DEPENDENCY AND ORGANIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN AFRICA
The Case of the Universite Nationale de Cote d'Ivoire
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1. Introduction

From an input-output perspective, social and economic progress of contemporary societies including Africa, depends in part on the quality of their human resources, the level and the nature of the organizational capacity of their institutions, and the dynamics of their political cultures. The quality of human resources is a result, among other factors, of the interactions between the social milieu (culture, market and politics) and the quality and the nature of the process of learning in educational institutions, including higher education (Assié-Lumumba, 1993a).

This paper will analyze the form and substance of higher education in Africa at large. It is not appropriate to discuss achievements made at African universities, since most of them happened in the early 1960s, without first analyzing the structures of those universities and their relationship to national and international dominant powers. African universities are microcosms of African social institutions and conditions. Within the existing economic crisis and emerging democratic and popular movements, how are those universities playing their nationally assigned or defined role? The process of creating a second university in Côte d’ivoire, namely in Bouaké and another campus in Abobo, started in 1992. To shed light on the above theoretical and policy concerns, this analysis will focus on the National University of Côte d’Ivoire. Although the integration of the Grandes Ecoles of Yamoussoukro into the higher education system has the potential for creating new dynamics in the université nationale de Côte d’Ivoire, this paper focuses on the traditional structure and organization of the university.

From its inception, and particularly since the mid-1980s, l’université nationale de Côte
d'ivoire has played a systematic role in Ivorian politics. Before and after April 1990 when the late president Félix Houphouët-Boigny reluctantly accepted the establishment of legal multiparty politics, the university has been in the center of political formations and socialization activities. But, the current national and international environments have given rise to new factors that make the recent political activism of the university different from that of the past. As is the case in many other African countries, following constant disturbances and student unrest, the university has been closed many times and programs have suffered. In the past four years or so, many students who succeeded in graduating and who wish to continue further studies in French universities (*Doctorat du Troisième Cycle, Maîtrise and Diplôme d'Etudes Approfondies*) find it more difficult to do so than in the past. The main reason for this is that the quality of education is now much lower than it used to be in the 1960s and 1970s. Mr. Bakary Touré, the former *recteur* of the university (now representative in UNESCO in Paris), while meeting with students in March 1992 in order to discuss and bargain the conditions for the re-opening of the university, acknowledged that the *diplôme Ivoirien* has only a local value. It has lost its international credentials or value and reputation because the university has not functioned normally from 1989 to the present. In a country or society where a diploma is technically considered more important than knowledge, this situation has created a lot of anxiety among university students and their parents.

The direction of popular and democratic movements, and the nation and its people is not clear or predictable. Côte d'Ivoire, like many other African countries, is politically and socially in a transitional stage, especially after the death of President Félix Houphouët-Boigny on December 7, 1993. Political parties and civil society are continuously pressuring the state and new government to make substantial political reforms. The role the university has been playing in both the national power struggle and the struggle for democracy is vital.¹ The main thrust of this paper is to analyze the structure and objectives of the National University of Côte d'Ivoire within the framework of dependency and organizational theory. Universities do not evolve in isolation from politics and economics in society. Rather, they grow as part of the societies they belong to.
Higher education systems in Western industrial countries, for example, took centuries to develop within the entire society to achieve their current specific organizational features.

Although this study is not a comparative one, we will use some references from comparative higher education works of scholars such as Ashby (1964, 1966) on transfer of institutions. Altbach referred to it as a pioneering work which takes the ecology of higher education into account (Altbach 1979, p. 19, Mazrui 1975 and Burton Clark 1983). The ongoing dynamics between African universities and national socio-political processes make the assumptions and analyses in these works very relevant. Clark was right when he pointed out that the literature on higher education does not offer a general framework for understanding the similarities and differences across nations.

We will use organizational theory as developed in West, especially in the works of Burton Clark and classical dependency paradigms (dependencia theories) to analyze and understand the nature of the mission of the National University of Côte d'Ivoire. The first section of the paper summarizes some of Clark's major theses, and underlines some of his weaknesses, followed by a brief account of the main arguments in dependency theory in general and the domain of higher education in Africa as a specific example. The second section presents the origin and mission of the National University of Côte d'Ivoire. The last section deals with the structure of the university.

2. Organizational Theory and Dependency Paradigms

Basic features that some organizational theorists in the West have identified in dealing with higher education include: the work structure, the prevalence of beliefs, and the distribution of authority, integration and change. According to Clark,2 higher education systems, as social entities, have a common culture based on common beliefs (Clark, 1983, p. 72). He argues that higher education systems have evolved to become autonomous entities. As such, they operate without much pressure from the external world, including political control. The professionals
working in those institutions enjoy "academic freedom." Clark views the universities as repositories of intellectual excellence and of universal values.

He analyzes the features listed above he looks at specific examples in different contexts. For instance, he explains the way the European chair and the American departments function. Despite differences among them as described by Clark, virtually all the institutions considered in his writings are in western/industrial countries: Western Europe, the United States and Japan.

Despite the comparative scope of Clark's analysis, the application of the above organizational theory to attempt to analyze African universities is a theoretical and ideological challenge largely because he neglects developing countries in general, barely mentioning any African cases in his work. He does not systematically discuss cases from countries that experienced colonization and where higher education institutions were created during or shortly after political independence. He does not deal with the characteristics of the student population in connection with the issue of equality of opportunity in higher education across nations.

Clark rightly points out that the European chair system, for example, is a reflection of the old elitist system, having a medieval scholastic origin. He explains that there have not been major changes in the status of Ivy League institutions in the USA, Oxbridge in the Great Britain, and the Grandes Ecoles in France. He points out that parity of prestige cannot be achieved (1983, p. 63). But he does not deal with the issue of the selection of the students and the changes of the characteristics of the students across nations and institutions. He criticizes those who predicted in the 1960s and 1970s that European higher education systems were bound to become like American ones and that they would change from "elite to mass and eventually to universal higher education" (1983, p. 185). However, his work provides a strong analytical approach from a functional and philosophical perspective. We support the position that higher education, in terms of its internal organization and financial management, has developed its own massive structure and bounded process that give it an impression of being autonomous. However, this autonomy, especially in Africa, has always been challenged by the ideology and actions/policies of the ruling class/state because higher education is part of the state apparatus.
The nature of the educational relationship between developing countries and colonial powers/industrial ones has been analyzed by only a few scholars. For the purpose of this paper, dependency theory is briefly presented. It is used to analyse the dynamics of the organization of higher education. The rationale for introducing dependency theory is that we intend to show that the arguments of the organizational and functionalist theorists, in evaluating the behavior of African universities, tend to forget the implications of the historical context in which they are behaving the way they do.

The relations between developing countries and the former colonies have been characterized by Gunter Frank (1970), T.D. Santos (1981), Vengroff (1977), Walter Rodney (1972) and others as "center-periphery" or "metropolis-satellite" ones. Cardoso and Faletto define them in these terms:

We conceive the relationship between external and internal forces as forming a complex whole whose structural links are not based on mere external forms of exploitation and coercion, but are rooted in coincidences of interests between local dominant classes and international ones, and, on the other side, are challenged by local dominated groups and classes (Faletto, 1979, P. xvi).

In this variance of dependency theory, the dynamics that are engendered from internal and external forces seem to be in the center of their argumentation. Another variation of dependency has been defined by Dos Santos alone as he said:

Dependency is a conditioning situation in which the economics of one group of countries are conditioned by the development and expansion of others. A relationship of interdependency between such economies and the World trading system becomes a dependent relationship when the countries can expand only as a reflection of the expansion of the dominant countries, which may have positive or negative effects on their immediate development (Dos Santos, 1970, p. 231).

The important point in this reasoning is the distinction that Dos Santos has made between
conditioning and determining factors. What it means is that the accumulation process of dependent countries is conditioned by the position they occupy in the international political economy and determined by their own laws of internal development. Cockcroft, Frank and Johnson have also defined this phenomenon in these words:

Dependence is a situation in which a certain group of countries have their own economy conditioned by the development and expansion of another economy, to which the former is subject. The relations of interdependency between two or more economies, and between these and the World trade, assumes the form of dependence when some countries (the dominant) can expand and give impulse to their own development, while other countries (the dependent) can only develop as reflection of this expansion (Cardoso, 1979, p.xvi).

This approach emphasizes the situation in which a given country is developed at the expense of another country. Dependency here does not mean the lack of interdependence among countries; rather, it reflects an interdependence where one dominates the other. The economies of new nations/states, including the African ones, are generally conditioned by external economic interactions. Dependency is a result of unequal economic interactions that have occurred between many countries/nations and the Western capitalist world. These economic interactions have created economic peripheries which cannot be understood without reference to the economic drive of advanced capitalist economies (Cardoso, ibid. xviii).

Wallerstein and other dependency theorists tend to emphasize that dependency is a result of integration or incorporation of non-capitalist economy into the world market or international economic system. Although not all parts of these economies have been integrated, the partial and/or total integration or incorporation processes were supported by capitalist ideology. These processes and the politics around them have shaped and are still shaping the behavior of the states of developing countries. Ogobanna describes the situation in these simple terms:

The colonies serve as sources of raw materials for the manufacturing industries of the metropoles. The manufactures are then shipped
back to the colonies where they are sold by expatriate oligopolies at the exorbitant prices (Ogobonna, 1984, p. 5).

In this kind of situation, which has been well documented by many scholars like Samir Amin, Walter Rodney, etc., the former colonies serve primarily as providers of raw materials, labor and market. Dependency is both an external factor and a conditioning situation. As an external factor, it manifests itself in various forms: transnational operations, economic aid and assistance, cooperation, ideology, culture and scholarship; as a conditioning situation, it is perpetuated in the domestic policies of the new nations where it is also engenders class interests. The situation described by Ogobanna has not changed even when the colonies became nominally independent. As Cardoso and Faletto put it:

Peripheral economies, even when they are no longer restricted to the production of raw materials remain dependent in a very specific form: their capital-good production sectors are not strong enough to ensure continuous advance of the system, in financial as well as in technological and organizational terms. So, in order to go ahead with economic expansion, a great dependent country has to play the "interdependency" game, but in a position similar to the client who approaches a bank. Of course, clients usually develop strategies of independence and can try borrow money in productive ways. But, insofar as there are structural borderlines, successful attempts are not an automatic output of the game (Cardoso, ibid.).

The general characteristics of dependent countries from the variations of dependency school of thought can be summarized in four points:

1. they play a small role in the decision-making of their own economies;
2. they depend culturally, financially and militarily on industrialized countries;
3. they are "beggars," and as such, they are unable to determine the course of their actions, and policies by their own will, and;
4. they play the role of imitators and producers of raw materials.
It should be emphasized that the nature of dependency varies from country to country and from the historical culture of each country and the peculiarities of the colonial powers or international systems which determine this phenomenon. Although this school of thought tends to generally undermine some aspects of internal weaknesses of the developing countries, class struggle and alliances of power internally, it provides a framework containing several interesting theoretical dimensions such as: holism versus particularism, external versus internal factors, sectoral/regional contradictions versus class contradictions, underdevelopment versus development and voluntarism versus determinism. These theoretical aspects help us analyze the structure of the National University of Côte d'Ivoire. Is this university dependent on international economic institutions and metropolitan countries? If so, why is it or should it be? And what are the political implications of the way it functions?

Based on the above paradigms and an historical analysis, the economic, political and educational systems of developing countries function as part of an international structure of relations between a center (more developed countries) and a periphery (developing world countries). Those systems in the developing countries are organized by industrial countries to their advantage. Developing countries do not make the decisions regarding their systems: rather, they approve those made in the center. In fact, the economic and political elites in developing countries have common interests with the center. Hence the acceptance of these elites in most developing countries in applying decisions made in the center.

As already indicated, the main arguments in dependency theory as developed above can be summarized as follows: at the international level, satellite countries are subordinated to metropolitan countries which dominate and take initiatives for change while the satellite countries passively adopt ideas and changes from the metropole. This framework can also be applied to intra-national relations, but for the purpose of this paper, the intra-national situation is not thoroughly addressed. The argument of dependence on external influence when applied to the organization of the systems of higher education contradicts Clark's contention that those systems have a great deal of autonomy. It is important to note various forms of dependence as applied
specifically to education.

Altbach (1977), for example, identified three basic categories of the influence of developed countries on Third World countries. First, from a historical viewpoint, Altbach notes that dependency can be considered "normal" in that industrial nations are, in fact, ahead in the areas of research, educational facilities and publishing (1977, p. 196). For this reason, dependency represents the patterns found in the political, military, economic, and educational domains.

The second category pointed out by Altbach is the "center-periphery" relationships that exist, not only between nations, but intranationally as well. Industrialized countries constitute the "center" where all the elements of a modern technological society are found and Third World countries are the "periphery" which rely on various goods and services provided by the center. In addition, individual nations, both industrialized and Third World, possess centers which control the distribution of wealth and education (1977, p. 196). These centers and peripheries all intersect on an international scale.

The third form of dependence analyzed by Altbach is neocolonialism. He defines this framework as the "conscious policies of industrialized nations to maintain their influence and power over the Third World" (Altbach, 1977, p. 205). Although neocolonialism is related both to dependency and center-periphery concepts, it differs in one important way: there is a considerable element of choice by both industrialized nations, and Third World countries. In sum, neocolonialism reflect a deliberate attempt by industrialized nations approved by Third World countries, to continue their influence over the latter and to perpetuate a relationship of dependence, "through a web of inter- and intra-national elites."

In the specific case of higher education system in Africa, Mazrui (1975) compares African universities to subsidiaries of multinational corporations. He views the universities as extensions of European metropolitan institutions where directives and instructions come from European sources. These multinational cultural subdivisions continue to follow the dictates of what can be considered "parent cultural corporations" from former colonial powers. According to Mazrui, the
paradox is that, although universities and formal education in general provided the impetus for political liberation within African countries, they have perpetuated a form of cultural dependence. Mazrui points out that because most or all university graduates in Africa are deeply westernized Africans, they are the most culturally dependent. Ironically, "the same education which has produced nationalists eager to end colonial rule and to establish African self-government have also perpetrated cultural colonialism" (1975, p. 194).

Mazrui cites two major reasons for this continued dependence on industrial countries. First, and most significant, African universities were modeled on overseas colleges, and in some instances, were official extensions of universities in Britain, France, and Belgium. All instruction, evaluation and policy matters had to be decided or approved by the parent institution in Europe. Second, African universities were responsible for producing the appropriate human resources and "redefining the market through acculturation" for commercial multinationals -- a major role played by African universities in the economic development of their countries. However, while successfully accomplishing this task, most African universities have also served to consolidate economic dependence.

Mazrui concludes by redefining the development process as "modernization minus dependency" (1975, p. 200). African universities, like commercial corporations, must not only re-examine the extent to which specific skills must be imported to further economic development and modernization, but also assess "which skills to develop locally and which values the education systems should sustain" (1975, p. 201). He identifies three strategies for development: domestication, diversification, and counter-penetration.

In the first strategy, the initial task of decolonizing modernity must be to balance the influence on university policy with that of the West through local participation. In order to successfully domesticate African educational systems, three major areas should be redefined:

1. University admission requirements and their implications for primary and secondary curricula,
2. Criteria for faculty recruitment, and
3. University organization.

The second strategy, diversification, requires that the cultural content in the modernization process be diverse. "In terms of culture reliance on one external reference group is outright dependency; reliance on a diversity of external civilizations may be the beginning of autonomy" (Mazrui, 1975, p. 206).

Finally, counter-penetration is essential for successful domestication of modernity and diversification of African cultural content. Only when Africa itself can influence Western civilization will modernization be established and dependency alleviated.

With regard to Mazrui's assessment of the extraverted systems of education, the extent to which the case of the National University of Côte d'Ivoire confirms either Clark's argument of institutional autonomy or the analysis of dependence and external control will be shown.

3. The Origin, Mission, and the Structure of the National University of Côte d'Ivoire

The Origin and Selection for the University

When Côte d'Ivoire was granted its political independence in 1960, its only institution of higher education was the Higher Education Center of Abidjan, created in October 1959 with 48 regular students. In April 1961, upon the request of the Ivorian government, the French government agreed to help Côte d'Ivoire create and develop a system of higher education similar to that of France. By a presidential decree, January 9, 1964, the Higher Education Center of Abidjan became the National University of Côte d'Ivoire.

The institution has functioned mainly on an elitist basis. Until recently, primary education was neither legally compulsory nor de facto universal. From primary school to the end of secondary school, students continue to be selected on the basis of official criteria such as academic performance. Children from high Social Economic Status (SES) origins are likely to attend primary and secondary schools, while those from low SES background cannot all be accepted in the system, due to the lack of school facilities and high direct and opportunity cost. Among those
who enroll, more than fifty percent leave school before the tertiary level, despite their positive attitude toward schooling, mostly because of the lack of concrete family and social support (Assié, 1982, Assié-Lumumba, 1983a and 1983b). Furthermore, students who do not meet academic requirements can be legally dismissed. Students who are dismissed, but whose parents have the financial means or social influence, usually continue their education in private or public schools. For those from socially disadvantaged origins, the lack of support usually makes it difficult to persist and to survive the selection process. Selectivity indices show that low SES students are underrepresented while those from high SES origins are overrepresented (Assié, 1982, Assié-Lumumba, 1983a). Virtually all university students are secondary school graduates who have obtained the final diploma, the Baccalauréat. The Baccalauréat used to be a sufficient condition for admission to the university, at home or abroad, with government scholarship. However, as a result of the national decline in economic resources and the impact of the implementation of the Structural Adjustment Programs (SAP), many secondary students with the Baccalauréat are no longer admitted to the university (about 5,000 in 1992/93)

Until recently, Baccalauréat holders were not free to choose their field. They were asked to select three fields by order of preference. A national commission made the final decision and officially assigned freshmen to various fields according to perceived national needs in human resources. In reality, factors such as political stability play an important role. For the past two years, this system of centralized decision in field assignment has been criticized and new recommendations have been made (Assié-Lumumba, 1993a).

The Mission of the University

Since their origin, more specifically in the Western World, universities have been considered repositories of "universalistic" values. Beside certain criteria that can be considered western, there are indeed "universalistic" values that universities ought to transmit (Lumumba-
In developing countries, the state wants from the higher education system: socio-economic relevance defined in terms of practicality and professionalization, cultural relevance referring to cultural revival and national identity, and political relevance defined as good citizenship and commitment to political goals (1983, 250).

Côte d'Ivoire is not an exception. Indeed, the President of the country stated the official mission of the National University of Côte d'Ivoire in a speech where he exhorted the university to comprehend the national reality and "needs" that should be reflected in the curriculum and organization. To fulfill its social mission, the university must be culturally relevant, adapted to local needs. As he said (in Faujas, 1971, p. 41):

Our university will have to be an integral part of our society. Actually, it will be the highest cultural expression of the society. We cannot afford to let it be exclusively oriented toward a western culture. It will have to ensure the continuity of our cultural heritage and of the African community on every ground: religion, philosophy, linguistics, arts, literature, and music.

This quotation indicates that there are Ivorian "needs", cultural and other kinds, that are different from those of Western societies, including the former colonial power. It is important to point out that political leaders refer to the "needs" of the country as if the Ivorian society were homogeneous, with no social categories or classes with different and conflicting interests and needs. But in reality, there are different socio-economic categories in Ivorian society. Those categories can be defined in terms of the level of formal education, occupation, revenues, areas of residence, and so on.

In the specific case of education, the system is highly selective and elitist. Hence, only a few among a cohort of children who enter the educational system can have access to the university. Such a university is organized to satisfy the needs of those "fortunate few". As Crawford Young (1983) points out, the university in Africa reflects "its imperial antecedents in structure, staff,
curriculum, and ethos." These "antecedents" well fit an institution geared to produce an elite whose taste, culture, and socio-economic needs are similar to those of the "dominant class" of the metropole.

Government controls the number of students who enter the university and in each field. This control of admission is a reflection of the overall relationship between the university and the government. Indeed when different political parties exist in a country, higher education matters become issues within their discourses (Clark, 1983, pp. 150-181). In the absence of other means of political expression, the university tends to become the main ground for political opposition. This was the case in Côte d'Ivoire where the major opposition parties started at the university with professors as their leaders until the multiparty system was legally established in 1990. There has been latent and often open conflict between the government, which wants to have agreement and cohesion, and the academic community, which tends to value criticism as the basis for shaping national public policy and political demand.

While officials may proclaim a policy which assumes concern for cultural relevance and local needs, the actual organization of the system of higher education better reflects the reality of universities of industrialized countries. This is illustrated by the administrative structure and organization of the National University of Côte d'Ivoire.

The university has been divided into several faculties (divisions). Each faculty, headed by a dean, is composed of departments with individual directors. There is a series of research centers and institutes, also headed by directors. About twenty of these centers and institutes are operating at the National University of Côte d'Ivoire. This institution has expanded to five faculties: Letters and Social Sciences, Law, Economics, Science, Medicine and the School of Pharmacy. Before analyzing the administrative structure of the National University of Côte d'Ivoire, it is worth mentioning a few features of the curriculum.

The faculty of Letters and Social sciences has the largest number of departments: Modern Letters, English, German, Spanish and Portuguese, Linguistics, Philosophy, Sociology, History, Geography, Psychology and Communication. Officially, this faculty is mainly geared to train
teaching staff. However, all the departments of the faculty are supposed to offer new courses to prepare for jobs in the public as well as the private sectors of the economy (République de Côte d'Ivoire, 1978, p. 1).

The faculty of Economics is divided into two major tracks: public and private sectors. The faculty of Sciences is composed of five sections which offer undergraduate and graduate courses (République de Côte d'Ivoire, 1978, p. 8):
1. Chemistry, Biology, and Geology,
2. Physics and Chemistry,
3. Mathematics and Physics,
4. Agronomy,
5. Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, and Technology.

As for the faculty of Medicine, its official mission is to train medical doctors and related staff in accordance with the needs of society (République de Côte d'Ivoire, 1978, p. 12). Finally, the School of Pharmacy aims at training pharmacists who are able to fulfill the health "needs" of an African population. This according to the document, has required an adaptation of the French curriculum to Ivorian realities (République de Côte d'Ivoire, 1978, p. 13).

The Ivorian curriculum does not vary much from the French one. The content of the curriculae of the faculties in general is similar to that of France. The diploma earned from the National University of Côte d'Ivoire has been considered legally and fully valid in France until recently. Several students from the National University of Côte d'Ivoire who transferred to French universities in the past did not need any major academic adjustments or additional requirements, and vice versa. The similarity between the two systems is exemplified by the large number of French students who used to attend the National University of Côte d'Ivoire until the political unrest of the past five years. Among the 3092 students enrolled at the National University of Côte d'Ivoire in 1970-71, 21.5 percent were French. In some cases French students outnumber Ivorians. For example, in 1963 the ratio of French to Ivorian students at the License level was 226
to 156 (Faujas, 1971). Although such ratios have been reversed, the proportion of French students at the National University of Côte d'Ivoire is still high.

According to the document on the "response to employment and ivorianization (République de Côte d'Ivoire, 1978), the content of education at the National University of Côte d'Ivoire has been responding to human power (human resources) needs of the country. In the case of Law for example, it is claimed that the training received by the students who graduate seems to correspond to the needs of business enterprises.

In the faculty of Letters and Social Sciences, in addition to its traditional role which consists in training teachers, more courses have been offered on a "multi-disciplinary basis in order to respond to the needs of the labor market and to open new avenues to the students (République de Côte d'Ivoire, 1978, p. 10). The curriculum in the faculty of Economics is conceived to enable students "to integrate teams either within enterprises or in the public sector" (République de Côte d'Ivoire, 1978, p. 8).

In the area of Sciences, efforts have been made to "adopt the curriculum and training to the needs of Côte d'Ivoire as evidenced by the scientific and technical tracks (République de Côte d'Ivoire, 1978, p. 9). As for the faculty of Medicine, its mission is to train medical personnel to be of immediate use. This requires that the curriculum be adapted into Ivorian conditions and culture. It has been so not only in Medicine, but also in Pharmacy where the emphasis has been on "African special health needs" (République de Côte d'Ivoire, 1978, pp. 12-14). On the whole then, the content of the curriculum in every faculty is supposed to have been carefully designed to meet the socio-economic needs of the country, (République de Côte d'Ivoire, 1978, p. 12). There have been some adjustments and adaptation. But the curriculum, and the criteria of evaluation and selection at the National University of Côte d'Ivoire are not fundamentally different from the French (Faujas, 1971, p. 48).

As a matter of fact, the National University of Côte d'Ivoire has special ties with the University of Bordeaux, involved particularly in certain orientations, examinations, diploma
preparation and awarding. Reforms passed in France have been applied in Côte d'Ivoire. For example, the reforms of the 1970s, which led to the transformation of diplomas hitherto offered at the end of the second year of university, were applied in Côte d'Ivoire. This has been the case in many other respects, including the three years required for the Doctorat du 3ème Cycle with one year of courses which leads to the DEA (Diplôme d'Etudes Approfondies) as opposed to the past when the degree could be done in two years and the students were less formally supervised.

On the point of dependence on external sources, some generalizations can be made about African universities. Each African university in former French colonies, for example, has a parent institution in France. Within the nature of these relationships, the African university cannot make major changes without the consent of the parent institution. In some cases, until the African university is allowed to deliver certain diplomas, even if the courses and the examinations take place in Africa, the diplomas are those of the parent-institution.

An important degree of similarity in the curriculum and the organization of two systems is a sine qua non for unconditional equivalence. As those systems do not relate on an equal basis, that of the subordinate country is the one that is modeled after the dominating country's. The origin of the administrative structure in its distribution of power and authority also reflects external influence, as illustrated by the case of the National University of Côte d'Ivoire.

The Administrative and Power Structures

The administrative structure of the university has been modeled after the French system. In the vertical division or tiers, the highest administrative official of the university is the rector. A presidential decree (Faujas, 1971), stipulating the organization of the National University of Côte d'Ivoire, laid down the structure of power and authority. In that decree the functions of the rectors were specified as follows: the rector is the head of all higher education and research and passes the budgets of the university. The rector's functions include: management of both teaching and non-teaching staff, academic affairs, student welfare and activities, budgeting, accounting, and
maintenance of university property. In principle, the university is run by a council. The distribution of authority within the council confirms the power of the rector. The council, chaired by the rector, decides on the budget, matters regarding the curriculum, criteria of course organization, issues of discipline and university holidays. Within the council, two commissions are designated, one for registration and another for disciplinary matters. The disciplinary commission also includes two elected professors and students. The university council is composed of the deans of the faculties in addition to two representatives elected by each faculty for two years. At the faculty level, the deans are appointed for three years. Each faculty, run by an assembly chaired by the dean, is composed of teaching staff of various levels, students and the secretary who represents the administrative staff.

The form of authority at the National University of Côte d'Ivoire is "bureaucratic," to use Clark's terminology (1983). In the Weberian sense, however, the authority is not bureaucratic. Rather, the administrative authority is personalized and concentrated in the powerful position of the rector despite the fact that the system of education is centralized at the level of the Ministry of National Education. According to the agreements between the Ivorian and the French governments, the first rectors of the university were jointly appointed by the two governments. Accordingly from 1964 to 1974, the three sectors were all composed of Frenchmen jointly appointed by the Ivorian and French governments. Actually, Ivorian legislation regulating the status, appointment, and promotion of the teaching staff is similar to that of France.

Clark argues that universities depend on immediate environment, "immediate structural setting" (1983, pp. 183-184), for change. The National University of Côte d'Ivoire was created after the political independence of the country. Yet, while some professionals have pressed for "autonomy" (as evidenced by numerous strikes by faculties and students at various periods to oppose government decisions), it cannot be said that the institution enjoys academic freedom and independence from the external world. Their dependence has been expressed in part by the appointment of French citizens as rectors of the National University that is supposed to produce
suitable human resources for the Ivorian economy.

The rector is appointed not only as a professional bureaucrat (Assié-Lumumba, 1993a). He is supposed to be able to understand and to interpret the needs of the country as they are perceived and/or defined by the political leaders/state or the ruling party. He must translate them into choices when making decisions regarding the allocation of resources, the curriculum, selection, evaluation, and so forth.

Crawford Young rightly points out that "to preempt the risk of the university as the locus for anti-regime activity and to ensure the responsiveness of the university to government-defined priorities, the choice of administrative leadership becomes particularly important" (1983, p. 15). In the case of Côte d'Ivoire, the rector is appointed by the President, head of the ruling party, Parti Démocratique de Côte d'Ivoire-Rassemblement Démocratique Africain (PDCI-RDA). The position is highly political in the sense that the rector's agenda cannot be in conflict with that of the government. In imported values that reinforced patriarchy, only men have been appointed to this position. For similar reasons, only men have been in charge of Ministry of the National Education, Higher Education and Scientific Research. Only the Ministry of the Primary Education has been headed by women. This can be considered as a game in the politics of tokenism.

Patronage and political connections are "at least" as important as academic qualifications in the appointment of top administrators. Political control over the university is real. Such an institution cannot be considered autonomous. Academic freedom is not valued and respected by political leaders. Until the early 1990s, researchers and professors sometimes had to be careful about topics or authors that the government could consider "subversive" or anti-government. In other words, autonomy and academic freedom, characteristics of higher education systems according to Clark, have not been evident in the Ivorian case until the emergence of the multiparty system. Thus, there are some necessary pre-conditions for their realization.

Ivorian leaders are conscious of the extraverted nature of the university. More than ten years ago, a national commission designated to study the system of education and to make
recommendations for reform admitted that the system was still much like that which was inherited from colonial days. In that situation, the argument goes on, the colonial powers did not design a system of education for the socio-economic development of the colonies. Therefore, reform was needed in order to match the educational system with the country's manpower (sic) "needs" (République de Côte d'Ivoire, 1977). The proposed reform points out that "until now higher education has not philosophically reflected the structure of economy in the country." Several remarks in reform documents suggest that in fact, the university has not been fulfilling the economic needs of the country.

One may ask, who is in a position to know and to design relevant and appropriate curricula for the needs of the country? Are those needs universal and therefore understandable by anybody, including the French rectors and the others who have been defining them? Knowing that the Ivorian society is not homogeneous, one may wonder the extent to which the needs of the Ivorian masses: the peasants, illiterates, lumpen-proletarians, in rural and urban areas, can be understood and fairly taken into account by the leaders and their appointed university administrators. The Ivorian elite, formally educated, identifies itself with the "dominant class" of the metropole and shares its values. Under these conditions, one must agree with Faujas, assuming the existence of either overall Ivorian needs or the specific needs of the masses, when he stated:

The University (of Abidjan) will remain alien to the social reality as long as the French have a monopoly on the teaching positions and the administrative staff is dominated by them because they live in Cocody, spend 2 months of annual holiday thousands of kilometers away from Côte d'Ivoire and are not particularly able to understand the Ivorian realities" (1971, p. 52).

It is important to note that the proportion of French teachers and administrators has decreased since Faujas published the article quoted above. With the policy of ivorianization, the proportion of Ivorians in the administrative and teaching personnel has increased. Since 1974 all rectors are Ivorians. As Africans, including the Ivorians, in the colonies did not have access to general
secondary and higher education until the late 1940s, there were few university professors when the
National University of Côte d’Ivoire was founded. Thus, in the beginning, the majority of
university professors, researchers (including educational planners) and top administrators were
French citizens. As mentioned by Faujas, that was still the case in the early 1970s. According to
available data in 1977-78, 51 percent of the university teachers and researchers were Ivorians and
49.0 percent were foreigners (République de Côte d'Ivore, statistiques 1977-78). In 1982-83,
61.4 percent of the 888 teachers, researchers and technicians were Ivorians. 26.6 percent were
French and 12.0 percent were from other countries. There is a wide range of French citizens, from
16.6 percent in the faculty of Economics, 46.2 percent in Odontology, 66.6 percent in the Center
for Continuing Education, and 90.9 percent in the computer center (Université d'Abidjan, 1983).
It should be mentioned that since 1984 there has been a policy of drastically reducing the number
of French technical assistants, including those who have been teaching and/or doing research at the
university. As of 1993, because of financial and economic difficulties and a high level of
unemployment in urban areas, the policy of ivorianization is beginning to be taken seriously in
most professional circles. But put at global level, does it really matter to have an Ivorian sous-
directeur or chef de personnel under the supervision of a French technician? Furthermore,
economic hardship has led of number of them French people to decide to leave.

Nevertheless, in the dependency framework, it is not necessary for the metropole to be
physically represented in the periphery by its own citizens. The elite, known also as
compradorized elite, in the periphery, who shares the values and interests of the metropole may
well ensure the application of the dictates from "headquarters." That elite may not, for example,
try to promote changes in the local system of education unless they are initiated and/or approved by
the center (Assié-Lumumba, forthcoming, 1994).

It should be noted that the recommendations of the national commission for proposed
reforms were made in 1977. To date, they have not been implemented. This means that the
current system fulfills at least the needs of those who have the power to make decisions for change
in the functioning of the university.
CONCLUSION

Some have argued that it is no longer valid to say that school in Africa is an alien institution, for it has been part of the African social fabric and reality, in some cases for more than a century. Also, in Côte d'Ivoire, formal education cannot be considered new in terms of the number of years since it was introduced. However, there is a difference between time gone and the actual congruence between the needs of the population and the goals fulfilled by the institution. There has been a gap between the proclaimed mission of the university and actual policies.

In fact, the system of education in former colonies was geared to select a local elite with taste and interests similar to those of the "dominant class" in the former metropole. The latter continues to be the cultural center. In following the French university, a product of French history since the middle ages, those who designed the National University of Côte d'Ivoire did not have in mind the fulfillment of specific needs of a society or population which are not identical to those of France.

The National University of Côte d'Ivoire was created after the political independence of the country. The Ivorian leaders made a choice of the administrative organization, the nature of the curriculum, and the origin of several top university officials that reflect French social reality. Are French rectors and other administrators and technical assistants, teachers, educational planners and so forth, qualified to design curricula and to make fundamental decisions regarding the objectives of educational activities relevant to the Ivorian population, assuming that there are needs for Ivorian society as a whole? Can they be expected to recommend policies that would give priority to "Ivorian interests" if they are in conflict with the French ones? Can they be inclined to recommend policies that would favor an independence of the Ivorian system? It is worth pointing out, as an illustration, that Ivorian leaders and educators at the tertiary level had been following the discussions related to French reform which recommended that the Doctorat du Troisième Cycle and the Doctorat d'Etat be merged into a single Doctorat similar to the North American Ph.D.
When they were asked what would be done if the French proposals were adopted, the usual replies were "we will follow" or "we will see and when the time comes we will make the appropriate decisions." In other words, the French laws would continue to be implemented in Côte d'Ivoire once they were implemented in France.

The main point is that whether they are French or Ivorian, the administrators who had been appointed by the government of the one-party system had been selected not only as professionals, but as agents who agreed and were willing to translate the desire of the political elite into general and specific educational objectives.

When the system is extraverted like in Côte d'Ivoire, fundamental changes tend to originate from the external center. They are applied to the institutions by direct decision of political leaders or through top administrators appointed by those leaders. High level national administrators are not appointed only as professionals. There is a great deal of patronage. Being an advocate of the government’s views is an important factor.

The universities in Africa, most of which were created after political independence, function in national settings. However, while the leaders call for adaptation, the majority of those institutions continue to depend on the "former" colonial powers, and their institutions which serve as models for change. Under these conditions, contrary to Clark's arguments, not all universities do rely on the immediate societal structure for change. Furthermore, those African universities, and in this case the university in Côte d'Ivoire, are the state institutions which do not equally enjoy an autonomy that guarantees academic freedom.

The National University of Côte d'Ivoire has serious organizational and "deontological" conflicts. Even from a demographic point of view, it cannot any longer function as in the past. When it was founded, it had six thousand students. In 1993 it hosted over twenty thousand students. What kind of human resources can it and should it continue to produce? what resources are available to make university function effectively and efficiently? And what will graduates from this school do in an economy that has become incapable of absorbing them? With the
implementation of privatization of state enterprises with all its policy implications in the employment sector and the government policy of limiting the number of graduates to enter la fonction publique, what should be the contribution of university graduates to the processes of social progress and the building of a democratic nation?

The University -- for whom and what kind -- are key questions some opposition parties in Côte d'Ivoire have started to raise. For instance, in its Congress of April 20, 1992, Le Mouvement Démocratique Social (MDS) articulated that the university should be democratized and academic authorities should be separated from those of the government. They also should be elected or chosen democratically through the university structure and hierarchy:

En un mot, démocratiser l'Université, c'est la débarrasser de toutes les chaînes, de toutes les entraves à la recherche scientifique, à l'invention, à la création et à la diffusion des techniques et des idées nouvelles (Congrès Extraordinaire, avril 1992, p.17).

The current organization of the university does not respond to the demands and claims of recent political activism and national economic and social realities, although it continues to well support the logic and functioning ideology of the state. For this institution to survive its current crisis of confidence, and of structural and financial malaise, it needs major restructuring. A new debate at the national level on what kind of school is needed for the Ivorian population to be productively competitive after the Cold War in international economic and industrialization processes while keeping its particularities is a sine quo-non of celebrating and promoting differences.

ENDNOTES

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2. Burton Clark is a well known sociologist of higher education in the United States. He has extensively published in the area of organization of higher education and is a professor at the University of California, Los Angeles.

3. For years, sociology was not allowed at the National University of Côte d'Ivoire mainly because it is among the disciplines that are supposed to train "trouble makers".

4. For further information on this subject see Tukumbi Lumumba-Kasongo, "Democratic Discourses and Discourses of the Opposition Parties in Africa," A preliminary result of an ongoing research project presented in the Institute for African Development's Seminar, May, 1992. It should be noted that all the leftist parties in Côte d'Ivoire had their original base at the university, for instance, Front Populaire Ivoirien (FPI), Parti Ivoirien du Travail (PIT), Mouvement Démocratique Social (MDS) to cite only a few parties.

5. Teaching staff as well as students have organized opposition. Several times, the university has been closed for at least several weeks in 1969, 1970-71,1982, 1990, 1991, 1992 and 1993.

6. Valable de plein droit sur le territoire de la République Française.

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