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The Alternative Report of Africa (AROA) An African project under construction

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► **To cite this version:**

Jacques Fontanel. The Alternative Report of Africa (AROA) An African project under construction. Guerres et conflits économiques, Institut libre d'étude des relations internationales (ILERI), Jan 2021, Paris, France. hal-03277105

HAL Id: hal-03277105

<https://hal.univ-grenoble-alpes.fr/hal-03277105>

Submitted on 20 Jul 2021

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The Alternative Report of Africa (AROA) An African project under construction.

ILERI (Institut Libre d'Etudes et Recherches internationals)

Paris

19 Janvier 2021, Paris.

Summary : AROA proposes a philosophical, ideological and methodological reversal of the usual economic and statistical analyses. International experts still have knowledge based on the values they have been taught in the past and which they constantly reproduce. The statistical methods that underlie economic and political decisions only take into account market values, which are subject to manipulation that influences all economic agents. The famous catching up of development in stages is only a delusion at a time in history when great environmental and human damage has been committed by the economic actors of a greedy capitalism that is not interested in the living conditions of people or their survival. Under these conditions, Africa must build its own instruments to measure the progress of its national economies against the needs of its people and citizens.

Résumé : Le RASA propose un renversement philosophique, idéologique et méthodologique des analyses économiques et statistiques habituelles. Les experts internationaux ont toujours un savoir porté par les valeurs qui leur ont été enseignées par le passé et qu'ils reproduisent constamment. Les méthodes statistiques qui sont à la base de décisions économiques et politiques ne prennent en compte que les valeurs du marché, lesquelles font l'objet de manipulations qui influencent tous les agents économiques. Le fameux rattrapage du développement en étapes n'est qu'un leurre en un moment de l'histoire où de forts dégâts environnementaux et humains ont été commis par les acteurs économiques d'un capitalisme cupide qui ne s'intéresse ni aux conditions de vie des hommes, ni à leur survie. Dans ces conditions, l'Afrique doit construire ses propres instruments afin de mesurer le progrès de ses économies nationales à l'aune des besoins de sa population et de ses citoyens.

Africa, AROA, economic development statistical index

Afrique, RASA, développement économique, indices statistiques

The Alternative Report on Africa (RASA, 2018), promoted by several African and Third World non-governmental organisations, considers that the notion of economic development as it is presented today in global statistical analyses leads to perverse effects (poverty, immigration, excessive exploitation of the continent's people and available resources) that do not allow Africa to express its assets, while bearing an excessive share of the scourges that affect the very future of humanity. The methods of analysis adopted by international reports on Africa take into account standard of living factors that mainly concern developed countries, within the framework of a globalised world (Fontanel, Henriques, 2007), dominated by multinational firms that have a strong influence on the objectives of governments and international organisations (Fontanel, 1995). The analyses, indicators and ideological reflections of unbridled liberalism lead to a weakening of Africans' self-confidence, while they often no longer have control over their land and wealth. While not all indicators should be rejected, they should be cross-referenced with other measures concerning freedoms, solidarity, authentic living conditions, and the importance of religious or civilisation objectives pursued by groups of people. The priority search for GDP growth is only a delusion, given its calculation, the fragmentation of the added value of products and services, the quantitative estimation of global consumption, the unequal distribution of private property, the relative importance of material goods and the weight to be given to the present compared to possible futures.

RASA proposes a philosophical, ideological and methodological reversal of the usual economic and statistical analyses, an almost second stage of decolonisation, by establishing criteria that reflect real life, as it is lived and accepted by Africans in their natural environments. It is a desire to regain true sovereignty over the vital objectives specific to the inhabitants of a continent, through the application of relevant public policies in order to initiate autonomous and sovereign transformations of African societies.

RASA aims to determine a new concept of development for and by Africa, "to build a definition of progress for Africa and Africans that is closer to their cosmogonies and worldviews, their realities and practices; to account for societal, economic, cultural, religious, political, and environmental changes and transformations that give another idea of the Africa that is being built and that are beyond the reach of conventional indicators of development and well-being; to reflect the prospective vision of Africans and the evolution of their thinking on Africa and the world; to give a voice to African citizens and actors in the production of a report that innovates in its methodology of elaboration by setting up a platform for the production of knowledge and information combining scientific, community, citizen and popular sources" (RASA, 2018 page 13). The question arises as to whether, from an economic point of view, there might not also be a "clash of civilisations" (Sen, 2003). It would be paradoxical if Africa, a victim of excessive consumer development, did not seek to find other ways. If all the countries of the world spent the world's natural resources at the rate of the economically developed countries, they would disappear rapidly, but also permanently, for everyone. International experts still have knowledge based on the values they were taught in the past and which they constantly reproduce. Africa must develop its own authentic and sovereign thinking, which it can then project into the world.

The reproduction of international reports that do not meet Africa's needs

Reports on Africa develop a well-established vision of development on the basis of information founded on increasingly contested statistical concepts, often unable to take into account the organisational and civilisation specificities of the countries. According to figures from international bodies, for at least the past decade, African economies have been growing at an overall rate of 5% per year. "Africa thus seems to have become the world's normative "new frontier", the continent that is attracting attention, raising the planet's hope that it will instil new dynamics, new values" (RASA/AROA, 2018). In 2018, real GDP growth is broadly maintained, driven by public investment, strong domestic demand for goods and a robust services sector. However, according to the African Emergence Observatory, no

African country can now be described as emerging (Gazibo, Mbabilia, 2018), which does not help to sufficiently highlight Africa's progress by its own standards.

Today, the destruction of free goods and services (water, air, natural resources, etc.) allowed by a neo-liberal globalisation blinded by the quest for ever-increasing profits threatens the very existence of humanity. Africa is poorly measured, poorly qualified and poorly represented by instruments and measures that do not apply to its economic, social and political reality.

Africa is not a land of power over the world. Large international companies plunder its natural resources and it is perceived as an eternally assisted space. It has been historically emptied of its human resources through slavery, it has suffered constant wars, the weight of tyrannies and ill-fated ideologies, it has been a place of conflict for the great economic powers, a domain of hunting and plundering of natural resources for multinational companies, it has hardly ever had a voice in the establishment of a new international economic order. Africa has not been the victim of an internalised refusal of development, simply because it has always been exploited to favour the economic development of the colonising countries or the rise of multinational companies that corrupt local powers (Fontanel, Touatam, 2018). The result is the notorious vicious circle of poverty whose psychological effects on the population are exacerbated by the rise of social networks. The system based on the infinite increase of a GDP of questionable content provides only fragmentary information on pollution conditions, global warming or the respect of working conditions. Technological progress is not in a position to prevent recurrent economic and societal crises caused, more often than not, by the unsustainable growth of social inequalities.

Africa is today in a situation of great dependence, it has only limited control over its own resources, its voice in the international concert is indistinct, often fractured, dispersed and inaudible, depending on the interests and economic policies of African governments influenced by the big developed brothers. Its military power is very limited, even negligible, and its place in the international cultural and scientific concert remains secondary (Smith, Fontanel, 2008). Are African countries in a position to insert them positively into the global economy, following major institutional and structural changes? Do they really want to? This strategy of specialisation is dangerous and non-pauperising exports are not so easy to conceive. There is no shortage of foreign investment. The Chinese government has decided to inject \$60 billion into development projects in Africa,

with a view to improving agricultural productivity, developing infrastructure (roads, rail, ports) and reducing public debt.

That new dependence of African countries on China may raise questions. These investments are not aid to Africa, but a quest for economic control of indigenous labour forces and natural resources. These hopeful values have contradictory effects, with the effects of dependence on imports, production and exports, making any growth particularly precarious, in the face of a powerful country that will enforce its rights and even go far beyond them in the event of a dispute. With the other so-called Western partners, profits leave the country to settle in politically stronger and less taxing countries (Fontanel, 2016)

Under these conditions, Africa must build its own instruments to measure the progress of its national economies against the needs of its population and citizens. Is the type of development advocated by the great powers compatible with African societies, or should we always follow the same path as that of the so-called developed economies in terms of pollution and climate? Should we always question a country's productive capacity without looking at the interest of its consumption? Can we keep the concept of Gross Domestic Product as the main indicator of an economy's strength, even though it is so questionable? (Fontanel, Guilhaudis, 2019). GDP is a simplifying aggregate that does not take into account ecological, environmental and societal issues, nor the depletion of soil and subsoil, nor pollution, nor international and national security, nor democratic freedoms, citizen solidarity or cultural influence. Its quasi-monopoly of use has caused heavy damage to the Earth's potential.

All countries are in a state of exacerbated dependence on markets and international economic rules. The catching up of development places the continent in a system of competition, the rules of which Africa knows little about. It is stigmatised for its lack of organisation, corruption, poor governance, inability to retain local financing and the permanence of internal conflicts. Without the currency, economic structures and strong instruments of power to participate in the global free trade system, Africa is doomed to be a constant loser. It is necessary to return to a domestic economy oriented towards the internal market and to question the real needs of the indigenous populations. It is not a question of promoting autarky, but rather of controlling international flows (monetary, financial or of goods and services) in order to democratically establish norms

that protect the citizens of the countries concerned from the effects of domination by developed countries.

It is a question of challenging the crippling effects of domination and of evacuating the social violence of multinational firms and the plundering of Africa's natural resources for purely mercantile purposes. In other words, should the criteria of developed countries be used to define the human development of populations? Should we simply compare peoples in their capacity to produce market goods and services indefinitely without any negotiated reference to the usefulness of their social, philosophical and egalitarian content? How can we define the relative happiness of citizens? What are the guiding principles of economic and social progress?

Development indexes for Africa

The content of GDP is often contested. The UN has proposed adding the Human Development Index (HDI) to the economic and social analysis of a country. This includes not only economic variables, but also statistical values for health, public education and income indicators. It takes into account human health and longevity (measured by life expectancy at birth), knowledge or educational attainment (average length of schooling or decision-making ability), standard of living (gross income per capita in purchasing power parity) and the satisfaction of basic material needs such as access to safe food, clean water, decent housing or good sanitation and medical care. However, this indicator does not always lend itself to indisputable interpretation (Fontanel, Guilhaudis, 2019). Developing countries have an HDI that grew slightly between 1990 and 2016, with the exception of several African countries. What are the priority criteria for well-being and human development? Isn't the precariousness of social life a scourge that comes from wars, the absence of law enforcement, and all kinds of violence, whether military or police? All these indicators do not provide significant proof of one of the most serious scourges of the African continent.

While the content of GDP is strongly contested, the proposed Genuine Progress Indicator deserves, in a first analysis, to be used (Backshi, 2008, Gadrey, Jany-Catrice, 2012). Proposed by researchers from an NGO (Redefining Progress), it is also called the Green GDP. GDP defines the added value of the entire productive system, without considering the intermediate consumption of 'natural' goods, which are then assumed to be

free, indefinite and inexhaustible. The LPI (Logistic Performance Index), on the other hand, takes into account all social constraints, the perverse effects of the production system, the future and the quality of life of individuals. It aims to measure the negative or positive impacts of growth on the environment and natural resources, which will be permanently withdrawn from the productive system when they are exhausted. It takes into account overall personal consumption, including income inequality, net external debt, the cost of durable goods, social adjustment (social fractures such as crime, accidents, time lost in transport, divorce, unemployment, leisure time, etc.), environmental adjustment (cost of pollution, depletion of agrarian land, destruction of forests and non-renewable resources, etc.) and beneficial adjustments (such as domestic work or volunteering).

The question is whether the LPI is an indicator of sustainability, or an indicator of "economic well-being". In the calculation of the LPI, the material standard of living still plays a key role, which excessively reduces the negative effects of the social, ecological and environmental variables taken into account, thus weakening the quality of the judgement on the sustainability of development. It remains too sensitive to short-term issues of immediate well-being, considering furthermore that social and civic peace is not an economic issue in itself, and that it is often achieved in compliance with the rules of the liberal economy and the market. However, most African countries suffer from insecurity, daily violence, ethnic, political or inter-state conflicts. These are probably the fundamental reasons for Africa's low level of economic development.

GS (Genuine Saving) measures assets that directly or indirectly produce well-being, built capital (machines, buildings, telecommunication networks), natural ("gifts of nature"), such as non-renewable and renewable resources, and their production-related evolution in terms of short- and long-term climate) and intangible (social and human) necessary for the communities thus analysed (Hanlet, N., Dupuy, L., McLaughlin (2014). The fundamental assumption is that wealth is a fundamental basis for well-being. In this sense, it only has a simplistic and one-to-one projection of man, as if these elements were sufficient to define the fulfilment of citizens.

Finally, the Gross National Happiness Index proposes to determine the level necessary to achieve a sufficient sense of satisfaction of fellow citizens, based on the standard of living, the

feelings of well-being and the qualities of health, education, culture, peaceful community life and sustainable diversity of ecosystems. The calculation focuses on economic growth and development, cultural conservation and promotion, environmental sustainability, sustainable resource use, and responsible governance.

These indices are difficult to calculate, but they are interesting for understanding the diversity of societal developments, without relying solely on the market values promoted by the liberal economy.

The RASA proposals

The concept of "Development" aims to categorise states on the basis of economic criteria founded solely on immediate commercial grounds, thus ignoring the values of the future, the Earth's heritage, national and international inequalities, but also man and citizens. The idea that social progress goes through stages, which presuppose the development of innovation, the capacity to invest, but also the organisation of a productive system legally designed by the rich ruling classes with the help of the daily work of the other classes placed at their service. When countries do not produce as much as others, they are considered as backward. In these conditions, liberal rules are cruelly adapted to them by international organisations, without the progress made being commensurate with the human suffering suffered by the generations concerned by a very problematic "catching up".

Thus, the policy of structural adjustment was strongly contested for its violence and inefficiency, before it was abandoned for new projects such as the "Millennium Development Goals", the "Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper", and the "structural transformation of the economy", which embody the continuity of a master-pupil relationship that never allows the latter to pass their exams. The logic of domination and exploitation of Africa is never questioned.

For RASA, macroeconomic indicators are not sufficient to evaluate the well-being or development of the African man, who remains resistant to the cultural uniformity demanded by the great powers, by progressively suppressing all diversities. In this context, Africa does not have to catch up if it wants to be itself, with its values and their diversities. Africa suffers first of all from the financial flows that have evaporated from its production space, often illicitly or encouraged by corruption. Many public subsidies have been used to increase individual profit and

inequality; land has been taken over by multinational corporations; and the militarisation of African nations is an economic and social burden, leading more easily to wars than to human security.

The economic development claimed by the international order paradoxically emphasises the market economy of quasi-monopolistic oligopolies, individualism and power relations. This system that, in theory, should function on its own, does not fail to experience serious economic crises, unbearable inequalities and violent relations based on predation. Poverty is seen as the result of chronic inefficiency on the part of those who experience it (Matteudi, Fontanel, 2015). Yet economic growth and interrupted possession of artificial goods and services are not unsurpassable human goals.

The world today is shaken by structural contradictions, by the perverse effects of economic and social domination, by an unalterable production process that is increasingly destructive of diversity, personal time and open thinking. Development models have undoubtedly made it possible to reduce famine and improve people's health, but today, with the existence of technology and science, another life could be opened up to the whole of humanity, through sharing. Although the hard sciences have developed considerably, the social sciences still refer to the philosophers of yesteryear and sociologists are unfortunately rarely listened to in the face of the demands of the dominant 'Friedmanian' economists, for whom the function of an entrepreneur is first and foremost to make a profit, regardless of the consequences for employees (Sen, 2012).

Today's global system leads to the oligarchic concentration of economic and political power; a real plutocracy has been established. Insecurity at work in developed countries is also a testimony of a society that moves forward without questioning the well-being of people. Africa's history has been confiscated by colonisation and slavery, all of which are scourges for which no international law has defined simple compensation. Furthermore, the statistical systems in place are discouraging because they only validate the productive process of a liberal system that is so constraining to human well-being.

In search of relevant indicators

The question is what are the relevant indicators, given the heterogeneous African values. Does Africa have nothing to teach the world, probably not in the area of mass production, but in the area of life skills? Is it necessary to disseminate information that

is useful for the continent? For RASA, the African citizen must be placed at the centre of the objectives of a specific economic and social progress, which would make at least as much use of the richness of the diversity of Africa as of the global world that is now being proposed as a master.

It is necessary to move away from the development trajectory advocated by liberal thinking and to rethink a new project based on local knowledge and the heterogeneous cultures of the continent. Africa must decolonise its thinking and engage the foundations and structures of its own history. It is a question of taking into account the specifically African societal, economic, cultural, religious, political and environmental evolutions and transformations, of developing a prospective vision of Africa's place in the world and of reclaiming the voice at all levels of the communities, by defining new organisations for the production of scientific, community, citizen and popular knowledge. Five multidisciplinary themes are privileged by RASA.

- From conceptual abstraction to the diverse realities of Africans

Africa is far from the perceptions and analyses of international experts obsessed with figures that transform and even betray the reality of this continent. It still suffers from the stereotypes developed during the colonial period. 'Negritude' was then a weapon in the fight for decolonisation (Senghor, 1967). Africa does not correspond to this simplistic image, it is also a place of cultures that have spread throughout the world, and it is a disparate population and demography, proposing living, evolving and sometimes revolutionary political objectives. It is also a claim of belonging and an often common history, but dominated, in the modern era, by colonisation and slavery. Finally, there is a diaspora that could reinvest in the continent, bring new scientific and organisational skills, and help improve the image of an Africa in the making. What does it mean to be African today? It is necessary to reconstitute links between the peoples of Africa and to resume links with a diaspora whose African roots can constitute a powerful ferment for reinvesting in this continent which has not always been able to preserve its human forces, a victim of colonial, civil and economic wars.

- What are the specific African thoughts that could nourish the African man today?

Africa has known its own civilisations that must be recognised and rediscovered, if possible by erasing the gangue of

ideas received by the armed invaders of territories and the masters of unduly appropriated wealth. This is a historical epistemological approach to classical African thought.

Is it possible to construct an African cultural model, with a view to defining, for the present and the future, specific paths to well-being and to the collective and personal fulfilment of its inhabitants? This raises the fundamental question of pan-Africanism and regional integration.

- What powers are installed in Africa today?

In the world, democracy has lost some of its main points of reference. A plutocracy seems to be imposing itself, with the control of information through the media and the self-interested orientation of the best informed or supported social networks. Is this mode of government appropriate for Africans? Democracy is no longer a decisive factor of political stability and does not respond satisfactorily to the values and history of Africans. Its exercise often seems to be a simple graft of a system applied by other civilisations. How can modern institutions be reinvented while retaining the legitimate principles of African societies? We need to build an alternative to a liberal globalisation that (RASA, 2018). African society has often been organised around a leader and his elites (Koulibaly, 2008). It is therefore a question of self-centred, endogenous development and governance that stimulates productivity while strengthening the collective sense of 'living together'. It is a question of defining the type of democracy applicable to Africa, with respect for the rule of law within the framework of the diversity of social dynamics, of developing the continent's natural resources for Africans, of finding a better link between the market economy and the underground economy, but also of strengthening the processes of regional politico-economic integration, of participating in the establishment of a model of sustainable and equitable globalisation, and of decolonising the mind. While maintaining and strengthening the basis of its African culture, Africa must also open up to the culture of the world.

- Popular sovereignty as an ideal alternative to liberal globalisation.

Capitalism is supported by the dominant states. Imperialism plays a devastating role, with the most powerful states supporting the large multinational firms in a system of exploitation and predation legalised by international organisations (Fontanel, 1995). The constitution of a great international of the exploited classes is particularly difficult to

set in motion, as the means of security and communication between the opponents are clearly unequal.

The issue is all the more difficult to tackle because Africa's demographic challenge is considerable in terms of economic, social, philosophical and economic issues. The potential working population is expected to reach 1.25 billion by 2050. How to absorb this growing workforce into productive and rewarding jobs?

- What models and indicators of human performance should we adopt?

The colonisation of knowledge gives free rein to the centres of power in developed countries. On the other hand, any action initiated locally, based on the notion of belonging and contribution to global dynamics, can be positive. New measuring instruments must be put in place, not to make comparisons with other societies, but to measure the progress made over time in relation to the objectives set. Can we assess African well-being? How can we value family solidarity, the oral transmission of culture, but also social life skills, the pharmacopoeias of traditional medicine, regional food diversity and, above all, African traditions and mythologies which are creators of dreams and infinite hope? It is a question of fuelling debates on the aims of African societies, to help them take economic and political orientations that are closer to their societal and human aspirations. It is about defining the application of the principle of "thinking globally and acting locally". RASA is the initial basis for further systemic thinking. The methods of action are not really described, but the objectives are defined.

RASA sidesteps the fundamental issues of national and international security and the economic and religious heterogeneity of Africa.

The security of a nation and its inhabitants is not limited to the military protection of its borders and the respect of private and public rights by the judiciary and the police, but also concerns the living conditions of its citizens (Fontanel, 2010). This is an essential condition for its development. International bodies also initiated this concept when they undertook studies on the creation of an International Disarmament Fund for Development (IDFD), which could have benefited African countries (Fontanel, 1985).

However, apart from the difficulties in reversing the idea that a country's security depends on its military power, many political, economic and financial obstacles appeared strong enough to prevent the implementation of a procedure that was difficult to control and verify (Fontanel, Smith, 1987).

Table 1 - Coefficient of divergence in GDP per capita estimates according to the use of current purchasing power parity rates in relation to the current exchange rates of the States

Coefficient	Countries
> 3.5	South Sudan (6.4), Sudan (4.9), Egypt (4.8), Tunisia, Madagascar, Mauritania
> 3	Guinea, Malawi, Nigeria, Tanzania,
> 2,5	Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Lesotho, Libya, Mali, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Rwanda, Chad, Togo, Zambia
> 2	South Africa, Botswana, Cape Verde, Cameroon, Comoros, Congo Rep., Ivory Coast, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Liberia, Mauritius, Namibia, Senegal
> 1,5	Angola, Burundi, Central African Rep. Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Seychelles,
> 1,3	Djibouti, Zimbabwe

Official statistics provided by international economic organisations highlight the disparities in comparisons of key economic outcomes, depending on whether currency conversion indicators are used, notably current or constant exchange rates and purchasing power parity rates, which significantly diminish the picture of the real relative poverty of African countries (Donsimoni, Fontanel, 2019). It is easy to see that the perception of the level of development is different depending on the statistical tools used. Many African countries are experiencing interesting economic growth, but it is mostly based on the exploitation of raw material and energy resources, managed by multinational companies, which invest their added value in developed countries or in tax havens (Fontanel, 2016).

In the context of an African desire to assert new values and indices to measure the evolution of the economic and social situation of citizens, one of the important questions is to determine the rules of intra-African trade. Will they be based on

market rules, on multilateral or bilateral trade agreements or on a mutual assistance system?

What will be the relationship of African countries with the outside world, that of globalisation, what place should be given to multinationals and their dominant role in the African economy and what instruments of internal solidarity should be built? Today, Africa remains a continent divided into states, with interests that only appear to be complementary in order to fight collectively against the economic and political domination they suffer from the outside.

Similarly, the major actors of economic globalisation have opposing internal positions, between states, multinational firms that have a monopoly on many modern technologies, such as GAFAM (Fontanel, Sushcheva, 2019) or even the direct or indirect control of non-governmental organisations (Bensahel-Perrin et al., 2009). For RASA, Africa must refuse marginalisation and open up its political space to ensure its own original development. Finally, the issue of internal and inter-state security is hardly addressed. Like most economic theories, the RASA reporters assume that it does not affect the daily life of citizens. This analysis does not seem to be in line with the real life experience of Africans. African countries are often in conflict, with porous borders, and military power is often very present in the governing bodies. Military expenditure is not negligible (Table 2). The share of African countries' GDP devoted to defence is not negligible; it is sometimes very high, as is the case in Eritrea, Libya and even Algeria. The report neglects these power relations and enmities between countries, as if these military expenditures were not intended for internal conflicts in Africa.

Table 2 - Military expenditure as a proportion of GDP in African countries in 2018.

Countries	% military expenditure/GDP
> 3%	Eritrea (20.9), Libya (15.5), Algeria (5.3), Djibouti (3.7), Namibia (3.3), Morocco (3.1), Mauritania (3)
> 2.5 %	Botswana, Congo (DR), Guinea, Mali, Niger
> 2 %	Burkina Faso, Sudan, Chad, Togo, Tunisia, Zimbabwe
> 1,5 %	Angola, Burundi, Eswatini, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Lesotho, Senegal, Somalia
> 1 %	Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Kenya, Mozambique, Central African Republic, South Africa, Rwanda, Seychelles, Tanzania, Zambia
< 1 %	Benin (0.9), Congo DRC (0.8), Malawi (0.8), Liberia (0.8), Sierra Leone (0.8), Madagascar (0.6), Cape Verde (0.6), Ethiopia (0.6), Nigeria (0.5), Ghana (0.4), Equatorial Guinea (0.2), Mauritius (0.2)

Civil war is even endemic in many countries on this continent. An "African" solution should be found to the conflict and warlike relationships in the vast uncontrolled territories of the Sahel, which suffer from a shortage of water and insufficiently productive arable land, a lack of jobs for young people, and religious, ethnic or mafia antagonisms. It is difficult to hope for a 'sustainable' or 'durable' African economic and social revival as long as the state is not in a position to recover all its State functions. RASA does not sufficiently take into account the power relations in the world and does not give any guidance on how to avoid them in the face of the multiple conflicts that could arise from the position of multinational firms supported by the most powerful countries in order to continue exploiting their raw materials. Cuba has had to suffer a violent economic war, which even today prevents its development. The history of humanity is marked by conflicts over the direct or indirect predation of wealth (Coulomb, Fontanel, 2008). Similarly, in order to safeguard interesting commercial positions, countries may engage in military operations that reduce the potential for state autonomy, not to mention the strategies put in place to create conditions of enmity within and outside African countries. History shows that economic interests are often a factor in wars.

The economic, political, social, environmental and human stagnation of today's world is a testament to the crisis of neo-liberal capitalism. The question then is whether capitalism should be fought for to resume a positive course towards development or whether, as a violent and maladaptive system, it should disappear so that people can emerge from this crisis (Amin, 2009). The modern mode of economic development is strongly contested for its destructive consequences for the environment, the climate and the violent inequalities it produces. RASA's reflection concerns the entire humanity and, in this context, Africa can become a voice that carries weight. This is the hope of the RASA participants. "Africa thus seems to have become the world's normative "new frontier", the continent that is attracting attention, raising the planet's hope that it will bring new dynamics and values" (RASA, 2018).

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