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إفريقيا وتحديات القرن الواحد والعشرين**

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**21<sup>st</sup> Century 'Academic Imperialism', Internationalization  
of Higher Education and threats to indigenization of Research  
and Innovation for Development in African Universities**

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### **The Commercial Aspects of Internationalization of Higher Education**

Do the trends noticeable in higher education worldwide, (internationalization, privatization, Globalization), represent new ways through which developed higher education systems seek to control and use higher education systems in less developed countries for a new 'civilizing mission', one tied to the economic and cultural interests of the industrialized North? Are we seeing a new 'higher education imperialism' where weaker higher education systems may be divided and partitioned as enclaves (for purposes of attracting financial resources and raw materials for research); In respect to Africa, what possibilities exist that internationalization and attendant processes will strengthen research and innovation by the institutions such that they provide the foundation for social and economic development in Africa?

Slightly over two decades ago, 'The Second Scramble for Africa; a Response and a Critical analysis of the challenges facing contemporary Sub-Saharan Africa (Ndeti and Gray1992), was published; an offshoot of Conference proceedings by the Kenyan chapter of the Professors World Peace Academy (PWPA). Though then, African Higher Education Institutions were just beginning to implement the neo-liberal phase of internationalization, the articles in the volume, particularly those in section two reflect on formal education in Africa as an agent of the second scramble, being perpetuated through systems of intellectual dependency and the creation of a local elite who shares in the scambler's values (Gray, 1992:11). An interesting observation is made between the first scramble for Africa, which was led by Christian Missionaries, who failed in their messianic role as they practised double standards; Christian love and charity in their societies while denying them to other societies outside the West (Rayapen, 1992:19-24). This observation could make an interesting analogy with the manner in which internationalization of higher education has been presented as an altruistic process. The 1990s, should be recalled was a time the international community, led by the World Bank, counselled the developing countries against investing in higher education in preference for higher education.

Two decades later, higher education in Africa has become attractive; the same international community is promoting more focus on its development; but on terms and defined by them. This changed and favourable attitude to promoting the development of higher education in Africa, and appreciating that higher education in the continent has a place in global higher education and economy has been necessitated by realities of economic globalization. Economic

globalization has given rise to new pressures that challenge the traditional role of higher education; challenging the existence of 'the university' as a standardized and universal institution, but an umbrella of myriad forms organized in different ways to address different social, political and economic goals (Jones, McCarney and Skolnik 2005:7). The attempts to realign higher education worldwide; to institutions that can respond to pressures of globalization is what has been framed as higher education internationalization.

Despite the flavour with internationalization of higher education has been marketed, doubts abound of its true intentions, especially on if internationalization of higher education is not in fact another the face of 21<sup>st</sup> century imperialism, with higher education internationalization taking the place of the Christian Missionaries of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. The amount of academic and political reactions from the developing countries voicing concern of the real intentions of higher education internationalization is telling. From June 27-29, 2011, a Universities Conference took place at Penang, Malaysia, at the Universiti Sains Malaysia. The theme of the Conference was '*Decolonizing our universities: another world is desirable*'. Three countries from Sub-Saharan Africa; Nigeria, Tanzania and Uganda were represented at the conference, whose focus was on critiquing what the participants saw as forms of academic Colonialism, False Consciousness, and the Western University. The conference also reflected on the subtle tendencies of exclusion (of ideas, paradigms, models, options, missions) evident in the broad transformations and debates underway in most higher education circles, which have been triggered by the process of internationalization and articulated different versions of intellectual and emotional resistance to the idea of continuing to submit higher education institutions in the developing countries to the tutelage and tyranny of western institutions (<http://chronicle.com/blogs/worldwise/>).

The Penang conference once more highlighted the need to decolonize universities in the developing countries by resisting internationalization and other attempts to turn universities in developing societies into pale imitations of Western universities, with marginal creative contributions of their own and with little or no organic relation with their local communities and environments. Part of the resolutions from the conference affirmed of the need to restore the organic connection between universities in developing countries, communities and cultures. Part of this restoration should entail the recovery of indigenous intellectual traditions and

resources is a priority task and the need for universities to focus on their original task of creating good citizens instead of only good workers(<http://chronicle.com/blogs/worldwise>).

The above concerns show how increasingly instrumental internationalization has been perceived or turned to be especially among higher education institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa. It is seen not as a benevolent concern to develop universities in the south, but more as a means to profit, economic growth, sustainable development or ideological goal-attainment of political regimes, multinational corporations or interest groups (Stier 2006, Oanda 2010). The ideological purpose here is to use higher education institutions to impose the Western lifestyles and promote a desire to replace local, regional or national identities with supranational ones (Stier 1998). It is instructive that the Bologna Declaration (1999) has this tone; that internationalization of higher education may contribute to ideological convergence, a European sense of community, cultural conformity and, consequently, to social harmony. The European Association for International Education (EAIE), a non-profit organization has been tasked with this mission; to actively promote the internationalization of European higher education, and to meet the needs of international higher education professionals both in Europe and the rest of the world.

It is this increasing reservation about the real intentions of internationalization of higher education that have forced the International Association of Universities(IAU), to appoint an expert group to re-examine the concept of internationalization; to examine if the concept and its definition is keeping up with developments in higher education; to see if there is a shared understanding of the concept and if internationalization has lost sight of its original purposes(<http://www.iau-aiu.net/content/re-thinking-internationalization-iau-creates-international-ad-hoc-expert-group>). The expert group has been tasked to bring together perspectives from all parts of the world to among other issues, assess the extent to which internationalization activities fit the current conceptual umbrella, critically examine the causes that are leading to some questioning and even criticism of the concept, and to investigate the ways to address these concerns. The reservations with internationalization, especially from the south is due to the realization that it may not be after all a new process, but a consolidation of some historical tendencies related to globalization and the role of knowledge in this new phase of globalized capitalism(Oanda 2010). Hence, the officially presented objectives of internationalization as

mutually beneficial exchanges between higher education institutions are accompanied by other covert intentions.

The more worrisome covert intentions of internationalization are those related to growing promotion of commercial interests of developed higher education institutions and countries. The prevalent aspects of internationalization that have been suggested for universities in Sub-Saharan Africa have commercial/ trade and profit implications. These include franchising arrangements, the growth of a trans-nationalized higher education that develops networks of twin institutions in different countries, based on the commercial principles of 'economies of scale', the attraction of co-degrees- and the development of new virtual universities that pose a number of problems to establishing adequate quality controls and other practices that undermine regional initiatives to higher education development in Africa (Oanda 2009). These arrangements have been fortified by the classification of Education Services within the framework of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) of the WTO. Reminiscent of the Berlin Conference that set regulations for the partition of Africa, the WTO rules aim to regulate the international trade in educational services, not as a public but private good.

How have internationalization and the GATS regulations intensified scramble to control the educational market in Africa? Or perhaps one might ask, is African Higher education of any strategic commercial interest to the developed countries? And how has internationalization compromised the development of relevant research and development within African higher education institutions?

#### **The USA, Commercial Brand of internationalization and Higher Education in Africa**

On April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2011, the Chronicle of Higher Education (<http://chronicle.com/article/Commerce-Dept-Takes-Greater/126988/>), carried an article by Francisco Sanchez, Under-Secretary for international trade at the Department of Commerce, entitled, '*Commerce Dept. Takes Greater Role in Promoting U.S. Higher Education Overseas*'. Sanchez made a case for expanding educational opportunities for students in emerging economies like Indonesia and Vietnam as critical to developing a middle class in those markets, which middle class could in turn have increased resources to participate in both local and global markets, including that of the United States. Expanding educational opportunities for Indonesian and Vietnamese students, he argued, will

provide direct benefits to U.S. companies doing business in those markets in the future, as they seek out U.S.-educated distributors overseas because of their understanding of American culture, their English-language skills, and the resulting increased ease of doing business with them. Besides, he observed, the more than 20,000 students from Indonesia and Vietnam enrolled in colleges and universities in the United States, paying full tuition opens opportunities for more American students to receive financial aid and scholarships. Moreover, he said, the purchasing power of international students who study in the United States remains strong after they graduate and return home as they become part of the growing middle class, regardless of where they live in the world, will be more likely to remain Consumers of American goods and services.

The same commercial projections have been made with regard to the increasing number of African students in search for international higher education and the need for American higher education institutions to tap into them. Demographic projections show that Africa is the continent of the future considering that it is demographically the youngest in the world, and the one that is in this respect growing faster than any other (Marmolejo 2011). Considering current growth rates, Africa's population is likely to double within a generation, while the rest of the world continues having an aging population. This youth is evidently the focus of much for internationalization activities in higher education.

The above reality has fashioned the kind of internationalization strategies that developed countries engage. On May 22<sup>nd</sup> 2011, the Same Chronicle ([http://chronicle.com/article/How-the-US-Can-Stop/127587/?sid=at&utm\\_source=at&utm\\_medium=en](http://chronicle.com/article/How-the-US-Can-Stop/127587/?sid=at&utm_source=at&utm_medium=en)), Mitch Leventhal, vice chancellor for global affairs at the State University of New York, and co-founder and vice president of the American International Recruitment Council, argued for steps the United States needed to undertake to encourage instead of hindering higher education Exports and address competition for emerging markets. For example, he argued delivery of instruction overseas (popular in setting up of branch campuses and franchise arrangements), is another form of export much the same as when someone travels to the United States to study as money flows into the United States in exchange for the educational goods. However, he noted the increase in such educational exports are hampered by absence of coordination among key U.S. agencies and an absence of unified strategic vision regarding educational exports, and a lack of coordinated consultation with key education organizations, institutions, and the private sector.

He lamented the failure of the failure of Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, to develop a national higher-education export strategy, thus frustrating the efforts of higher education leaders charged with internationalizing their institutions, raising tuition revenues, and revitalizing communities. To address this shortcoming in the development of an higher education strategy, the author advices for the formation of a federally mandated national export council for higher education to force a discussion among federal agencies; Commerce for trade; State for diplomacy and consular affairs; Homeland Security for immigration; and Education for accreditation; and forge a coherent strategy to build the global bridges needed for growth and prosperity through higher education exports.

Research partnerships between US Universities and Federal agencies have been structured within the tone of the above policy context. The Launch in 2008 by Higher Education for Development (HED) funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC) in association with the Partnership to Cut Hunger and Poverty in Africa and the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa fits into this internationalization policy context. The Research partnership targets at increasing the engagement of U.S. higher education institutions in Africa. The focus for the research partnerships are in the areas of agriculture, environment and natural resources, health, science and technology, engineering, education and teacher training/preparation, and business, management and economics.

The research partnerships, which evidently tilt more towards agriculture and technology raise concerns in terms of their likely impact to the development of research and development technologies in the field of agriculture and food security that are relevant to Africa. The partnerships are being promoted at a time when a consortium of American Multinationals, funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), seeks to further the aims of biotech abroad, especially in Africa, where Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda, and Zambia have been singled out and have been the testing grounds for this strategy (<http://www.projectcensored.org/>). It is also instructive that such research partnerships tie ownership of patents accruing from any research undertakings to funding sources, implying that the beneficiaries of such internationalization trends in agricultural biotechnology are the handful of corporations which own the patents and the technology, and which produce the

herbicides and pesticides required by the use of such seeds. One could argue that such partnerships to cut hunger by improving agricultural productivity in Africa should focus more on indigenous technologies comparative to biotechnology led agriculture. But this has not been the case. Instead, there are noticeable trends in use higher education partnerships in research in African Universities to fortify arguments for adoption of Western agricultural biotechnologies and introduction of genetically modified organisms (GMOs).

### **The European Union Approach to internationalization**

Within the context of the Bologna process that came into being in 1999, and the consequent realization of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), in 2010, internationalization of higher education has been promoted as an intellectual and cultural reciprocal process. But slowly, the rhetoric about intellectual and cultural exchanges is giving ways to internationalization policies that shift focus from aid to trade, forcing universities to charge full-cost fees to international students, a shift in paradigm from cooperation to competition and represents a more commercial approach to international higher education (De Wit 2011). The increasing emphasis on internationalization as an economic activity by universities from the European Union has been a response to government cuts in public financing on higher education, forcing countries across Europe to modify laws and regulations governing tuition, employment, and immigration to enable an increasing number of international students, seen as a significant source of income(<http://chronicle.com/article/Amid-European-Economic/129042/>).

There are indications that the dependency of tuition revenues among universities in the European Union is deepening, raising concerns of what these developments would mean the cash-strapped universities in the developing countries. A report by England's Higher Education funding Council for the 2009/2010 academic year reveals that income from tuition fees paid by overseas students rose by 17.8 per the previous year to represent almost £10 out of every £100 earned by the English higher education sector (Baker 2011). The report notes that by the end of the 2009-10 academic years, fees from non-European Union students accounted for 9.6 per cent of all income, the highest level to date, and projected that most universities expect overseas fee income to rise, with 21 institutions looking at an increase of more than 25 per cent in the 2010/2011 academic year.



One can dismiss the contribution of Sub-Saharan Africa, in terms of students' revenues to Universities within the European Union, or even whether attracting students from the Sub-Saharan region can constitute part of institutional internationalization policies from the European given. This is particularly so, given the relatively small percentage of students from Africa studying in European higher education institutions, that has averaged 18% of the years. The fact that mobility surveys show African students to be the most mobile in the world and therefore a target of choice for higher education systems willing to broaden their recruitment efforts has been alluded to. Academic opinions are equally divided regarding the Bologna Process and its capacity to create an international higher education space that accommodates higher education and developmental concerns of Africa or this process signals a return to the colonial dependency situation (Charlie and Croche 2009, Khelfaoui 2009). However divergent these reflections are, the Bologna process is working to develop the appeal of the European Higher Education Area to those from outside, implying that this the appeal of the European higher education area may be more appealing to institutions and policymakers in Africa in terms of student mobility and vouching of partnerships, to the extent that African-wide attempts to revive universities are scuttled (<http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story,Oanda 2009>).

There are noticeable trends, signifying the fact that the European higher Education area through the Bologna process is focussed on maintaining international competitiveness through a strategic shift away from a focus on international student recruitment toward a longer-term and more partnership based conceptualisation of internationalisation. This shift also focus on facilitating their higher education sectors to engage at an institutional level with global partners through teaching and research collaboration. Three examples will illustrate this shift in engagement. First is a report by the British Academy and the Association of Commonwealth Universities (2007), which sought to explore ways through which UK universities can engage more with universities in Africa in terms of Research Collaboration in the Social Sciences and Humanities. The Report outlines a series of issues directly affecting research capacity in African universities and in particular, the usefulness or otherwise of collaborative relationships with colleagues in UK universities. The purpose of the Report was to map out an action plan to strengthen and develop research capacity in African universities, and to improve the ability of

African and UK academics to undertake new collaborative research. This initiative is similar in aim and intent to the US-Africa higher education collaboration in agriculture, project to cut hunger in Africa, already discussed. Both the two initiatives move beyond student recruitment to research partnership. As already mentioned the status of African universities in the initiatives is diminished by funding arrangements and the emerging new regimes of intellectual property rights in the context of GATS, where patent ownership is increasingly tied to funding sources.

The Second example of the EHEA's influence in Africa Higher education relates to the **Tuning Project**, an initiative launched in 2000 by a group of EU universities and strongly supported by the European Commission through the Socrates and Tempus schemes, which aims to offer a concrete approach to enable higher education institutions to adapt to the internationalization of higher education and increasing mobility of students, researchers and staff (<http://tuning.unideusto.org/tuningeu>). The Tuning approaches consists of a methodology to re- design, develop, implement and evaluate study programmes for each of the Bologna 2 cycles (undergraduate, postgraduate doctoral studies) and develops cycle (level) descriptors for a growing number of subject areas<sup>3</sup>. The process has a direct impact on recognition, quality assurance and capacity building (Gonzalez et al 2006).

In Africa, the 2007 Joint Africa-EU Strategy<sup>6</sup> and first Action Plan (2008-2010) emphasize the importance of cooperation with Africa in higher education to build high-quality tertiary capacity through networking, mobility of students and scholars, and institutional support and innovation.

Repeatedly the 2008 " Developing links: EU-Africa Cooperation in Higher Education through Mobility" Conference focused on the need to revitalise and reform higher education in Africa and to do so in cooperation across national boundaries, to establish compatible structures and systems, which would facilitate mobility within Africa (through mobility schemes such as Nyerere) as well as between Africa and Europe and other parts of the world([http://ec.europa.eu/development/geographical/regionscountries/euafrika\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/development/geographical/regionscountries/euafrika_en.cfm)). An African Tuning Project building on the Tuning Educational Structures in Europe and Latin America Projects was suggested. In a nutshell, the Tuning project is about making higher education institutions' structure and curriculum compatible to those of the European Union, with this imperative, not the development needs of Africa, defining the quality of such

programmes. One sees an attempt by the Tuning project to contribute to the African Higher education Harmonization strategy, but from the perspective of the European Union such that at the end, an harmonized higher education system in Africa is closely compatible with structure and curricular in the EHEA universities. To this end, Representatives from the African Union Commission, European Commission, and the EU Delegation to the African Union; and EU Tuning Experts met in Nairobi on the 14-15 March 2011 with key stakeholders for higher education in Africa to receive a report on the feasibility study funded by the European Commission to evaluate the relevance of the Tuning approach to the Harmonization of Higher Education programmes in Africa.

Curiously, in a manner reminiscent on how Europe partitioned Africa in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Tuning Project adopts a similar paradigm, where higher education institutions will be partitioned along disciplinary orientations; in the guise of addressing key areas of skills and competences for employability and transparency of curriculum, the development of a common academic credit currency, teaching, learning and assessment related to the achievement of learning outcomes, skills and competences, quality assurance and enhancement. The disciplines identified by the pilot study are Engineering, Agriculture Sciences, Health Sciences and Teacher Education; with a proposal that each of the five regions of Africa and each region will nominate a University to participate in the subject area groups of the other regions thus ensuring a genuine continental approach and commitment to disseminating the outcomes on a continental as well as a regional basis.

A third example of the EHEA'S interest to incorporate African higher education institutions is the African Universities international Dimension Strengthening(AUDIS), which, as the name suggests aims at addressing the human and policy deficit within African Higher Education institutions to respond to and accommodate internationalization trends in higher education. The AUDIS project aims to combat this trend by creating better regional conditions for effective networking and by building the capacity of African universities to develop and carry out internationalization policies and projects in the teaching and research sectors ([www.coimbra-group.eu/audis/Docs](http://www.coimbra-group.eu/audis/Docs)). The initiative is led by the University of Padova in Italy, and its two European partners, the Coimbra Group and the Catholic University of Leuven in Belgium. The focus of the initiative include improving international relations management and mobility management of students and teaching staff, recognition of diplomas and credit transfer, and fund raising. The AUDIS project, like the Tuning counterpart, targets the improved capacity of

the partners' International Relations Offices to set up collaborative programmes and develop curricula that are international in perspective, organize student and staff exchanges, apply for international (including EU) project funds and scholarships, and administrate international programmes. It should be noted that lack of internationalization policies and offices in universities in Africa, has been a source of concern to organizations that promote higher education internationalization, such as the International Association of Universities (IAU) and the United States' Institute for International Education (IIE).

The AUDIS project therefore seeks to bridge this gap, one may say, not necessarily by improving the quality of higher education institutions in Africa as much, but rather in making them 'conform and be fashionable' by enhancing awareness and commitment of African higher education systems to networking and international education. It will reinforce the role of international services in their university structures and make regional cooperation a strategic objective of their academic activities. AUDIS will contribute to incorporate African HEIs into the international academic community market, as junior partners, by transforming the existing traditional systems of bilateral relations between the African and European HEIs into a network of horizontal and multilateral relations, both at regional and international level. This is in the same manner that colonialism incorporated Africa into the global capital economy.

### **The Entry of China into African Higher Education in the Context of Internationalization**

China, an emerging superpower, has been the latest entrant into the higher education seen in Africa, in the context of internationalization. The engagement of China with Africa has so far been interrogated in economic terms, in terms of China's attempts to secure a share of Africa's natural resources (especially oil, iron and copper) for use towards its growing population and booming economy, as a strategy to achieve its quest for more global political power (<http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story>). In which ways would China be using its higher education policy in Africa for World Economic dominance? And how do African institutions of higher support this scheme.

China's higher education policy in Africa was articulated in the establishment of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) in 2000 and the formulation of the Chinese government's 'Africa Policy' (Becker 2010). This policy was initiated in 2006 to promote student and faculty exchanges, training in African and Chinese languages and research cooperation in fields of

mutual interest (such as bio-agriculture, mining and medicine). Subsequently, several African countries, including Egypt, Nigeria and Tunisia, have already concluded agreements with China in the area of science and technology transfer. The main avenue through which cooperation is being pursued is through the establishment of Chinese Confucius institutes in several African countries to promote the learning and teaching of Chinese language. Through the FOCAC, China has committed to Continue to promote the development of Confucius institutes, increase the number of scholarships offered to Chinese language teachers to help them study in China, and double efforts to raise capacity of local African teachers to teach the Chinese language. So far, China has established 25 Confucius institutes in 19 African countries, where Mandarin language classes are offered (Becker 2010).

The point of contention here could be the implications to African higher education institutions in terms of developing local language policies in higher education. Apart from Universities in Africa, spending resources to host the Confucius centres (Some institutions have full time directorates and infrastructure for the programmes), one cannot avoid the feelings that once again, the universities are being turned into conveyor belts of Chinese cultural imperialism as a gate pass to economic imperialism. The universities in Africa are also caught in a dilemma, in china's quest to displace English and French as the lingua Franca in African higher education institutions, given declining resources from the west in form of funding for cash-strapped higher education institutions in Africa, and China's readiness to offer cash for infrastructural development, such as teaching Hospitals.

The other aspect covered by the China-African cooperation in higher education relates to investments in Science, Technology and innovation. This was articulated at the Fourth Ministerial Conference of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation in Sharm El Sheikh in Egypt (Sawahel 2009). Within this agreement, China and 49 African countries agreed on a three-year action plan for establishing strategic partnerships in science and technology as well as higher education to promote knowledge-based sustainable development. Doubts over the true benefits of these cooperation arrangements to African institutions and countries, still persist, and have grown, with the number of cooperation agreements signed. The implications and potential consequences of China-Africa collaboration were the subject of discussions in a conference

initiative, proposed by a group of African academics in March 2011 in Kenya, at which African and Chinese scholars interrogated the growing China-Africa relations in a global context.

Specifically to Africa, it has been noted that modes of technology and innovation being promoted through higher education institutions are unlikely to be sustainable and create more job opportunities to Chinese labour than African, even at professional levels. It has for example been observed that in countries like Angola, where Western companies rely primarily on local labour, Chinese companies bring 70-80% of their labour from home (Horta, 2009). In Angola's oil industry, while nearly 90% of Chevron's workers are Angolan, including specialised personnel such as engineers and managers, Chinese oil companies employ fewer than 15% Angolans and usually at the end of the pay scale(Horta 2009). Similar observations have been made in other African countries where china is engaged in road projects, such as Kenya. In 2006, at a Portuguese-run construction site in Maputo, Mozambique, there were only five Portuguese out of 120 workers compared to a nearby a Chinese run site with 78 Chinese workers and only eight locals, three of whom were night watchmen(Horta 2009).

These observations, taken from a few documented sites where the Chinese have entered to displace long held western dominance in Africa, raise doubts on china's policy of cooperation in higher education, especially in science and Technology. Why could china spend so much money to train Africans in areas of technology and innovation, but end up employing them in lower cadre jobs, or end up importing most of the workforce they need to implement their projects in Africa? These suspicions may point to attempts to create a reservoir of cheap labour through higher education institutions in Africa, who may be deployed in China's quest for global economic dominance. The observation also casts doubt on the true meaning of china's investments in areas such as the building of university hospitals.

### **Waves of Internationalization of Higher Education and Implications on Indigenization of Research and Innovation in African Universities**

What the preceding discussion has tried to show is that higher education internationalization is not one singular process in terms of definitions, aims and practices, rather, that countries have used it to promote certain aspects of the commercial orientation of their higher education institutions. It has been pointed out variously by African scholars that the centuries-old

subjugation of Africa to foreign exploitation, accomplished through a range of arrangements including educational philosophies, curricula and practices whose context corresponds with that of the respective colonial powers continue to hinder efforts at any development in the continent. Former South African president, Thabo Mbeki, has argued that we need a distinctively African knowledge system to recover the humanistic and ethical principles embedded in African philosophy (Mbeki 2005). This, he proposes should be the challenge of African Universities; to ensure that all critical and transformative educators in Africa embrace an indigenous African world-view and root their nation's educational paradigms in an indigenous socio-cultural and epistemological framework. This implies that all educational curricula in Africa should have Africa as their focus, and be indigenous-grounded and orientated. Africa's Science and Technology Plan of Action ( African Union 2005), emphasizes on developing an African system of research and technological innovation by establishing networks of centres of excellence dedicated to specific R&D and capacity building programmes. Part of the strategy proposed in the Action Plan is the promotion of linkages between formal R&D institutions and holders of indigenous knowledge and technologies; increase intra-African sharing and application of indigenous knowledge and technologies to solve specific problems; and improve the continent's capacity to protect indigenous knowledge and technologies from piracy and related misappropriation (African Union 2005:18).

The problem with internationalization of higher education discourse as so far presented to Africa is that it presupposes a vacuum, that needs to be filled, or an outdated system that needs to be replaced. There is no much appreciation that a system exists, which carries with it the values and aspirations of a people. There is not much acknowledgement of existing initiatives like the above one other than efforts to condemn and replace them. And one could argue that over two decades of promoting internationalization in Africa, especially the research partnership approach, seems to have stunted African higher education institutions from take-off and achieving the relevance with regard to the developmental needs of the African society. The whole scenario is confusing (like the Bible on one hand, and the gun on the other confusion of the last century). On the one, research partnerships are being promoted and signed between institutions, while on the other African universities do not seem to take off using this route.

Researchers in African universities, do not seem to be contributing much to the scientific stock of knowledge, producing only 1.8% of the world's total scholarly publications ; consistently performing worse in terms of inventions; 633 patents awarded by the US Patents and

Trademarks Office during the five years - less than one per 1,000 inventions protected in the world's largest economy, and substantially lagging behind the rest of the world in science, technology and innovation(Macgregor 2008).These observations remain puzzling. How come internationalization that has been pursued for the last two decades has not moved African academics and institutions upwards the global Science and Innovation radar, and how long will the partnerships take to come of age?

### **Conclusion**

This paper has briefly reflected on the emerging trends in the internationalization of higher education and the fact that commercial interests seem to be the driving forces of this process more than the reciprocal intellectual exchanges and fortifying the foundations for the growth and globalization of academic capital. Three brands of internationalization, with no clear boundaries have been sketched out; the United States Model ; seen in the growth of 'American' universities in a number of countries and the implantation of campuses of American universities in African countries; The European Union approach that seeks greater compatibility between higher education institutions in Africa and those in the EHEA, and the Chinese approach through, coupling spread of Chinese language with its quest for global economic dominance. All these brands of internationalization seem to target higher education in Africa, as entry points to broader economic and political designs.



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