American, English and Russian. In summarizing their findings, Goldstone (1980:425-453) has identified the following that; (1) prior to revolutions, intellectuals cease to support the regime; (2) prior to revolutions, the state undertakes reform; (3) outbreaks have more to do with a state crisis than active opposition; (4) after taking power, conflicts arise within the revolutionary coalition; (5) the first group to seize power is moderate reformers; (6) the revolution then radicalizes because moderates fail to go far enough; (7) the radicals then bring about organizational and ideological changes, taking extreme measures to deal with problems and secure power; (8) radicals impose coercive order ("the terror") to implement their program in the midst of social dislocation; (9) military leaders such as Cromwell, Washington, Napoleon and Trosky often emerge, and (10) eventually things settle down and pragmatic moderates regain power. As Foran (2005:9) has noted, a major critique against these pioneering first generation scholars of revolution is that they merely describe the process of revolution; they did not explain why revolutions occur.

The second generation comprised of American social scientists in the 1960s who tried to explain why and when revolutions arise using either social psychological or structural-functional approaches to collective behavior. These scholars include Ted Robert Gurr (1970) with his relative deprivation theory, James Davies (1971) who developed the J-curve theory, Neil Smelser (1962) and Chalmers Johnson (1966). A common shortcoming runs through all of their attempts which is that of the difficulty of observing and measuring aggregate psychological states and societal disequilibrium. The third generation is made up of the works of structural theorists such as Moore Jr. (1966), Wolf (1969), Paige (1975) and Skocpol (1979). A major criticism against the structuralists is that structures don't change by themselves, so change cannot be completely explained in structural terms (Foran, 2005:11) rather, "social changes are produced by actions; social changes require new actions. New actions require changed desires and/or beliefs (Taylor, 1989:115-162). The fourth generation which emerged in the 1980s has drawn attention to the salience of interrelated issues of agency, political culture and coalitions, the dimensions of ethnicity (or race), class and gender to revolutions thereby accentuating Trosky's (1930) point that "revolutions are accomplished through people, though they be nameless. Materialism does not ignore the feeling, thinking and acting man, but explains him." Among the scholars of this period are Geertz (1973), Williams (1960), Thompson (1966) and Foucault (1980). Finally, the fifth generation has offered a new direction in the sociology of revolution by focusing on the question of who makes revolutions. Skocpol (1979) has directed attention to the peasantry, whereas Gugler (1988) has muted on the urban actors and Wolf (1969) and Foran (1991) have argued for a coalition of "multiclass alliances, often motivated by diffuse ideals such as nationalism, populism, or religion rather than particularistic ones such as socialism..." (Foran, 2005:15).

Contending Perspectives on Globalisation

The concept of globalisation has itself become 'globalised' implying that the world has become a single place, a global village, and by extension nullifying the age old concepts of Westphalianism and sovereignty with both geographical boundaries and time and space becoming meaningless. Before the 1980s, the notion

of globality and concepts such as ‘global governance’, ‘global political economy’, global gender relations’ and so on were virtually unknown. However, today, the idea of globality has pervaded the lexicons of politicians, journalists, social scientist, researchers and even bankers. Their language of discourse is never complete without the word ‘globalisation’ featuring prominently. For examples, in Italian, the talk is about ‘*globalizzazione*’, in French, it is ‘*mondialisation*’ and in German, it is ‘*globalisierung*’. The ‘global’ prefix is now commonplace such that we now have ‘global’ markets, ‘global’ institutions, ‘global’ communication networks and so on.

In spite of its popularity now, the concept is not immune from controversies. For instance, contentions have arisen among scholars as to the beginning or the start of globalization. One school argued that it started with the dawn of history especially with the first circumnavigation of the earth in 1519-1521 (Mazlish 1993). World-system theorists such as Wallerstein (1974) and Waters (1995:2-4) have argued that globalization started with the expansion of European capitalism in the 16th century. Robertson (1992:179) had also traced the beginning of globalization to between 1875 and 1925 with the “time-zoning of the world and the establishment of the international dateline; the near global adoption of the Gregorian calendar and the adjustable seven-day week; and the establishment of international telegraphic and signalling codes.” Scholars have also contested whether the rapid increase in cross-border economic, social, technological and cultural exchange engineered by globalisation is either civilizing, destructive or feeble (Guillen, 2004; Hirschman, 1982). Levitt (1983) and Ohmae (1990) have strongly argued that globalization offers promise of boundless prosperity and consumer joy, while in contrast, Kennedy (1993), Rodrik (1997), Gilpin (2000) and Mittelman (2000) have raised alarm concerning the increasingly free international economic and financial flows which, of course, is a one way traffic; that is, from the developing countries to the developed countries.

Added to these controversies is the non-consensus on what globalisation really is. The various definitions of globalization by various authors reflect their academic persuasions thereby adding to its conceptual confusion. For example, sociologists, Anthony Giddens (1990:64, 1991:21) has conceptualized globalization as a decoupling or “distanciation” between space and time, Roland Robertson (1992:8) sees globalization as referring to “both the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole” and Martin Albrow (1997:88) defines it as the “diffusion of practices, values and technology that have an influence on people’s lives worldwide”. Political scientists James Mittelman (1996) consider globalization as a compression of space and time, a shrinking of the world, and Robert Gilpin (1987:389) defines it as the “increasing interdependence of national economies in trade, finance and macroeconomic policy.” However, Guillen (2004:2) has offered a definition that is both cogent and appropriate in its clarification of the concept and incorporated the definitions offered by Robertson and Albrow above. He defined globalization as a “process leading to greater interdependence and mutual awareness (reflexivity) among economic, political, and social units in the world and among actors in general.” Globalization has also been considered as an ideology which at one time appears loosely associated with neo-liberalism and technocratic solutions to economic development and reform (Evans 1997, McMichael 1996:177). As an ideology, Guidry et al (1999), Keck and Sikkink (1998), have also linked it to cross-border advocacy networks and organizations defending human rights, the environment, women’s rights and world peace. The use of globalization as an advocacy ideology is not limited to these alone. As Mazlish (1993:6-7) and Robertson (1992:68-71) have shown that even some religions such Christianity, Islam and Marxism have made global claims and have global pretensions.

The conceptual water has also been further muddled by contestations amongst three major intellectual and academic theoretical paradigms concerning their perceptions of globalisation. The first view is that of the conservatives who out rightly deny the globalisation trend by downplaying on its significance. Conservative traditionalists while affirming the existence and relevance of Westphalianism, urged that social relations are still organized in terms of territorial units with only limited interdependence between sovereign national states but definitely no global fusion. Within this conservative circle are the proponents of the Realist School of international relations who still hold tenaciously to the fact that the world system is reducible to competition for power. They dismiss any claim to globalisation by arguing that power politics still carry the same salience as during the Cold War era. They, therefore see globalisation as a ruse whose attempt is to detract from focusing on the management of power relations at the international level and the reality of the division of the world into uni-polar or multi-polar (Layne, 1993; Waltz, 1993; and Krasner, 1994). The Realist arrogance and ideological denial of globalisation can be understood as it challenge their fundamental belief by negating power politics and instead preach a cooperative effort and shared destinies among nations hence the notion of a global village (Agnew, 1994). Conservative denial merely has a salutary effect of checking unrestrained attempts and claims by proponents of globalisation to globalise virtually everything, but in reality, cannot hinder the world-wide move of globalisation. Their continued and insistent denial therefore, seems baffling and bizarre in the face of this reality (Ruggie, 1993).

The second perspective is from the Liberal School. Proponents of this school accept the reality of globalisation but view it as progressive, necessary and benign. This school has within it those who basically have some advantage to derive from globalising the world such as advertisers, management consultants, large sections of governing elites and academia. From the Liberal perspective, the current trend of globalisation is God sent and long overdue. It is seen as an extension, if not the logical culmination, of interdependence among states in the international scene. Thus, it is no wonder that in Liberal discourse, the terms 'internationalization' and 'globalisation' are used as if they are synonyms. Seen from the essentially capitalist Liberal perspective therefore, globalisation offers the prospects of modernity in the sense that it frees market forces, electoral practices of the democratic form, technological transference, international cooperation, thereby implying global peace and absence of war and national self-determination from the shackles of traditionalism and communism (Huntington, 1991; Ohmae, 1990; Mueller, 1989, Bhagwati, 2007). However, visible within this broad Liberal perspective are two strains of the same view. The Neo-liberal preached that globalisation will usher in the end of history (Fukuyama, 1992). In contrast to this extreme perspective, the reformist liberal cautioned that globalisation should be used to correct the present imperfection of the free world. The extent to which the liberals accept the ideology of globalisation can be seen from their claim that globalisation has heralded an end to history, geography and even sovereignty by their argument for rapid de-territorialisation (O'Brien, 1992; Camilleri and Falk, 1992). Also implicit in the liberal view is a lack of critical examination of the trend and an unabashed declaration that globalisation as a process is inherently beneficial to all. This is a demonstration of naïve optimism by claiming that globalisation will automatically yield a universal, homogeneous, egalitarian, prosperous and communitarian world society. Conveniently, the liberal denies that in practice, globalisation has often led to poverty, violence, ecological degradation, and exploitation of some part of the world society. In this respect, liberalism presents itself as an ideology whose purpose is to sustain the status-quo of exploitation and degradation of a major portion of the world system with false utopian promises.

In contrast to the two views enumerated above are theorists who belong to the Critical School. Theorists of this perspective view the notion of globalisation from the perspective of exploitation and unequal

development among the world society. Their approach is that even before the advent of globalisation, the world capitalist system had engendered violence and deprivation of certain section of the world, specifically the Third world of Africa, Asia and Latin America. Critical discourse theorists, therefore, argued that with the claim of globalisation to de-territorialisation and supra-territoriality, the likelihood of exploitation and underdevelopment of the Third world countries will receive a new lease of life. Globalisation will enhance, extend and reinvigorate new forms of cultural and economic imperialism, exploitation, underdevelopment, military threats and incursion, including all other predicaments that have been factors in the move towards modernity.

Two trends are discernible in the Critical Perspective. The first is the historical-materialist trend which argued that globalisation is a particular phase in the development of world capitalism. Theorists of this particular perspective focus on the effect and implication of globalisation on accumulation forms of state and regulation, dynamics of class relations and exploitation (Lipietz, 1987). The second strain of the critical perspective is the post-modernist or poststructuralist school which focuses on the psychological and cultural implications of globalization. Theorists of this school have been able to link fragmentations of identity, language and culture, crises of community and religious riots and intolerance with globalization (Featherstone, 1990; Robertson and Garrett, 1991; Omoniyi, 2003, Stiglitz, 2003, Ghosh and Guven, 2006).

Following Harvey's (2000:61-67) attempt and by distilling some of the vast and growing literature on globalisation, a summary of the main features of globalisation can be listed thus;

1. The breakdown since the 1970s of the US-controlled Bretton Woods trade system and its transformation into today's more decentralised and financially volatile system with other poles in Japan and Europe, coordinated through a set of transnational institutions;
2. A 'galloping' wave of technological innovation, akin to past advances but accelerated by the intermeshing of applied science and the international arms trade;
3. The new forms of media and communication that are changing work-places and allowing financial transactions to take place instantaneously, as well as generating entirely new needs and wants;
4. The reduced costs of moving commodities and people;
5. The development of transnational corporate export processing zones (EPZs), new forms of flexible production, and elaborate global commodity chains;
6. A constantly growing wage labour force, more exploited, diverse and divided than in the past, further shaped by hyper-urbanisation and migrations that have changed the face of the working class;
7. The loss by many states over control of fiscal policy to the international lending institutions and rule-making bodies such as the World Trade Organisation;
8. The rise of such pressing ecological threats as global warming, the imminent advent of "peak oil" production, and the adverse consequences of the biogenetic revolutions in food and medicines; and
9. Culture coming to the forefront in unpredictable ways as processes of both homogenisation and resistance speed up.

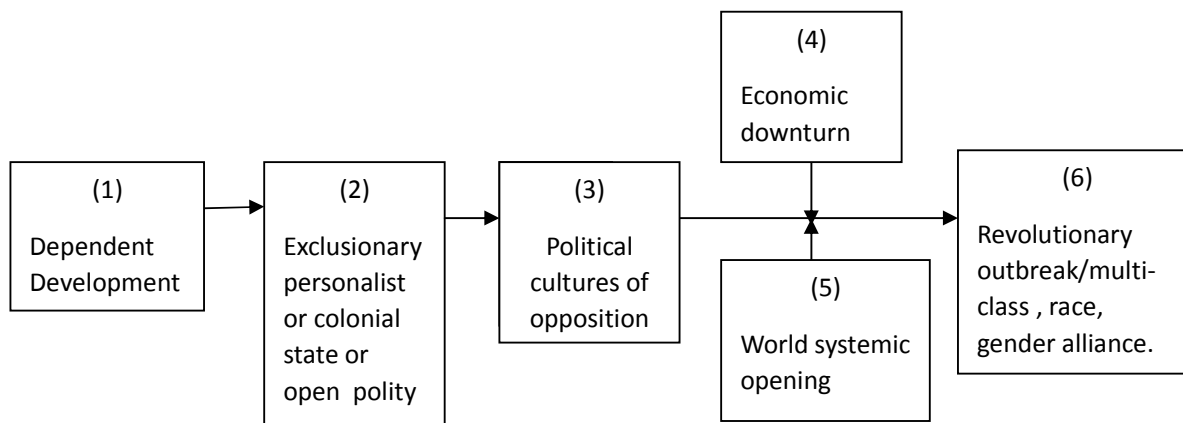
Theoretical Framework

Taking stock of the many cases of successful and/or failed revolutions and the many literature thus generated to proffer explanations as to why, had led to one conclusion; that the search for a single overarching theory of social revolution is impossible. To get around this therefore, scholars have distilled from empirical evidences of revolutions certain typologies and patterns. For instance, Huntington (1968) has distinguished between what he called "Western" and "Eastern" types of revolutions. He categorised the "Western" type as

symptomatic of a regime that simply collapses without much application of force and one in which the trajectory of the revolution is from a moderate to a radical phase while spreading from the city to the countryside (examples include France, Russia, Mexico, Bolivia and Ethiopia). His “Eastern” type focused on colonial regimes or military dictatorships, requiring civil war and spreading from the countryside to the city with radicals assuming the leadership before power is seized (examples of these include China, Vietnam, South Yemen, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique and Angola). Dix (1983:281-94) has proposed a third category; the “Latin American” variety to account for the revolutions in Cuba and Nicaragua, with semi-modern regimes and developed societies.

Considering the fact that contrary to all prognosis and predictions, most Third World revolutions have occurred in smaller, more dependent societies with mixed social base and not peasant dominated, reflecting the unique complexities of Third World class structure and politics, there is therefore need for a different theoretical framework that would capture the uniqueness of revolution in these societies. This theoretical framework should provide an explanatory schema for “why revolutions so rarely occur at all in Third World settings generally, for while most world revolutions have been in the Third World, most Third World countries have not experienced revolutions” (Foran, 2005:17). This is not really a novel idea. Scholars such as Goodwin (2000), Roxborough (1989:99-121), Goldfrank (1979:135-65) have suggested a combination of four necessary and sufficient factors/conditions for Third World social revolutions ranging from “(1) a tolerant or permissive world context, (2) a severe political crisis paralysing the administrative and coercive capacities of the state, (3) widespread rural rebellion, and (4) dissident elite political movements,” and DeFronzo (1991:10) who proposed a structured model of five factors, including (1) mass frustration, (2) dissident elites, (3) unifying motivations, (4) “a crisis of the state which may be caused by a catastrophic defeat in war, a natural disaster, an economic depression, or the withdrawal of critical economic or military support from other nations,” and (5) “a permissive or tolerant world context” (citing Goldfrank, 1979) have focussed attentions on this.

However, our adopted framework is that of Foran (2005:18-24) whose conceptual framework draws from many of the “specific insights of the latest generation of scholars, but with its own particular synthesis that insists on balancing attention to such perennial (and all too often reified) dichotomies as structure and agency, political economy and culture, state and social structure, internal and external factors.” Foran’s concept is thus schematically presented below.



A model of Third World Social Revolution (Foran, 2005:18).

Dependent scholars are all agreed that Third World social structures are the products of the complex intermeshing of internal (pre-existing modes of production) and external (emanating from the powerful capitalist core nations) dynamics which produced a new complex of pre-capitalist and capitalist modes of production in the Third World. This has reshaped the trajectory of development in Third World economies producing such problems as inflation, debt, growing inequality, overburdened housing and educational infrastructures and many other social ills. In this, the world-system theorists like Wallerstein and the dependent scholars are all agreed that this forcible and historical insertion of Third World nations into the world capitalist economy system has led to the latter's dependence on the core north and thus significantly shaped its social structure with negative repercussions for specific groups and classes in the societies. Given this fact therefore, Foran (2005:19) submits that "it is from this subset of dependent developers that revolutions arise" ... "that the process of dependent development is the principle cause of the grievances of the classes and groups that participate in revolutionary coalitions, as well as the key to a more understanding of Third World social structure itself."

In order to contain the agitations of the displaced and suffering classes and groups, a repressive government is necessary and eventually emerges to guarantee order. Thus a repressive, exclusionary and personalist state which almost always accompanies dependent development legitimises repression of the lower classes and exclusion of both the emergent and growing middle class from political participation. Rather than quell the mounting political agitations and suffering of the people, such government merely succeeds in exacerbating conflictual relationships between the state and civil society, facilitating the formation of a broad multi-class alliance of the middle and lower classes with some segments of the upper class, against the state and providing them with a vulnerable target for cross-class social movements.

Thirdly is that for a revolution to occur, the opposition must coalesce, leading to the emergent of a "political cultures of opposition and resistance" (Foran, 1997:203-226) caused by the coalition of broad segments of many groups and classes in the society. To authenticate and legitimise their claims of suffering, such political cultures of opposition may draw justification from diverse sources such as formal ideologies, folk traditions, and popular idioms ranging from ideas to feelings of nationalism, socialism and democracy to the emancipatory power of religion. Fourthly is the presence of what the literature on revolution has variously termed as "accelerators," "precipitants," and/or "triggers," (Johnson, 1966:112). This means that a revolutionary situation is likely to occur if a crisis arises that both weakens the state and emboldens the opposition. This crisis (accelerator, precipitant or trigger) may be in form of an economic downturn, natural disaster, world-wide recession, military defeat by an external force, all adding to the present level of misery and exacerbating grievances throughout the society. When this factor is combined with the fifth – world-systemic opening – a powerful conjecture arises for revolutionary movements to succeed. By world-systemic opening is meant that the satellite's relationship with the core economy is disrupted with the core economy's control being lessened on the satellite due to some internal challenges, depression, war or rivalries with another core economy. As Foran (2005:23) has submitted, "this let-up of external control adds to the crisis of the state and creates an opening for the activity of revolutionaries." Finally, Foran (2005:23) submits that "the combination of all five of these factors is required for a social revolution to succeed. Any other combination will result in a different outcome." Where all of the above five conditions are met, the model suggests that "a revolutionary outbreak has optimal chances of occurring, in which a multi-class, cross-racial and all-gendered coalition of aggrieved social forces will emerge and coalesce to carry out a revolutionary project."

Assessing the Impact of Globalisation on the Prospects of Future Revolution.

The question that belabours us here is whether the age of revolutions is over now that the world has become globalised. At one end of the discourse, the conservatives' position is that the age of revolution is over (Nodia, 2000:164-71; Snyder, 1999:5-28). Their conclusion is premised on the fact that it will become harder for revolutions to occur in a world of global corporations and commodity chains, global cultural forms, instantaneous communication and swift travel, the collapse of Soviet-styled socialism and a no longer bipolar international political arrangement. Scholars such as Goodwin (2001) have equally reiterated the fact that with the passing of colonialism and indiscriminately repressive dictatorships, there may be a diminish future for revolutions. However, at the other end of the discourse are those who argue that more than before, globalisation has raised further the environment necessary and germane to revolutions. Selbin (2001) has opined that "as global gaps between the haves and have-nots increase and neoliberalism fails to deliver on its promise, revolution will be more likely." Foran (2005:259) is also of the opinion that as long as "North-South inequality continues to deepen on many levels with the "triumph" of neoliberalism, and as long as the Third World left has not suffered a fatal or permanent blow to its political creativity with the collapse of what has until now passed for socialism," then there is a great possibility for future revolutions in Africa.

We opined that in any discussion of the impact of globalisation on the prospect of future revolutions especially in Africa, two themes from the overall effects of globalisation will be of paramount importance to the discussion. These are the extent of world poverty as engendered by globalisation and the declining significance of the concept of nation-state or Westphalianism. Most scholars of Third World origin are quite clear on the fact that globalisation has exacerbated inequality and poverty world-wide, enlarging the divide between North and South with economic disparities on the rise and the assets of the three richest people in the world in 1999 exceeding the combined GNP of the twenty-five least developed countries with a population of over 500 million, while the assets of the 200 richest people in the world in 1999 exceeded the combined income of 41% of the world's people (UNDP, 1999). It can only be expected that the report would have worsened by now with the general trend now established if we considered the growing and devastating consequences of Third World debt and structural adjustment for development. The impact of globalisation seems clear enough and suggests strongly that there is no immediate end to dependent development. Given this fact therefore, one may reasonably conclude that dependent development will still be salient in assessing the prospects of future revolutions in Africa and the rest of the Third World.

There is also a widespread belief as evinced in the literature that globalisation has also weakened the sovereignty and power of states, thereby making irrelevant the Westphalia treaty. This tendency is found in the ability of transnational companies to develop ever greater capacities to escape and circumvent states' regulations, control the distribution of profits along commodity chains and depress workers' wages. Two issues are attendant to this claim. First is whether state power is in fact waning in the face of virulent globalisation and secondly, whether revolutionaries have other options than the direct seizure of state power. The declining significance of states' power is evidenced by the fact that most states in the Third World have lost control of their fiscal and domestic policies to IMF due to the latter's imposition of structural adjustment programs (SAP), the vulnerability of the states to the volatility of huge unregulated financial markets and the hijacking of sovereignty in trade matters by transnational bodies like WTO that favour multinational corporations in economic disputes over and above the states' right to decide what is good for their citizens.

If the state has therefore lost its sovereign power to the multinationals and transnational bodies like WTO, World Bank and IMF, could the seizure of state power still be a desirable goal for revolutionaries? Has

globalisation not made irrelevant revolutions by this? While we may not be able to discuss fully the implications of this for future revolutions and revolutionaries, but suffice to say that with globalisation making democracy more popular among former authoritarian Third World states, perhaps creating more democratic space for free discussion of political, economic and cultural alternatives will be a more suitable goal for revolutionaries than direct seizure of state power. Even at that, this global diffusion of democracy is not a sufficient guarantee that the Third World states will be genuinely open to the rise of the left through elections. This leaves the revolutionaries no other viable option than to seize state power, smash the dependent relationship with the core economies and transform the existing social structure. This is the only way a revolution can be distinguished from a reform, because while a reform initiate change or development that takes place within one and the same socio-economic formation, a revolution is regarded as a sweeping, fundamental change not only in the political organization, but also in the social structure, economic property control, and the predominant myth of the social order.

How might future Revolutions in Africa have better endings?

In an earlier paper (Agara, 2014), we have argued that revolutions fail because of a lack of a strong and all-encompassing ideology that is capable of binding all participants together in an all-inclusive coalition and providing the revolution with a focus and an agenda of action. We still strongly believe in this. As a matter of fact, our study of successful revolutions further confirms this position. Bell (1960:370) has argued that ideology is “the conversion of ideas into social levers.” It “simplifies ideas, establish a claim to truth and, in the union of the two demand a commitment to action” (Bell, 1960:372). According to Apter (1964:16), ideology acts as the linking pin that “links particular actions and mundane practices with a wider set of meanings and, by doing so, lends a more honorable and dignified complexion to social conduct.” Some scholars have tended to see ideology as a rather loosely organized folk philosophy encompassing the totality of ideals and aspirations of a people (Ingersoll and Matthew, 1991:4). Ideology has also been seen as a set of ideas and arguments used to defend an existing or a proposed distribution of power in the society. These ideas are accepted as true, logical and binding by their proponents without bothering about their validity. Thus, the term ideology can be applied in two ways; first as a set of ideas which are accepted to be true by a particular group of people or nation or society without further examination or inquiry as to their validity, and second, as the science of ideas which examines how different ideas are formed, how truth is distorted and how we can overcome this distortion to come to the truth.

For future revolutionary movements in Africa to have better endings, they must be based on sound ideological base which will position the revolutionaries to negotiate and tackle the problem of levels of struggle. Every revolutionary struggle, notwithstanding wherever it may be taking place, straddles the boundary between grassroots and global conflict. The context of global conflict includes pressures from global financial institutions and the transnationals to continue the dependent relationships thereby making it one of the most likely sites for revolutionary activity and as the terrain on which political democracy, economic development and oppositional alliances meet and play themselves out. Ideology also provides the basis for sound political culture of resistance which is necessary for a successful revolution. The revolutionary ideology must project love for the people and the nation. As Foran (2003, 2005) has stated, “love is arguably the emotion that most strongly underlies the vital force that impels many ordinary people into extraordinary acts, across time and place. Expressing hope and optimism, it provides a constructive counterpoint to those other powerful animating emotions, hatred and anger. Love of life, love of people, love of justice all play a role across revolutionary political cultures. This is something that the revolutionaries of the future will need to learn to nurture and build upon.”

The revolutionary ideology must also project the revolutionaries' future dream of what they hope to achieve. As Foran (2005:274) has enthused, "dreams can feed revolutions," because it is part of the way we apprehend life. Sterile ideology that cannot articulate the proposed state of affairs, the expected end-result of the revolution, what the people should be expecting, is of no use to the revolution as a rallying point. Articulating a revolutionary economic alternative to corporate capitalism and globalization is very necessary. The emphasis here is that the revolution is not for the revolutionaries, but for the people, it should not be for the benefit of the revolutionaries, but for the benefit of the people. It is for the whole country, it is for all the people who have been suffering under colonial and neocolonial dependent development. This is the essence of social justice which constitutes the foundation of the economic side of the revolution which is geared towards addressing the main areas of economic emasculation and powerlessness of the people. This becomes not only the revolutionaries' slogan for change but must be such that people can rally under it. For instance in Mexico in the 1910s, it was "Land and Liberty," "Bread, Land and Peace" in 1917 Russia, it was "Equality and Egalitarianism" in France from 1789 to the 1990s, while South Africa wanted "Socialism with a Human Face."

Finally, the revolutionaries must be acutely aware of the fact of protecting the revolution against counter pressures from the multinationals and transnationals. In short, the revolution must be protected from a hostile world system. Although the end of the Cold War may have opened opportunities for the revolutionaries to operate seeing that countries cannot longer be treated as pawns or proxies in a larger geopolitical struggle between United States and Soviet Union, however, the increasing tendency to label every revolutionary or communist as a terrorist is America's new counter-revolutionary measure. The warning of Susan George (2002:12) of the "faulty but sometimes effective logic" of "You're anti-globalisation, therefore you're anti-American, therefore you're on the side of the terrorists" is rather timely and of importance here. The revolutionary must be ready to disarm the US and other global interventionist forces by winning the peoples' support by giving them new goals, coalitional possibilities and anti-hierarchical and creative political cultures. In counterpoint to Goodwin's (2001:8) axiom that "the ballot box is the coffin of revolutionaries," the revolutionary must be ready to go the democratic route, and as Foran (2005:276) optimized, "democracy in its many forms may become one of the best weapons of the revolutionaries of the future."

Conclusion

In concluding, we want to reiterate the fact that the age of revolution has not expired. As a matter of fact, this age of globalisation has call forth new versions of the broad coalitions of alliances that have made revolutions in the past possible, especially with global inequality and impoverishment it has engendered. All that may be needed for the future African revolutionaries are (1) to find a strong ideological base with a language that is capable of uniting diverse forces, articulating and expressing their mutually compatible desires for change, (2) to find the necessary organisational structure that is capable of lending action (praxis) to these expressed desires both locally and across borders, (3) to articulate an economic alternative to neoliberalism and capitalist dependent development relationship that can sustain against the systemic weight and counter pressure of the past and the pervasive but hostile reach of the present global economic system, and (4) to sustain the impetus to make all this happen at all levels (local, national and global), working with both the deep strengths and frailties of the experiences and emotions of human liberation.

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