

**Development for Peace:
In Search for Solutions to Conflicts in Sub-Saharan Africa**

by

Cage Banseka

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AFRICA -**

CAGE BANSEKA

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A basket case, an awful site, a sinking continent. The load looks too heavy for just one bull. This is Sub-Saharan Africa as many would like the world believe it.



Kal/*The Economist*/London

Source: Henderson, W. Conway¹

“PEACE IS NOT AN ABSENCE OF WAR, IT IS A VIRTUE, A STATE OF MIND, A DISPOSITION FOR BENEVOLENCE, CONFIDENCE, JUSTICE”

-John Keegan: *A History of Warfare*.

¹ Henderson, W. Conway, *International Relations. Conflict and Cooperation at the Turn of the 21st Century*, McGraw Publishers, New York, 1998, p. 255.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The last decades of the 20th century represented monumental moments in the history of the human race and of the entire planet on which we dwell. The last decades in particular epitomise changes of a colossal scale. The policies of Glasnost and Perestroika are said to have been some of its greatest landmarks. They have not only led to the collapse of the Soviet Union, but equally brought about the end of the Cold war, a change that has affected both international politics and the world economy to a noticeable degree. The East/West divide has effectively ended. The reunification of East and West Germany is portentous of this change. Outside Europe, we have also experienced fundamental changes on the global scene. In the Middle East, on the one hand, tensions have been escalating between Israel and Palestine, but on the other hand, major breakthroughs and peaceful processes have begun in other parts of the region, and are moving on, albeit with a snail-like pace. On the African continent, what has been considered as one of her greatest historical curses, the nauseating apartheid system in South Africa also came to an end, with the first free elections in 1994. In Sub-Saharan Africa, people of the most varied kinds and loyalties up and down the sub-continent, from peasants in the North to harried populations of the distant South, and all the way between, are repeatedly being confronted with questions of a great and often passionate debate. These include questions about change and choice, about what happens now, where do we go from here, and by what means? The September 2001 United Nations Conference on Racism in Durban, South Africa, brought so many of these questions to the fore. Questions about poverty alleviation, development, democratisation and conflict eradication are omnipresent in the African geopolitics.

Although terrorism is now taking a truly global dimension, and wrecking the international community with uncertainty and chargin, many optimists believe, however, that the world is a much freer place today, and many United Nations Development Programs (UNDP) reports do make confirmatory allusions to this point. The possibility of a nuclear war has become more remote, and the much cherished democratisation and regional integration processes have made much pace. It is now believed that half of the world's 180 nations have adopted democratic principles and are ruled by elected and accepted governments. Close to 30 nations are currently expected to join the trend by way of civic participation and the rise of political parties.²

However, painting such a glamorous picture of the world does sound optimistic and impressive, but leaving it at that might send the intelligentsia jittering, since they are certainly aware of the

² UNDP Report, 1992.

fact that there is another humanity that still lives in persistent anguish and suffering on a monstrous scale. There is indeed the dark side of things. This sad episode is brought about by mostly man-made disasters and wars of all sorts. The end of the cold war has failed to deliver the much expected peace, but on the contrary, ethnic conflicts that have long been suppressed by it are now erupting, albeit with increasing ferocity. Weapon production and arms trade carries on unabated. New markets for them flourish in the Balkans, The Middle East, Africa, South East Asia and South America. The traders in this market seem to be giving no thought to the consequences of their action, and there is no indication that this will end in the near future. This weapon production and sale have indeed precipitated conflicts and engineered massacres of frightful proportions, especially in the so-called developing countries, or the Third World.

Furthermore, the economic and social rifts between the underdeveloped and developed countries are widening at the speed of thunder, and the ferocity and anger with which many have demonstrated against this injustice on European and American streets is indicative of the seriousness of the matter.³ Terrorism, which as it is claimed, has its roots in these rifts and social divides, is on the rise and taking on more global, coordinated and sophisticated dimensions. America is mobilising the world to fight against this terrorism. The Bush administration is using both diplomatic and coercive forces to garner support for this fight. However, and much to the ire of political analysts, this global coalition is seemingly not about tackling some of the known root causes of terrorism, but battling with its effects. A global coalition against unjust economic patterns, social injustice and sustainable development would, in our humble opinion, be a more benign and appropriate fight against the rising terrorism. Many influential statesmen apparently feel they can fight this terrorist waves with sophisticated intelligence units, armies and tanks.

Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), which is our major concern in this dissertation, and which is equally code-named a third world, is undoubtedly the weeping boy of the globalising forces (though they have not been identified with any terrorist acts as a means of drawing public attention to their plight). Slavery, colonialism and neo-colonialism, coupled with mismanagement and clientelist politics, have evidently incapacitated her and made her too lame for the globalisation race. While acknowledging the dangers involved in generalising about this Sub-continent, it will be worthwhile pointing out a few indicators of the plight under which she is languishing:

³ These demonstrations are mostly carried out in places where important meetings of the International Financial Institutions and the so-called G-7 are taking place. Any other meetings that have a global economy on their agenda are potential grounds for these demonstrations. There are also demonstrations against individual heads of states, especially on their official visits to other countries.

-SSA is the least developed region of the world, and in World Bank terms, comprises a set of predominantly „low-income countries“

-SSA is the least industrialised region in the world (the sub-continent is also undergoing deindustrialisation in a lot of places), with the greater proportion of the population actively engaged in agriculture or subsistence farming.

-Its economic growth is among the lowest in the world, and the region has the smallest share of world trade, a limited range of export (mostly primary products and a very limited range of manufactured goods) and a great debt burden.

-SSA equally has the lowest life expectancy rate and the highest rate of malnutrition and infant mortality. It is the only region in the world where food supply is declining.⁴

-SSA presently has the greatest number of conflicts and historically the highest number of military regimes.⁵

This rather gloomy diagnosis offers a dispiriting outlook of the sub-continent, and emphatically confirms our assertion above that she is too lame for the recent globalisation race. Infact a Marshal Aid plan is emphatically called for at this time to save this sinking sub-continent. All the above factors, which have equally led to the ‘frustration-anger-aggression syndrome’ will certainly find salvation in a development for peace initiative.

The litany of these unpromising characteristics, unfortunately, does not end with the above mentioned. The sub-continent is not only disunited for a large part, but also has nothing to show for her abundant resources. Her economies are weak, and her political systems deemed wanting in compelling ways. Western writers portray it as a continent of oppression, human rights abuses, a place lacking in opportunities, bedevilled by discrimination on the basis of ethnic, regional and religious considerations. There exists a ruthless exploitation of the already miserable, there are wars, instability, corruption, maniacal leadership and illiteracy (the cartoon at the beginning of this chapter captures the scene more vividly). The place is overflowing with dilapidated institutions, roads full of pot holes. Hunger and disillusionment characterise the socio-political landscape. SSA is not only a dark continent in the eyes of the so-called civilised world, but also alleged to be the source of AIDS, which is thought to have come about as a result of some sinister co-habitation of humans with green monkeys in the wild jungles of the sub-continent. The wars in the region are blamed on warlordism and tribalism, or some other ‘black devil’ that is unique to SSA. At the end of the day the impression is given that SSA is full of idiots, people who despise democracy and peace, AIDS infected people living alongside wild

⁴ As Colins Leys has put it: In SSA most people are facing a future in which not even bare survival is assured. Out of a population of about five hundred million, nearly three hundred million are already living in absolute poverty. Macro-economic indicators seem to be pointing downwards.

⁵World Bank Report,1994.

animals in jungles, and having some pathological and unheard-of human afflictions, kleptocrats who parade themselves as leaders, starving children and nations dependent on the goodwill of international aid organisations, and desperate people just seeking any opportunities to escape to Europe or to America. In fact SSA is sometimes portrayed as a region from where nothing good comes out, where no new ideas can develop, and a place which inhabits rapacious politicians, blood-sucking generals, and a people generally addicted to blood and mayhem. All these sounds to us like a deliberate conspiracy of the media and writers in the West to satisfy and entertain the demands of a generally ignorant western public. Our main point here is not to deny the existence of some of these contradictions, crisis and conflicts in the region, but to hint on the fact that there is more to the SSA than people elsewhere are often made to believe. This misperception also eventually leads to a misperceived agenda on how to handle the problems facing the sub-region.

In the Western mind, and in view of its own definition of democracy, SSA is also the least democratised region of the world. As a result the sub-continent harbours authoritarian and repressive military regimes, with awe-inspiring records of despotism, endemic corruption, bad governance, appalling human rights record, and a suppressed civil society. There is lack of accountability, transparency and competence. Nepotism and tribalism, clientelism and patronage are rather the norm and not the exception. This bad politics, in combination with several other factors, have not only contributed to the wars that continually plague the continent, but equally made politics anathema to many people. This has equally led to the personalised nature of rule, and at times to a lack of mandated leadership or the so-called government of the people, by the people, and for the people. These are also living contradictions to the expectations of the IFIs and other donors, and The World Bank has put the case this way;

„Democracies, conversely, could make reform more feasible in several ways. Political checks and balances, a free press, and an open debate on the costs and benefits of government policy could give a wider public a stake in the reform. The need to produce good results in order to be re-elected could help, rather than hinder, economic change: it increases government’s incentives to perform well and keep predatory behaviour in check.“⁶

However, it is again worth noting that it is not only the lack of good governance that has offered SSA the ugly face that it now seems to have, nor is it the only root cause of the conflicts that constantly raise their bloody heads in the sub-region. The very people who today call this sub-continent a third world or underdeveloped have greatly contributed to making it as such. Beginning

with the despicable slave trade, SSA as well as other parts of the continent, saw its most able and economically productive men taken out and brought to lands where they toiled and laboured to enrich their masters and put them in that comfortable position from which they now view the world. No sooner had this practice been outlawed than another sort of organised subjugation in the name of colonialism had been put in place. Described by many as a grandiose act of banditry, the entire African continent again saw their raw materials and sources of labour leave and destined for the coloniser's land. Back there, the colonial master consolidated markets for himself. Consider one of the coloniser's slogans „*I go to Africa to try to make an open path for commerce and Christianity. Do carry out the work which I have begun. I leave it with you.*“ David Livingstone, British missionary and explorer in 1857.⁷ Many of them also claimed, in this vein, that they were on an evangelising mission.

The colonial powers exploited and raped the continent, destroyed long standing traditions, arbitrarily defined boundaries and in so doing implanted much of the dissent that is the subject of most of the conflict today in SSA. These colonial powers taught Africans to believe that European ways and systems were ideal and worthy of emulation; that their god was the true one, and that they possess knowledge that brought everything under their control. In fact they wanted to civilise Africa, to make them live in houses and not on trees, to make them drive cars and not the traditional means of transport, and to make them use industrially produced medication and not depend on herbal treatment. On the surface, this looks like benevolence, but deeply, it has made the African to long for those things and values that his/her immediate and natural environment does not seem to provide, and things which the colonial powers themselves do not seem ready to provide either, but rather more ready to take away. The search for those things and the frustration of not finding them easily has not only tortured and exasperated people psychologically, it has also led to open warfare and conflict among communities, tribes and nations, which otherwise would have been more peaceful.

Having achieved their goals, the colonial powers left as suddenly as they came, leaving behind them poverty and ill-defined boundaries, fragile economies, political unrest, mixed feelings, and no peace. Consequently most of the SSA countries have suffered more than three decades of war, repression, uprisings and massacre since independence. Civil and inter-state wars around the sub-continent have not only led to mass massacres, but they are also producing a generation that knows no peace, education, family values and civility; a generation that is bred in violence and understands only the language of force, fear and hatred. This is indeed an unhappy irony for the colonial masters who had supposedly come to Africa on a civilising and evangelising mission. On another score, this so-called civilising mission has also brought about the mechanisation of warfare, an innovation of the West that

⁶ As quoted by Mkandawire Thandika in Eshetu Chole and Jibrin Ibrahim, eds., *Democratisation Processes in Africa*, Codesria Book Series, Dakar, 1995, p.93

⁷ Smith, Dan: *The State of War and Peace, ATLAS, New Edition*, Penguin Group, London, 1997, p. 52.

has been carried to the rest of the world by colonisation, globalisation and neo-colonisation. It is often said that in the inter-tribal wars of pre-colonial Africa, a week of fighting between two communities could have produced only two or three casualties. The dane gun had a quasi-democratic character. In one out of the five times that the trigger is pulled, the gun explodes, and the shooter himself might even be the victim. Nowadays a young man with a single riffle could wipe out a whole village, and by so doing ignite hate memories the whole of previous history could never have imagined. Weapon proliferation has made the destruction of state and society too easy and too frequent.

There is, however, no subscription here to the often oversimplified notion that the problems facing SSA today are all from without. The suggestion here is only that external forces have set the ground for much of her economic stagnation and conflicts, and made her to try to cope with global trends dictated by those with the necessary economic and political stamina. Again, it may be unfair to suggest that colonialism was all negative. In fact many structures and ideas present in SSA today, owe their existence to colonial times, a situation that makes the recent demands for an apology or compensation for slave-trade and colonialism rather complicated. Human Rights activists in Africa and elsewhere in the world now feel the continent deserves an apology from their colonisers for the ruthless abuse of their rights during the reign of colonial terror. How such an apology or even compensation, if ever given, will change the socio-economic situation of the African continent remains an open question.

Furthermore, linguistic, regional and ethnic divides, coupled with greatly stratified social entities that greatly characterise SSA's geo-political setting have made it difficult at times for harmony and peaceful co-existence to prevail. The search for fertile land and good sources of drinking water have also made many to be permanently at daggers-drawn with each other. As earlier mentioned, bad governance, ethnic politics and rent-seeking have hampered economic and social development in many of SSA's nations, rendering populations not only breadless and hopeless, but equally violent and vulnerable to warlords. Many who eventually have nothing to lose, take on arms as a means of achieving ends or drawing attention to their plight, and a means of finding an identity and sense of belonging in a world they consider generally hostile to them. This has, in many countries inevitably led to civil wars, and wars across state boundaries in the African sub-continent. This African tragedy has sent different echoes to different areas of the world, leading to action by some and to inaction by others.

While the African sub-continent and the rest of the developing world are being baffled with this awful reality, some contemporary political actors and the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) on their part seem to be infatuated with the idea of a 'Perpetual Peace' resulting from a society of republican states, predicted by Immanuel Kant two centuries ago. This idea claimed that democ-

atic countries virtually do not go to war with each other, and that as democracy spreads around the world, it will reduce wars, expand global commerce, and bring about a general opinion supportive of human progress on a wide range of non-security issues. Since the early 1980s, this apparent pattern has been regarded as one of the most important empirical features of international relations.⁸ This is a view with which this dissertation strongly sympathises. This is because the concept has had some verifiable evidence, and has proven its workability in the European or Western context to which Kant is probably alluding. The West has experienced the bloodiest wars that history has in record, and they were essentially engineered by Nazism and Fascism, which were by no standard democratic. Since the disappearance of these regimes from Europe's political arena and the adoption of democracy as the ideal form of rule, Europe has experienced relative tranquillity. The claim that democracies do not fight against each other in fact evokes our academic sympathy, and all friends of peace do wish to see such a noble idea become the norm on all of our planet.

The democratic peace theory is indeed a hopeful vision of world affairs that forsakes realism's premise of endless cycles of wars and power struggles, but we are still left with the nagging question of what form of democracy Kant is referring to here; and most important of all, if this concept could become applicable everywhere (also in SSA), as the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) and other Western Donors now seem to imply. If democracy were to be consolidated in SSA, for example, would its norms and values achieve the objective of containing conflicts and effecting lasting change in the direction of peace?⁹ Another big question that ultimately arises is, how relevant the Democratic Peace Theory (DPT) could be in SSA (we shall attempt an analysis in subsequent chapters), given that most of the wars that are now being fought in the sub-continent are intrastate as opposed to the interstate wars that underlie the Kantian theory. It is with this in mind that we have decided to propose another theory, which in our understanding better analyses the situation in SSA. This theory will also be called the DPT, where D stands for development as opposed to the Kantian version where that letter stands for democracy. In effect we are bringing forth a Developmental Peace Theory, which shall argue that it is not democracy that will lead to peace in SSA, but development. Applying the Kantian DPT in SSA will be attempting to make democracy fit for the sub-region without first having made the sub-region fit for democracy. The IFIs and other western donors should also realise that the absence of war does not translate to the presence of peace. A state of peace, according to Kant, is the

⁸ Michael E. Brown, Sean Lynn-Jones, Steven E. Miller (eds.): *Debating the Democratic Peace*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, 1999, p. ix.

⁹ There is suggestive evidence that links features of democratic systems positively with overall aspects of development and welfare. A further result emerges from the empirical literature on the relation between economic performance and political systems. It is claimed that by developing human resources and more particularly, by investing in education, countries have been found to strengthen the basis for open systems. Some studies, like those of the World Bank, quoted by Mkandawire, suggest that for a given level of income, improvement in social indicators are associated with freedom and liberty.

expectation that there will be no recourse to war. A state of peace is also in our minds not yet a successful deterrent to war, but successful development makes citizens more aware of the disastrous consequences of war. It is not hard to realise that anyone will have to abhor losing a ten-storey building in which a great fortune, strain and pain have been invested than losing a hut that took only a few days to build. It is easy for the Masai in Northern Kenya to attack another tribe in neighbouring Somalia, since there is materially and structurally little he can lose by doing so. In his view he can only gain. On the other hand, it will be hard for the Germans to attack the French today, not only because Germany is democratic, but more so because they fear the consequences of such an attack in material terms. Germany like France wants to develop, and to maintain that state of development once achieved. It takes no great science nowadays to realise that they can only do so if they cooperate with France. This cooperation is inspired not by norms and politics, but by a feeling of mutual gain in developmental terms. It is therefore not democracy that has led to the greater integration in Europe, but their uniform development. Their avoidance of war as a tool for foreign policy is a question of neo-realist and rational thinking, not democratic norms and practices. Democracy does not make people better or more humane, and there is nothing so magical about democracy that today could make the French love the Germans who they had hated so bitterly some years ago. Realists have argued, and rightly too, that under normal circumstances all states will want to outdo the rest of the other states to their advantage. This was the frame of thought in both 1914 - 1919 and 1941 - 1945. If European states do no longer seek to accomplish this today through war there must be some gain in not doing so. Developed states are now amply aware of the fact that other developed states have the potentiality of defending themselves or inflicting great damage on aggressors with sophisticated and well developed weaponry. These developed states therefore will not go to war with each other for fear of mutual self-destruction. Give Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi and other East African states the Marshal Aid or the same level of development like in Europe, and they will find no reason for going to war over the Democratic Republic of Congo. Do the same to Ethiopia and Eritrea and they will equally refrain from antagonising each other. The recourse to war by the former has been prompted by material gains from the rich natural resources of the DRC, and not by the absence of democracy in their respective countries. The developmental peace theory, which in effect will provide an assurance of survival for the populace of SSA therefore sounds more convincing as a hypothesis in the analysis of the conflicts and wars in SSA. The American economist, George Marshall was right, as is undeniably clear today, to suggest that the only way to make Germany less aggressive, and keeping her perpetually so, would be by revamping and stabilising her economy, and not by exacting war reparations from her. This alternative was tried, and unlike the situation after World War I, the country developed so rapidly, and consequently became peaceful with her neighbours. If another Versailles-like sort of treaty had been

put in place the situation might have been no different from the one after World war I. Marshall did not propose democracy or some other political idea as a solution. This should be a lesson for the Bretton Woods Institutions to learn in their dealings with the less developed countries in general, and with the SSA in particular. Wealth for peace has been the motto in Europe, especially after the Second World War, and it could be the same for SSA that is also facing a situation not very different from the European war and after-war experience. Furthermore, most of the problems the IMF and World Bank have recognised as facing the African sub-continent are more economic than political or institutional.

It is, however, worth noting at this point that SSA has witnessed an unprecedented growth in the democratisation process in the last decades. Several grassroots organisations have mobilised themselves to promoting liberalisation, to pave the way for political reforms and putting an end to one-party domination. By the early 1990s several SSA nations had undergone this transition (e.g. Benin, Kenya, Nigeria, Sudan, Zambia, to name but these). Popular alliances have equally been successful in ousting totalitarian African regimes in Zambia, Benin, and Sudan, to mention just these few.¹⁰ Despite these positive steps in the direction of democratisation, the sub-continent's record on conflict and violence is still evidently on very gloomy pages. The World Bank and other like-minded external donors view the adoption of democratic principles as a prerequisite to the obtention of aid, and a precondition for membership in these organisations. They have therefore continually insisted on the consolidation of democracy as part of their very much cherished Structural Adjustment Program. This seems to suggest that in their political conditionality, the World Bank and foreign donors are proposing or advocating liberal democracy for SSA as a solution to the conflicts, poverty and under-development presently plaguing the continent. It has been asserted by the IFIs, and analysts that;

„The aims of political conditionality are threefold: to promote democratic reform, to improve human rights, and to enhance administrative efficiency. These are often subsumed under the rubric of ‘good governance’ which presupposes a high level of organisational effectiveness in the management of public affairs and adherence to the principle of accountability, openness, transparency and the rule of law. A more fundamental and longer objective is that good government can bring about improved economic performance and social welfare.¹¹

Furthermore;

„Countries which tend towards pluralism, public accountability, respect for the rule of law, human rights, market principles, should be encouraged. Governments which persist with repressive policies, corrupt management, wasteful and discredited economic systems should not expect us to

¹⁰ Bratton M. and Van de Walle N. :*Democratic Experiments in Africa*, Cambridge University Press, 1997, p.15

¹¹ Robinson, Mark, ‘Will Political Conditionality Work?’ *IDS Bulletin*, Vol. 24, No. 1, 1993.

*support their folly with scarce resources which could be used better elsewhere.*¹²

The experience of democratic transition in SSA to date has demonstrated that while the overall direction of change might be positive, it has not been problem free. It has been prone to reversals, and in some cases to political violence and other forms of conflict. It has become undoubted that all the conditionalities as put forth by the International Financial Institutions (IFIs), as already mentioned, have unfortunately not brought about the end to conflicts and advanced development, or even the hope that these conflicts and the economic crisis will soon end. On the contrary, and as a result of misguided policies, they have created more problems for the countries of the region that came under this scheme. Furthermore,

*„... it is now clear that the main cause of the political change sweeping across Africa ... is not the aspirations of African intellectuals, much as they long for liberty; nor is it a union of the political opposition and the masses which has been conspicuous by its absence with fitful expectations... No. The principle cause of Africa's wind of change is the World Bank and the donor countries. They are explicitly demanding political change as a condition of further loans to Africa.“*¹³

This is exemplified by the fact that the open criticism of the Kenyan government (among others), by the country's major donors, and the decision of the donors at Kenya's Consultative Group Meeting, held in Paris in November 1990, to withhold 1 billion Dollars worth of aid to the country for a period of six months, pending progress on political and economic reform was instrumental in the decision of the Kenya African National Union (KANU) to repeal the reference to the one-party state in the constitution and to announce the holding of multi-party elections.¹⁴ However, the question of what constitutes genuine democracy has remained clouded by the debate about whether this democracy is a universal or a Western concept. Whatever the individual interpretations to these questions might be, it is worth noting that the democratisation process has been on the rise in the last decades, but so too has been militarisation and the development of modern war technology. The proponents of the Kantian theory must certainly be baffled with this irony. It is the so-called classical democracies which are involved in this war mechanisation. Should their faith in democratic peace not have led them instead to spend the enormous military budgets in promoting democracy, and thereby giving peace a chance? Weapon construction only points to the direction of war, not peace. Furthermore, no

¹² Robinson, Mark, op. Cit., p. 59.

¹³ Africa Confidential, No. 3, 1990, as quoted by Sadig Rasheed, *The Democratisation Process and Popular Participation in Africa: Emerging Realities and Challenges Ahead*, *Development and Change* Vol. 26, pp. 333-354, 1995, Blackwell Publishers, Oxford.

¹⁴ IBID.

country will take up arms against another simply on grounds that the latter is not a democracy. Wars are fought for expansion, conquest or show of force, retaliation, pride or security, and other reasons. As could be true of both democracies and non-democracies state leaders can start wars with other countries simply to divert attention from miserable economic or political conditions at home. Although already democratic, many imperial nations in Europe fought wars of colonisation abroad. During the many decades of their colonial presence they did not seek to promote democracy, but acted in ways that were in living contradiction to what they themselves believe to be democratic norms and principles. They were more interested in getting raw materials for the home industry and creating markets for the finished products. In effect they were seeking to develop themselves at the expense of the colonised, and to be able to withstand the industrial competition that was raging across Europe during this time. In these former colonies wars are being waged today, and for almost the same reasons as the Western nations had fought in earlier times. Surprisingly, these wars become interpreted in the West as a result of the lack of democratic norms.

This dissertation is an examination of the Developmental Peace Theory as opposed to the Democratic Peace Theory in the Sub-Saharan African context. It is also a critique of the Kantian democratic peace theory, or the way it has been interpreted and applied, especially with regards to conflicts in SSA. As already mentioned we shall be seeking to propose in the dissertation that it is not democracy that makes countries dovish, but development. Economic considerations and a balance of power compels nations to be peaceful with other nations that measure up to them in those terms. This is either done out the realisation that is better to assist each other in mutual growth, or it is done out of the fear of guaranteed mutual self destruction in the event of war. No nuclear power can today threaten another nuclear power with such weapons. Those who possess that level of military development are aware of the consequences of using them more than anyone else. Their only success might have remained at the level of constructing those weapons and letting them act as deterrence, than actually using them. In effect, development and wealth make peace. For countries already in this state the effects of war with a nearby or far-off country can be extraordinarily unpromising and unrewarding. States with flourishing economic systems will therefore lack the incentive to draw daggers with others.

The dissertation shall be dealt with in seven major chapters. The first part shall explore the many and contested meanings of democracy and the forms that have so far been experimented in SSA, (with the view of examining if the current practices by the sub-continent of this political culture suit the aspirations of the advocates of democracy as a solution to SSA conflicts, or simply what chances

and opportunities democracy offers to the sub-continent). The second part will explore the causes of conflicts in SSA and their relationship with democracy or lack thereof. Following will be a discussion on the concept of governance and its implication for democracy and conflict. In the third part we will attempt an analysis of the concept with reference to two case studies; Tanzania and Kenya. In so doing, we shall make reference to concrete examples that may help cement the arguments we are seeking to put forth. The final part of the thesis will, through inferring from the quoted examples, suggest some ways forward in our understanding or analysis of democracy and conflict as prevailing in SSA. We will attempt to expose some of the events of the last few years that have given a substantial boost to the process of democratisation in SSA, and have opened up at least the prospect of reshaping the political order in the sub-continent into forms which are now startlingly at variance with those with which most of the continent has been governed during the last decades. To put it rather short, the dissertation will be examining and questioning the viability of the Democratic Peace Theory in SSA, while proposing the Developmental Peace Theory as a correlate or replacement of this theory.

The dissertation will be purely theoretical, and may end up raising more questions than it can answer. We are also aware of the fact that our Developmental Peace Theory, like any other, will be subject to different interpretations and criticisms, but we hold steadfastly to it, with the belief that our humble opinions might add to the already existing debate about the survival of liberal democracy in SSA, and its ability to bring about peace and development. Naturally, we cannot pretend to offer an exhaustive description, nor a definitive assessment. We consider such an ambition impossible, if not unrealistic, in a continent counting around 50 countries. As already mentioned above, our very modest intention is to propose another way of reasoning and another approach in analysis that could help in advancing the social and political life in the African sub-continent, and to contribute to the scientific debate on the theoretical framework of democracy, development, governance and conflicts in SSA.

No fieldwork has been done on the subject matter as yet, but some interviews have been carried out with intellectuals and students from various African countries, especially Kenyan and Tanzanian students, studying or working in Britain and Germany. The arguments presented here shall therefore also borrow from secondary sources such as published books, journal articles, and other publications.

CHAPTER II

ON DEMOCRACY AND THE FORMS SO FAR EXPERIMENTED UPON IN AFRICA.

INTRODUCTION.

Anthropologists seemingly believe that the concept of democracy is as old as mankind itself. In their view, what might have varied over time are its manifestations and conceptions.¹⁵ In this chapter we shall be more concerned with its modern history, and especially as concerns SSA in its somewhat special circumstances.

Democracy is one of those terms about which nearly all great minds of memorable time have talked. From Plato, Socrates, Aristotle and contemporary philosophers, much has been heard about democracy. Today it is hard to say something new about the term, and this dissertation does not claim to do so. Our singular attempt here is to explore the different views of democracy vis-à-vis its understanding and applicability in the political context of Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). We shall be seeking to answer the question, if democracy as currently understood and practiced, especially by the western world is feasible in SSA. We shall also be seeking to question if Africans have their own version of democracy.

Coming into English in the 16th century from the French word 'democratie', and derived from 'demokratia', its origins are Greek. Derived from 'demos' (people) and 'kratos' (rule), democracy means a form of government in which, contrary to monarchies and aristocracies, the people govern. Democracy entails a state in which some form of political equality prevails among the people, and where rule by the people is the norm.¹⁶ Historically, the idea of democracy has been a subject of complexity and offers plenty of scope for disagreement. It has invariably meant different things to different people in different places.¹⁷ Definitions of the term vary from extremely narrow to extremely wide interpretations, from institutional changes to socio-economic emancipation, and the development of a democratic culture. Other definitions claim that democracy must include the right of the people to live their own aspirations and programs, not only in political life, but also in the economic, cultural, religious and other aspects of life. By extension, democracy includes ending the criss-crossing networks of oppression, exploitation, corruption and discrimination.¹⁸

¹⁵ Archie Mafeje in Eshetu Chole and Jibrin Ibrahim, eds., *Democratisation Processes in Africa*. Problems and Prospects, Codesria Book Series, Dakar, 1995, p.8

¹⁶ Held, David: *Models of Democracy*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1993, p. 2.

¹⁷ Dahl, Robert A., *On Democracy*, Yale University Press, London, 1998, p. 9.

¹⁸ For more details on the definitions of democracy, see Elly Rijnierse's review of literature on the democratisation of SSA in the *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 14, No. 3, 1993.

Perhaps more than at any one time in recent history, today the struggle to define democracy has become a major psychological battle. However, not too long ago, there was a consensus among Africanists that democracy was not on the agenda in Africa. A variety of routes were used to arrive at this conclusion. At one end was the argument widely shared in developmentalist circles that economic growth and political participation were incompatible. At the other end was the contention of the dependency theorists that democracy is not possible under conditions of dependency. Somewhere along the line, there were those who arrived at the same conclusion as an expression of sheer realism.¹⁹ There has, however, been a dramatic turnaround in Africanists perspectives in recent times. The very same people who argued only yesterday that democracy was at best a developmental luxury, today uphold democracy as a developmental necessity. It could, however, be noticed that the consensus in these circles is more apparent than real, though they employ a common vocabulary. They equate democracy to accountability, but there is no agreement among developmentalist as what exactly this single catchword signifies. An influential interpretation of accountability as a preponderant ingredient for good governance has been put forth by the World Bank. It would appear though, that the accountability as described by the Bank is limited only to an anti-corruption drive, and its terms of reference are for accountants and managers, and not for politicians. Its concerns seem to lie in efficient management, not with self-management. Here, neither the Bank nor the architects of the notorious Structural Adjustment Programs ever thought of suggesting that African political leaders be accountable to their people, not only for the funds they receive and spend, but also for the policies they implement. In contrast to this perverted notion of democracy as efficient management is also the above mentioned restricted notion of democracy as multipartyism.

It could be asserted that in recent times three distinct concepts of democracy have emerged, accompanied by only two systems of political and economic organisation. It should be noted at this point that all these systems and formulations are Western in origin, a fact which Africans and the rest of the developing world should never forget as they contemplate on the term at the dawn of their own intellectual and political awakening. These three concepts of democracy known to modern history are: *liberal*, *Social*, and *socialist* democracy.²⁰ This simple enumeration does not suggest a straightforward simplicity in their chronology.

It has been asserted that liberal democracy is by far the oldest form. As a political form and utopian vision, it pervaded Europe and the kindred extensions such as North America and the British Dominions. It remained unrivalled for two hundred years, and therefore not surprisingly, it is the best studied form of democracy, and one that has been well advertised (the basis for the World Bank and IMF conditionalities on SSA countries in the 1970s). Its unexceptional and eloquent ideals include

¹⁹ Mamdani, op.cit., p.54.

the freedom of speech, freedom of association, freedom of the press, the rule of law, and respect of the rights of individuals. Even the worst fascists in European history, and the most hardened dictators of Africa and elsewhere do often have to swear by these ideals in order to justify their existence in power, and their social atrocities. This would probably sound like a perversion or debasement of a good concept, but this is as well a sign of its atrophy at a particular time in history. Our intention of drawing allusion to this here has stemmed from the fact that in the academic discourse on democracy by Africans, there is seemingly a failure to establish the social and historical foundations of the object of their discourse. Democracy in this sense becomes treated as an item of vocabulary, whose meaning will depend on the user's intention. It is sometimes as a result of the absence of a clearer definition that many of SSA despots give their own interpretations to the term, and like the European fascists of the pre-World War Two period, justify even their autocracy using democratic overtones.

Liberal democracy reached its climax in theory and practice in the nineteenth century. It was the apogee of European ascendancy whose influence was to be felt far and wide.²¹ Under cover of the ethos of liberal democracy, 'enlightened' Europe reserved the right to subjugate and degrade the less fortunate people, whom they often referred to as savages. It is not our intention here to dwell on the perversions of liberal democracy, for it is not only intellectually boring, but equally often sounds like self-pity or a miserable attempt to find excuses for the unscrupulous leaders in the so-called Third World. However, we do admit that stereotypes are another way of telling unpleasant truths, and in our context such stereotypes are not only of romantic interest, but we believe that they can be helpful in explaining the history and nature of some of the institutional structures as existing in SSA today. We therefore consider that it might be of some strategic advantage to consider the negations of liberal democracy at source. It is liberal democracy that brought Hitler and Mussolini to power, and it is liberal democracy that laid the foundations for imperialist adventures, and equally for class exploitation and domination, these aspects being what has kept most of the countries of SSA in bondage. The underlying supposition here is that, since liberal democracy was one of the achievements of a triumphant national bourgeoisie in leading capitalist countries in Europe, through imperialist impositions the same countries have now usurped the rights of ex-colonies to form their own national bourgeoisie or pursue governance and politics as they find appropriate. This imposition in most cases has inhibited the development of a strong national bourgeoisie in the former colonies, since this has become the prerogative of international capitalists, and any national bourgeoisie in the ex-colonies to which SSA notoriously belongs, can at best only play a second fiddle to these representatives of international capitalism. This being the case, we can easily infer that the present struggles in SSA with democracy and the so-called liberal economy are at times merely simple projections of given images of democ-

²⁰ Archie Mafeje, *op. Cit.*, p.8

racy from abroad. Not only are these projections caricatured in the SSA context, there is a further claim by the Westerners and even some African statesmen and political analysts that these projections can form a base for conflict resolution in the sub-continent. One of our greatest interests in this chapter shall therefore be to examine the feasibility of this claim within the context of what is practiced in the sub-continent in the name of democracy. However, we note in advance that the democratisation process in SSA has come to represent a crisis in the African state itself. This is becoming apparent in many countries of the sub-region. Whether the process itself is likely to lead to the creation of a reasonably democratic order is, however, quite another matter about which many people remain extremely sceptical.

CONDITIONS THAT FAVOUR DEMOCRACY.

In order to imprint a more clearer picture of the concept of liberal democracy in our minds; and for the sake of this present dissertation, it might be worthwhile to examine the conditions that favour the existence of democracy and the result that its application are expected to achieve.

Table 2.1:

²¹ IBID

Conditions	Arguments	Problems
1. Economic development	correlation exists between wealth and democracy; increases national wealth makes competition for resources less disparate.	a) correlation is not the same as cause. b) greater wealth may strengthen the resources of authoritarian rulers. c) process and rapidity in economic growth is not specified clearly.
2. Political attitudes and behaviour.	Democracy requires a willingness to accept government by consent as a means of resolving conflicts.	attitudes may be shaped by social and economic circumstances.
3. Inter-elite relations.	Democracy emerges when elites agree to the rules of the political game rather than risk national disintegration. These rules can subsequently be adopted to accommodate non-elites.	a) why is a point reached when national unity is preferred to violent conflict or disintegration? b) How can elite attitudes be ascertained?
4. Political Institutions.	democracy requires the establishment of institutions (especially pressure groups and political parties) which can filter public demands and thus facilitate compromise.	a) danger of historical determinism. b) Role of economic changes, external influences and even society is not clear.
5. Sequences in Development.	Democracy is easier to establish if political competition precedes mass participation, and if major conflicts over the role of the state are resolved one at a time.	a) Danger of historical determinism. b) Problems of recognising and quantifying the variables.
6. External Influences.	Foreign governments, institutions or individuals may supply ideas, offer inducement or apply sanctions.	a) influence can only be indirect; democracy cannot be imposed.

source: Pinkney, 1993, pp.22-23.²²

Furthermore, for democracy to prevail, there has to be an effective participation of the citizens in the political life of a country; there has to be equality in voting, the people should have an enlightened understanding of what their action leads to or not, control should be exercised over the agenda and all adults should be included in the democratic processes.²³

If the above conditions, conducive to democracy prevail within a state, the following will be the desirable consequences:

1. Tyranny will be avoided,
2. Essential Rights will be guaranteed,
3. General freedom will prevail,
4. There will be self-determination,
5. There will be moral autonomy,
6. Human development will be precipitated,

²² Pinkney, Robert: *Democracy in the Third World*, Open University Press, Philadelphia, 1993, pp.22-23.

²³ Dahl, Robert, op. cit., p. 38.