



LIBERAL INSTITUTIONALISM AND GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT: THE QUESTION OF AFRICAN IDENTITY

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Abstract: *As the world seeks to settle in the heart of Peace and by implication development, away from the aggressive world of power struggle and violent domination, a liberal institutional path that eventually becomes a global norm for all actors within international system was recommended not just as a solution for global peace but more importantly global development. Following this, questions yet to be properly addressed by literature abound on where the liberal developmental agenda has actually placed the third world region like Africa on the continuum of global development tracing from the deplorable living conditions and poor standards in this region. The paper observes that the liberal institutionalism's prescription for development is practically monolithic and technically skewed to only facilitate qualitative and quantitative improvement of those parts of the world whose values and sentiments are codified into liberal ideology while it consciously ignores the peculiarity of other regions such as Africa in its evaluation and assessment. The paper concludes that development for Africa will remain elusive and unattainable as long as Africa continues to navigate its own developmental path through a liberal institutional model without due attention to its own background and distinctive identity.*

Keywords: *power struggle; violent domination; liberal institutional model*

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1. Introduction

From its Latin origin, the word 'liber' has been used to refer to a class of free men who were neither slaves nor serfs and by fourteenth century the term 'liberal' itself is believed to have been in use to connote a wide variety of meanings. It has since then been associated with a different range but somewhat connected ideas such as human freedom, liberty, modernity, openness or open-mindedness, rationality and choice of individuals (Humphrey 1955, Hayword, 2009; Kudnani, 2017)

Liberal theory assumes that state behavior in world politics is defined by transnational society in which they are embedded and the domestic realities surrounding them. In this case, societal ideas, prevailing interests as well as institutions influence state behavior by shaping state preferences (Moravcsik, 1997), thereby becoming the fundamental purposes underlying the strategic calculations of states in the global community. Unlike the realists who place premium on states as fundamental actors in international relations as well as the monopolization of power to survive the anarchical international environment, the Liberals contend that individuals and private groups who are on the average rational and risk-averse could organize a collective action to promote differentiated interests under constraints imposed by conflicting values, material scarcity and variations in societal influence. (Moravcsik, 1997; Rourke, J. and Boyer, 2008; Blanton and Kegley, 2017)

The underlying assumption for the political ideology of liberalism is that freedom is essential for human development. By such quest for freedom, the structural dynamics of human society in this case is the international environment, which has to be changed to reflect this interest through an institutionalized accord and regulatory norms that will protect and guarantee the liberty rights of mankind. For liberals therefore, the protection and promotion of individual dignity in form of freedom and rights are more important than national interests and state autonomy in international politics. To this end, liberalism advocated for creating a global institution to contain the raw struggle for power between self-serving and mutually suspicious states (Blanton and Kegley, 2017) in the hope of building peaceful and stable society which will facilitate growth and development. Thus the present prevailing world order which is based on cooperative institutionalism and regulatory norms was recommended by the liberals as natural condition for peace and global development. The monopoly of this idea is evident in the present-day membership of international regimes and various organizations by sovereign states across the world.

A striking feature of this reality is the possessive role of the big power nations of the global North as the anchor of this present international system and the custodian of norms that guide its operations. Whereas, developing regions of the world such as Africa would have considered these institutions as an arena for projecting themselves and negotiating their own terms of development on the world stage. There is less than little evidence that these global regulatory bodies incorporate the peculiarities of developing regions like Africa in their prescriptive norms.

2. Statement of the Problem

While expanded literature on African development might have suggested global international regimes, an integral part of liberal institutionalism, as part of the forces of domination and new imperialism (Hardt and Negri 2001; Baker 2006), the questions on how these institutions have denigrated and attempted to erode African identity are yet to be sufficiently addressed with respect to the prime importance of this identity as a specific tool for development in the global environment. In response to this question of African identity, one glaring observation is the inherent contradiction in the global developmental experience of the present liberal system in which Africa is left at the bottom of the global development continuum. This is because of the corrosive impact of liberal institutional norms on African values, philosophy, thoughts and practices. While the developing part of the global south has followed its own social peculiarity and background as the basis for interpreting every liberal invention, African leadership has endlessly depended upon foreign thought and values to navigate African development in the international system. Hence, this study examined the actual impact of the liberal institutional path on global peace and development especially concerning the nature of African peculiarity and the context of developmental values.

3. The Liberal International Order and the Question of Development

Generally, the phrase “liberal international order” is popularly used to mean an “open and rule-based international order” that is “enshrined in institutions such as the United Nations and norms such as multilateralism.” (Kundnani, 2017). By and large, at least from the end of World War II, the liberal international order has evolved into universal global creed with different elements for establishing its firm dominance in the global community. Contrary to its alleged vagueness as suggested by some commentators on this political philosophy, for instance, Kundani 2017 sees

the tenets of liberal international order as located around three core assumptions by which it gains a global ascendancy.

First, International organizations work hand in hand with international law and agreements to construct a global structure that extends far beyond a collection of merely state-based entities. The United Nations is the typical illustration of such an organization since it unites resources for shared objectives such as reducing climate change, facilitates nearly continual diplomacy between allies and foes, and offers all of its members a voice in the worldwide society.

Second, an open, market-based global economic system will be facilitated by the development of free trade and capitalism through the efforts of strong liberal states and international organizations like the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank. A high degree of trade between states reduces conflict and reduces the likelihood of war because a war would obstruct or eliminate the advantages (profits) of trade. States with close trading links have a strong incentive to keep their relations peaceful. According to this analysis, war is not only unprofitable but also harmful to the state.

The third element of the liberal international order is international norms. The rule of law, democracy, human rights, and international collaboration are all favored by liberal standards. Several different costs apply when a state acts in a way that is against these rules. The vast differences in global beliefs, however, lead to frequent disputes over international conventions. Indulging in breaking of liberal norms, often comes with sanctions or some punitive measures. In 1989, for instance, after China violently cracked down on pro-democracy protesters, the European Union placed an arms sale embargo on China, an event that continued for a very long time.

By these three core preferences, the liberals are convinced that the cause of global development must be navigated and it is on this liberal vision of human development that the present world order is based. A pronounced background for such liberals' outlook on global development is the conception of development as a uniform evolutionary path that all communities of the so called 'global village' must follow.

Meanwhile, the creed of liberalism is generally held as starting point of the evolutionary progress of Western society from status-based and centrally controlled culture dominated by unquestionable authorities to ever more democratically oriented civilization where the dynamics of freedom shifted the locus of power from religious and state control to private concentrations of political and economic power. Humphrey (1955) described the late Middle Ages and Renaissance period in Europe

as a society organized based on status in which the rights and responsibilities of the individual were determined by his place in the stratified and hierarchic system. However, the growing sentiments for liberalism soon provoked series of protests against this medieval order and its authorities. This is why Harold Laski declared that liberalism is 'the outstanding doctrine of Western Civilization (Laski, 1936 cited in Allsop, 2014).

John Ikenberry (2011) in explaining the current international system describes it as a kind of fusion of two major Western experiences. First, there is the modern state system, which dates back to the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 in Europe, and second, there is liberal internationalism, which over the past two centuries has been promoted by the United Kingdom and the United States and whose ascent in the twentieth century was facilitated by the emergence of liberal democratic states. Whereas the Westphalian system was founded on the idea of state sovereignty, the liberal vision of Western democracies presented "open markets, international institutions, cooperative security, democratic community..." among many others (Ikenberry, 2011).

It is to this end that the liberals recommend 'modernization' which they twinned with advancement as a "common path towards democracy and market society" (Grieco, J. M., Ikenberry, G. J., and Mastanduno, M. 2019) and that the development of history is more or less a unidirectional or linear movement that takes the advanced communities of world and expectedly the developing as well in the pathway of capitalism and liberal democracy. Thus these commonly perceived advanced capitalist societies (Western world) become the vanguard of this international movement. Based on this yardstick and pattern of international standards, Development is no other than a modernization perspective of what they call it. Thus development denotes a social evolutionary process in which a society moves from rural and agricultural life that defines traditional societies to an urbanized post industrial form that represents modern elements. In this case, Modernisation theorists treat development as a phased process that assumes a uniform evolutionary route for all societies within the international system. As credited to one of its most famous exponents Walt W. Rostow, in an explicit counterpoint against dependency and other similar Marxist theories of development to display the ideological competition of United States and western allies such as Britain offered modernization activity as exclusive development scheme for the developing communities.

In his leading work, 'The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto' (1990), Rostow posited an evolutionary track for these countries to follow to become 'modern'. He identified five stages of economic growth by which he believed development would be actualized. These are traditional society that represents an economy dominated by subsistence activity and fall short of advanced tools and technology, the transitional stage which is the preconditions for take-off identifies an increase in specialization to generate surpluses for trading through the development of modern science and ideologies. The Take-off stage is the stage of industrialization where a society switches from subsistence to manufacturing economy with self-sustaining growth that leads to increasing incomes for further generation of savings for more investment. This stage is expected to be accompanied by the evolution of new political and social institutions that will enhance such industrial growth. Drive to maturity on the other hand is the widespread application of technology in its fullest range. This is actually the time of expansion whereby through diversification of economy some new fields developed into rivals of older sectors (Rostow 1990, Reyes 2001, Rostow 2013; Shareia 2015).

The last according to Rostow is the age of mass consumption where a high level of economic activity and complete urbanization lead to emergence of multinationals thereby generating income beyond basic food, shelter and clothing for large numbers of persons. In other words, this approach sees international capitalism as the last stage in the development of nations. To this end, Liberalism recommends private sector involvement based on the principle of free markets and open trade which has been very influential in shaping international development policies. Liberals believe that economic growth and development are best achieved through market forces.

To facilitate this progression, (at least from the point of industrialization) liberal modernization apologists espouse a system that is based on individual rights, civil liberties, political freedoms, and the rule of law with a government based on the consent of the people. Liberals argue that democratic governance with accountable institutions and citizen participation, fosters sustainable development and social progress. (Diamond, 2008). Thus, the mission of 'modernizing nations' is believed to be far more than sectoral transitions of economies but rather an all-encompassing transitional approach that explains the development of the advanced polities or states while at the same time prescribing the developmental pathways for societies considered as underdeveloped.

A recurring theme, therefore, in modernization theory is the opinion that globalization and international connectedness lead to a consensus that the most

desirable systems for modernization are liberal democratization and Western models of capitalist development (Johannessen 2009 cited in Dunn, 2013).

To establish this model of development, international institutions consisting of both organizations and laws governing international activities and patterned to become established norms are put in place in a structured order of a redefined global system piloted by the liberals.

In reaction to this reality, critics of the present world order, especially the dependency theorists maintain that the incorporation of the Third World economies into the capitalist world system which is dominated by the West has conditioned the underdevelopment of this region (Randall and Theobald, 1998). Todaro (2000, cited in Shareia 2015) argued based on international pattern of dependence that the Third World nations are essentially ruled by the politics, institutions and economies of either the developed countries themselves or other nations that are under the influence of these dominating wealthy nations, thereby resulting into labour unrest or crisis that harms the domestic economies of developing nations.

In a similar pattern of thought, the World Systems Theory also considers the global economy as "an international hierarchy of unequal relations." (Shareia 2015, p. 82). This according to this theory is because resource transfers from less developed to developed (or "core") nations and trade specialization inhibit less developed countries from developing by forcing them to rely on core countries in the act of promoting the 'peripheralization' of the less developed ones.

For these two latter theories therefore, the structural design of the present liberal order cast aspersion on the promised global development claimed by the liberal institutionalism proponents and its other derivatives theories such as modernization. One successful strategy of this system is its pompous disregard for the political economic sentiments of other regions while autocratically imposing western thought and values. The pertinent question then based on the focus of this paper is where does this international agenda place Africa in the long run and how has Africa been able to project itself or define its own path in the course of global development?

4. Liberal Institutionalism and the Question of African Self Definition

The notion of Liberal Institutionalism assumes that certain patterns of established arrangements constituting regulatory norms such as organizations and body of laws play a very central role not only in facilitating peace between and among nation-states but much more in promoting international development through cooperation provided by these institutions.

Liberal institutionalism focuses on global governance through international rules and organization in its analysis of international relations. Basically, Institutionalism in the international system would canvass for common objectives through the ability of international organizations to ensure states' cooperation as against the realist assumption that international politics is based on power struggle whereby military might and security issues become a topmost priority in the international affairs. But instead of such a tense struggle for power and unhealthy military rivalry among states, liberal institutionalism would rather want to imagine 'a world in which actors other than states participate directly in world politics, in which a clear hierarchy of issues does not exist and in which force is an ineffective instrument of policy.' (Baylis and Smith 2005; Devit, 2011) Liberal institutionalism therefore calls for greater emphasis on cooperation and soft power through "the forms and procedures of international law, the machinery of diplomacy and general international organization." (Donahue, J and Nye, Cited in Devit, 2011)

Hence a liberal institutionalist model states would seek to maximize absolute gains through cooperation and are less concerned about the advantages achieved by other states in such cooperative arrangements. By parading itself as a corrective approach to the conventional international relations perspective, which is based on domination of powerful nation-states in the world politics. The present Liberal International society is predicated on the coming together of states, "conscious of certain common interests and common values, form a society in the sense that they conceive themselves to be bound by a common set of rules in their relations with one another, and share in the working of common institutions" (Devit 2011; Bull 2012).

This basis of international cooperation of Liberal institutionalism presupposes that states in effect must yield a large part of their sovereignty, which substantially serves as protection for many elements of self definitions and national identities for the purpose of an 'integrated communities' that is expected to promote development through economic growth and while addressing different international security issues among many other things. Indeed one of thorniest issues in the Liberalist

institutional order today, especially for developing world is how states in the global community must reciprocate an identical set of 'universalist values' and much more importantly adopt these values even when it is not compatible with the nature of certain states or region, in the context of the historical realities of their national evolution, an element which naturally becomes necessary in navigating their own development path within the global community.

Meanwhile, the ancestry of present international liberalism can be traced back to Western society (Humphrey, 1955) where its philosophy, nature, values including name and formal identity became known and popular until it gained the current global ascendancy.

As Langridge (2013) explicitly put it, "Liberalism is distinctly Western." It is made up of "Greek rationalism, Roman Stoicism, Christianity, Newtonian physics, and the critique of the European ancient regime" (Gress, 1998, Puchala, 2005 cited in Langridge). Commenting on this, Richard Allsop (2014) noted that "Of all the fruits of Western Civilisation, liberalism is surely one of the greatest", informing us that what is now accepted as a global culture today is a product of some part of the world beliefs, orientations and historical experiences rather than common value of different historical background or shared perspectives as it now portrayed. Because Liberalism has its historical roots in the West, it is in the opinion of this part of the world that its extension is natural and legitimate thereby seeking to impose it other parts of the world, especially the global south.

In the light of such disturbing question on how and why a moral philosophical values of a particular section of the world or the narrow vision and world view of 'good' would become an unflinching universal principle for all to uphold. Critics of 'liberal universalism' have responded that such thinking of "ancient Greeks' local beliefs or religious-based justifications for concepts of rights and dignity cannot be a justification for the universal, areligious, and cultural existence of human rights" (van Hooft 2009, cited in Islaam 2018, p. 52). For Jaan Islaam (2018) he observed that there is an ideological failing between the liberal's definition of 'goodness' to specific group and individual purpose of life. Similarly, Anthony Appiah (2010) maintains that there are different ways in which both individuals and groups of individuals reflect on moral terms thereby determining different opinions with varying practical reasoning. For Appiah therefore a necessary and much needed consensus must be something that most people and not just the wish of a few (fundamentalists and zealots) agreed to. Thus a certain pattern of thinking should not be imposed on

people or groups of people, rather differences must be deliberated in order to come to a 'common consensus.'

Consequently, the capability argument first developed by Economics Nobel laureate Amartya Sen, which also align with the principle of autonomy maintains that people have different capabilities as well as needs and wants. In order for these people in a society and even society as a whole to 'advance' that is, develop, they will have to individually take responsibility to engage their capabilities in meeting their specific needs. It is in this same vein that the 'autonomy' argument equally claims that "those who can control their own lives must be allowed to do so" (Islaam, 2018, p. 53).

Harvey Sindima (1990) observed the corrosive impact of international liberalism on Africa by maintaining that "African society has suffered a rupture and crisis of thought and culture as a result of the encounter with liberalism". Reasons for this conclusion can be deduced from the fact that African Political thought and social cultural development are anchored on the values and philosophy of communalism and family life alongside interpersonal relationships against liberalism, which focuses on 'individualism' as what really matters and even consider individual as an entity on its own, thus emphasizes on social political elements of individualism such as civil liberties, human rights among others became a priority for social living. On the other hand, African social political thought abhors individualism even though it shows respect for individual but much more favours the understanding that people are bonded to each other in a web of social relationships and by such interconnectedness, what affects one member of a community has affected all as well. The family in fact performs a special role in the success of African communalism, this is because the family as a primary unit and agent of socialization enculturates individual with the basic value of the community, commitment to kinship and communal brotherhood in the spirit of egalitarianism. The family is also actively responsible for the production of social capital for its members thereby establishing a profound communal bond.

For Africans therefore, it is the respect for community and life that must take priority over narrow individual interests. In essence, while liberalism concentrates on individual materialistic concerns, African society will on its own focus on both the material and spiritual welfare of the community which consists of the individuals. Based on this communal worldview of social ordering, African society is highly patrimonial in nature. In this case so much respect is usually ascribed to certain influential men in different spheres of social interaction who are seen as communal or societal figures and are looked up to for mentorship and direction by whole gamut of followers who often conceive them as 'demi-gods'. These communal

fathers are very instrumental in bringing people together and fostering a sense of oneness under common guiding ideology.

By implication, the separate African socio cultural orientation as distinct from other parts of the world would naturally serve as the basis on which this region engages the outside world and ply out its own development within the global system. It was therefore unsurprising that the many Nationalists in Africa immediately after colonial independence attempted to reintroduce the African communal spirit through various political ideologies that tended towards what was described as 'African Socialism'. The doctrine of African socialism, was not just a philosophy, to identify with the historical nature of African developmental route but also an ideology, that sought to reintegrate a sense of common identity for the colonially tribalized and ethnicized Africans. According to Otite, major feature of African socialism is that man has no distinct personality separate from that of society; his destiny or future is inseparable from that of the society.

Therefore, the prosperity of the individual is the prosperity of his brethren (Otite, 1978).

In pre-colonial Africa, it is the case that there was no private ownership of land, or such capitalist accumulation that is prevalent in liberal societies. Similarly, the concept of African socialism defines African society as classless with a collective approach that was central to the attainment of common objectives. While Power in African society was held in trust by the rulers on behalf of the ruled a ruler certain accepted norms for leadership recruitment, legitimization, as well as social sanctions to check excesses usually prevent leadership autocracy. The tenet of African socialism therefore is African culture-bound particularly a defense of African communalism and a mechanism for reflecting on Africa's originality, cultural and social exclusiveness, in the face of other diversities with humanist and egalitarian characteristics (Otite, 1978, pp. 141-144).

It was in light of this that nationalists like Kwame Nkrumah used the word 'Positive Socialism', Leopold Senghor coined 'Existentialist' or Negritude socialism while Julius Nyerere developed the 'Ujaamah' to mean family hood as political philosophy of African identity or self definition on which they intended to navigate the path of African development in the global system. It is however a debate whether attempts by many of these African leaders to modify the western introduce democracy through the eye of African socialism by promoting a one dominant party phenomenon, in a system which has been described as 'Democratic Centralism'

went well for Africans or a rather failed self definition attempts in quest for development.

At the threshold of African independence emerging political leaders at this period consider it rational to maintain strong national support and avoid distraction by divisive elements of opposition to pursue a virile economic programme for development, thereby crafting their colonially inherited democracy to suit this purpose. To reiterate, there are three key intellectual angles of Liberal international theory through which the West extends its influence and perpetuates its hegemony on the other parts of the world, one of these is the 'Democratic theory of peace' credited to Immanuel Kant (1970). The fulcrum of this argument is the interaction between democratic states as against the non democratic ones. It is believed based on this theory that democratic polities unlike the non democratic ones would rather seek to affiliate with other democracies and thereby build a peaceful relationship among themselves. Thus the assumption that democratic state unlike most dictatorship political communities will not likely go to war against another democratic state.

Another angle of liberal theory is on international trade. Liberals maintain that the spread of market relations and capitalism will create economic interdependence and more importantly shared interests and gains that will serve as incentives for international cooperation. Of all this arrangement is the third angle, which seems to be most important as it is very critical to the existence of the two other angles. This approach centers on the dominant role of international intuitions in anchoring these core objectives of liberalism. The basic essence of international institutions is to create a rule-based society and to prescribe or better put, impose a particularly identified path of 'common good' base on liberal philosophy on all actors within the global system. In other words while international institutions are legitimized in the international community by the appealing and compelling objective of 'common good', which is laden with many fascinating terms such as 'liberty and freedom', 'individual rights', 'peace' and more important 'development' among many other selling points that facilitates the political marketing of liberalism, in reality these institutions are virile mechanism to indoctrinate and subject the global community into liberal thinking, thereby becoming a universal creed in the present order of international system which the West has boastfully described as "the end of history" (Fukuyama, 2015).

It is to this end that Langridge (2013) clearly states that the first function of these institutions (in the global system) is the maintenance of western hegemony.

In addressing the various contentions surrounding the imposition of common rules and laws upon state actors in the international community through the activities of such organizations like International Court of Justice(ICJ) , Enabulele and Bazuaye (2020), observed that there is always a major problem in judging a particular customary practice as a recipe for international law especially when that practice is not evident in the realities of participating states to which this law seek to apply. While the ICJ may want to uphold certain international customs as 'evidence of a general practice' between or among contending states thereby accept them as law, it is however the case that such rule of law is imposed upon states even when they have not actually consented or subscribed to the so called 'general practice'. Whereas the concept of 'general practice' as stated in the article 38(1)(b) conveys the impression that a particular practice or rule is recognized and accepted by the generality of international community for it to have the credibility to emerge as international custom but in actual fact there is almost no unanimous acceptance of a particular practice by all states within the international community. In other words what is today accepted as international law and customs that are made to govern all nations today emanates from common practices and beliefs of a particular group of powerful states (Baxter, Cited in Enabulele and Bazuaye, 2020).

Coxed (cited in Langridge, 2013) confirms this with further explanation that five universal norms of hegemony are expressed through international institutions. According to him, the first is that international institutions “embody the rules which facilitate the expansion of hegemonic world orders” and secondly “they are themselves the product of the hegemonic world order”. The third is that “they ideologically legitimate the norms of the world order” and fourthly “they co-opt the elites from peripheral countries” and lastly, for the purpose of stability and sustaining their relevance could “absorb counter-hegemonic ideas”.

In this case international organizations like the United Nations (UN), the World Bank (WB) Bretton Woods Institutions, the World Trade Organisation (WTO), European Union (EU) to mention but just a few develop rules and policies that enhance the expansion and domination west. For instance, Langridge (2013) focusing on the financial international regimes describes how these liberal institutions employ economic forces to control the developing countries (as a way of subjugating their identities). In this case she cited the IMF's Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), which are form of manipulated liberal ideology (Langridge 2013; Jones & Hardstaff, 2005; Stiglitz, 2002). A further analysis of liberal institutions' manipulation is explained by the allowance of alterations by these institutions to present a “minimum pain” for suppressed and subordinated interests in a way to

legitimize their actions. Thus while the Bretton Woods Institutions would provide different safeguards and social support even for domestic social concerns like unemployment however “on the condition that national policies were consistent with the goal of liberal world economy, thus extending Western influence”. (Langridge, 2013, p. 2; Cox, 1983)

More than every other region, Africa seems to have been the worst victim of the liberal subjugation. Tracing from the bane of colonial legacy which leave Africans with commitment to ‘borrowed paradigm’ of development impose upon them by their liberal colonial masters after destroying their own developmental ideology. Compounded by leadership failures, characterized by lust for power and material greed Africans loss of identity soon became long time long time developmental crisis. This result in alliances with western ideology who now accepted their outlined roadmap to development by African leaders who are warmly received into the welcoming hands of the liberals who have much desired to have cooperating partners from the peripheral states especially highly rich in resources Africa.

As Donald Gordon (2007) has observed the “patronage network, massive bureaucracies and Economic needs of dominant class” in Africa require a large and steady income, thereby pushing the region to economic crisis of the late 1970s which reached a ‘cataclysmic proportions’ in mid 1980s (Gordon, 2007, p. 87) and forcing most African regimes into a Structural Adjustment Programme and other liberal recommended programmes for economy recovery following a loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). In this case conditions tied to these loans require borrowing states to “reorder their society by adjusting the structure of their internal economics” (Gordon, 2007) in such a way that further detracts from the economic viability of these borrowing states while invigorating the groaning of common citizens. For a state to accept such loans is just then a submission of the national integrity of the borrowing state to close surveillance of its economic sovereignty by the liberalist bank.

The United Nations Organization is perhaps the greatest agent of liberal control not just for strategically dominating the permanent seats of the most powerful organ of the United Nations, the UNSC, but it is particularly responsible for the regulation and institutionalization of ‘liberal internationalist world order’ (Puchala, 2005, p. 571) through its many agencies. Beyond incorporating states into liberal structure, it often represents a virile ground for the west to compel their interest on others. As one of the leading western states, the United States for example has often used the United Nations to achieve its foreign policy objectives at the expense of other interests. This is more obvious with her frequent use of veto or the threat of it at the

Security Council to force down her demands which include her influence over the choice of candidates to certain offices (for instance Secretary General's office) as well as secretariat representation. This is exactly why it has been observed that 'The primary role of the UN under the hegemony of the West is to validate the liberal world order' (Puchala, 2005, p. 581). Contrary to the legitimizing argument of 'common good' that draws another region such as Africa into it, the United Nations does not actually represent more than the spread of political and economic liberalism.

Hence, the hope of Africans using such platform to secure their interest and navigate their course of development would only remain illusory within an organized scheme where the only acceptable definition of 'rightness' or 'goodness' belongs to the Western identities.

Unlike some resilient states which have not given in to the liberal domination, defending their socio-cultural identity in the face of pressures, African states could have also been expected to take up a status of 'dissidents' within the present system but appear weak in many ways to take up the responsibility of defiantly projecting its own self definition into the global community. Not just for the quagmire of leadership miasma bedeviling this region but much more for the largely docile, distressed and politically disinterested citizens of its failed democracy, accommodating further crises such as acute poverty and different shade insecurity, Africa in no doubt has shown incapability in lifting itself from bottom of the global developmental continuum unlike other developing regions which have continually strive to forge ahead. At the same time such attempt to create a common front to push for African development through a United African Union is not clearly too different from Africans' attempt to replicate liberal order in native terms as much of the liberal cardinal principles such as democratic internationalization, free market and institutional regulations are still same ideas that this coming association come to represent and stand for, however with a common 'myth' that the group has come to defend the paramount interest of Africans at large.

Even from its early life, the pan African spirit that engendered the lofty vision of a United States of Africa through the formation of Organization of African Unity to facilitate cooperation and solidarity in order to bring about a better life for African communities was soon compromised by differing ideological commitments base on different western attachment and perceived relationship. This resulted in diverging opinions not only as regards strategies but also the structuring of this continental group and by a consequence defeated the consensus agenda and other lofty goals

that preceded its creation. Thus in the light of many of these multifaceted dashed hopes and failed arrangements, African promise of development within the present liberal institutional system has continued to remain a rhetoric and a mystery yet to be properly mastered and solved.

5. Conclusion

The prescription of the liberal order in the present international system might have presented a huge contradiction in the development experience of Africa in relation to the other parts of the world, especially the global north that facilitates the current international arrangement. While many of these parts of the world are seen to be recoding progress in terms human well being and general societal living conditions which are bold evidences of development in any place, Africa by this indices seems to be operating at the bottom end of the continuum of global development. One noteworthy explanation for this is because the institutionalized norms recommended by the liberals is clear orientation of western social cultural value which does not take into cognizance the peculiarity of African developmental patterns based on its historical identity. In essence, it appears visible that Africa rather than really walking the path of development has actually been thwarted from its own self discovery. From Ontology, the principle of identity which is held to be the first law of being states that 'every being is determined in itself, is one with itself and is consistent in itself.' In other words, the fact that every being is one with itself means that it is different from others, thus the uniqueness of individuals is what makes them different from others and dissimilar in nature, pattern of operations and ways of achieving an end. The corrosion of such uniqueness by any means especially a predetermined social order will not only mean the stripping of others of their right but the destruction of the developmental path of others in favour of a particular set of beliefs and social cultural orientation. Accordingly, such global institutional framework is just a direct tool for perpetuating the hegemony of the West and sustaining their global dominance.

Africa cannot therefore be expected to attain its own nature of development without having and going through its own structured path as against the template of the west. It would be erroneous for Development to be conceived in terms of uniform formula that is applicable to all rather than a product of each community's experiences and historical evolutions. Hence, it will remain one of the greatest crises of development in the twenty first century for Africans to delusively hold on to notion of becoming a global giant under the liberal institutional personal terms.

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