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ABSTRACT

This paper begins with a comparative regional survey of the current status of democracy and development in Africa, Latin America, and South Asia. Each region shares a legacy of colonial domination by European powers. The comparative study uses criteria from the basic needs approach. Critical social thought and future visions about democracy and development in each region are then reviewed as insights for education. Current evidence of the roles that education plays in helping or hindering achievement of these goals are then analyzed. Current ideas and efforts for reconstruction of education to strengthen social democracy and human development are examined. (EH)

The Role of Education in Building a Future World

based on

Democracy and Development: Regional Perspectives, Africa, Latin America and South Asia

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Education for Democracy and Development?
Regional Perspectives: Africa, Latin America, South Asia

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History in the twentieth century has been driven by social forces arising from earlier revolutions in commerce, culture and politics. The relationship of education to democracy and development has been influenced and shaped by the conflict of ideas and social movements unleashed by capitalism, colonialism and nationalism. In addition, the American and French Revolutions energized modern history with a quest for democracy as a progressive ideal in government. The ideas enshrined by these political liberation movements began a global struggle for political freedom. This movement to secure basic human rights like liberty, equality and fraternity continues today around the world. In our era the urban, industrial and scientific revolutions together with the phenomenal pace of technological change have also tended to impose common global standards for development and modernization.

Informal education began with the origins of humanity. Formal education, however, emerged much more recently with the development of writing and literacy. Before the nineteenth century most formal schools existed to empower children of the dominant classes or others who would serve those class interests. The rise of public or popular education after 1820 in western societies coincided with industrialization which introduced new utilitarian rationales for schooling. The new common schools were influenced by competing claims from capitalism, nationalism and religion. Class conflict and racism obstructed efforts to establish schools that would reproduce conditions favorable to democracy. The ideal of universal schooling for all is very recent, and, as yet, this goal remains unfulfilled even in the most developed nations.

Today the role of education as a means to foster democracy and development is a serious concern in Africa, Latin America and South Asia. Each region shares a legacy of colonial domination by European powers. This legacy left a burden of structural obsolescence in educational systems. Since 1945 developing nations have struggled to shed the colonial legacy of dependency and create a new identity based on autonomy in culture, development and popular sovereignty. This paper investigates the role of education in this struggle.

The paper begins with a comparative regional survey of the current status of democracy and development in Africa, Latin America and South Asia using criteria from the basic needs approach. Critical social thought and future visions about democracy and development in each region are then reviewed as insights for education. Current evidence of the role which education plays in helping or hindering achievement of these goals is then analyzed. Finally current ideas and efforts for reconstruction of education to strengthen social democracy and human development are examined.

I.

Three aspects of development are significant in this analysis; these include social distribution of economic growth, quality of life, and democratic culture. First, what are the economic conditions that influence conditions of life in these regions today? Income distribution data shows a growing disparity between the richest and poorest 20% of the world's population. From 1960 to 1990 the share of the poorest declined from 2.3% to 1.4% while that of the richest rose from 70% to 83%. The presence of inequalities in income distribution between and within regions is revealed by the range in percent of national income held by the poorest 40% of the population. In Latin America this ranges from 5% in Ecuador to 15% in Panama; in Africa, from 7% in South Africa to 19% in Chad; in South Asia, from 11% in Malaysia to 21% in Pakistan. Gender inequality is reflected in data which

show that women earn 30 to 40% less than men for the same work and work longer hours than men in all regions. In general developing countries show far greater income inequalities than industrialized countries.

Labor patterns reveal more about the nature of development in these societies. In nearly every country agriculture remains the predominant employer. Industrial employment has expanded since 1960 in many developing nations but remains a small proportion of total employment. In states with the largest populations it stands at 13% in India, 19% in Nigeria and 24% in Brazil. Unemployment in all regions has been exacerbated by the economic crisis and structural adjustments of debt in the 1980's. The growth of school leavers unable to find jobs has accelerated the unemployment crisis in many countries. Paradoxically, child labor, which makes up 11% of the workforce world wide, typically occurs in countries with an abundant supply of adult workers. Child labor did not diminish in the U.S. until public school laws required employers and parents to comply with compulsory education requirements. Today children comprise 13% of the labor force in South Asia, 18% in Africa and 7% in Latin America.

Economic well-being is further revealed by measures of per capita income, purchasing power, land ownership and poverty. In 1990 the per capita GNP for the industrial first world or OECD countries was $21,020; for Latin America it was $2,390; for sub-Saharan Africa $350; for North Africa $1,940; and for South Asia $320. The Purchasing Power Parities indicator (PPP) is more reliable than GNP as a guide to the disposable value of annual per capita income in terms of price and inflation variables in each country's economy. Considerable variations occur within regions. In South Asia, for example, Singapore has a PPP of $14,734 whereas Bhutan is just $620; sub-Saharan Africa ranges from $4,690 in Botswana to $447 in Chad; in Latin America it is $8,120 in Venezuela to just $1,820 in Honduras. For the most populous nations the PPP is $1,150 for India, $1,360 for Nigeria and $5,240 for Brazil. The percentage of countries in each region with PPP below a cutoff of $2,000 was 59% in South Asia, 82% in Africa and 12% in Latin America.

PPP gives a picture of general economic well-being but reveals nothing about inequality within countries. Nonetheless, it is evident that Africa has the weakest economic conditions, South Asia lies in the middle and Latin America is relatively better off. A survey of global poverty by the Overseas Development Council in 1980 revealed that one billion humans, one quarter of the world's population, were destitute. By 1990 1.2 billion people were living in poverty; 50% of these people live in South Asia, 20% in sub-Saharan Africa and 10% in Latin America. Wide variations exist within regions. For example, in South Asia Bangladesh has 75% of people living in poverty whereas Singapore has only 6%. In the most populous countries poverty affects 36% of the population in India, 30% in Nigeria and 8% in Brazil.

Remarkable gains in infrastructure development, industrial growth and provision of social services have been made in many countries in the last half century. However, most societies retain a high degree of internal structural inequality. This and other inequalities in international economic relationships sustains an economic culture which disadvantages the poor in many countries. Equitable distribution of basic goods, income, purchasing power, and general economic well-being is marginal. Macro-development has been the focus of many modernization projects but the expected distribution of benefits to all has not materialized.[1]

The second dimension of development involves quality of life measures related to health, nutrition, housing, literacy and education. An organic conception of development cannot focus only on economic growth to the exclusion of these social welfare variables. The non-monetary dimensions of poverty include ignorance, illness, illiteracy, malnutrition, substandard housing and unsanitary living conditions.

Health conditions in the three regions are revealed by data on life expectancy, infant mortality and number of physicians per capita of population. Life expectancy varies within and between regions. In Africa for example, the average in 1992 was 51 with a range from

67.1 in Tunisia to 42.6 in Uganda. By contrast the average in South Asia was 62 and, in Latin America it was 64. Africa presents the worst case; of 20 countries with male life expectancy below 40 in 1980, 17 were African and 2 South Asian. Infant mortality is a reflection of the availability of health care, pre and post-natal services, female literacy and general health awareness. In South Asia in 1980, Myanmar presented the highest infant mortality with 195 deaths per 1,000 live births whereas the lowest rate, 16.2 was in Singapore. In Africa, Zambia was highest with 259 with a low of 9 in Swaziland. In Latin America Brazil led with 84 against a low of 22 in Panama. The infant mortality rate in the most populous countries was 122 in India, 157 in Nigeria and 84 as noted above for Brazil. For comparison the worldwide rate is 97 and the U.S. rate is 13. Eighty percent of the world's ten worst infant mortality countries are African.

There is a great variation in number of physicians per capita within and between regions. In many countries rural-urban disparities are evident. In Latin America Guatemala had one doctor for every 4,427 people versus one per 525 in Argentina. In the most populous states the ratios were one physician for every 3,652 people in India, 14,344 in Nigeria and 1,647 in Brazil. In the U.S., for comparison, the rate is one doctor per 595 persons. In developing nations brain drain and rapid turnover of physicians in remote regions aggravates the rural-urban disparities in health services.

Health and the capacity of children to learn are directly affected by nutrition. Protein and calorie consumption data reveal patterns of nutritional intake. The FAO/WHO standard is 65 grams of protein per day per person. The world average in 1980 was 53.8 grams for developing countries versus 95.4 grams for developed nations. In the three regions we again encounter diversity. In South Asia the range is from 41 grams in Sri Lanka to 75 grams in Singapore; in Africa it is 31 grams in Zaire to 78 grams in South Africa; finally in Latin America it ranges from 45 grams in the Dominican Republic to 102 grams in Argentina. For the most populous states daily consumption is 49 grams in India, 46 in Nigeria and 63 in Brazil. Thirty two countries in the world had protein consumption levels below 50 grams; of these 9 were in South Asia, 11 in Africa and 5 in Latin America. In general all three regions show dietary deficiency; this situation is worsened by famine which still strikes Africa and refugee crises brought on by wars and civil strife. Children are the most vulnerable to malnutrition; if they survive they often face lifelong impairments.

Literacy, which is defined as the ability to read and write a simple sentence, enables people to navigate in societies which base communication on written information. Many traditional cultures were non-literate and relied on oral communication. Moreover, some prominent mediums of modern civilization, like radio, audio-recording and television, are compatible with this pre-literate oral culture. Nevertheless, literacy remains one of the critical standards of modernity. Illiteracy becomes a form of disempowerment in the modern world.

In 1990 Unesco reported nearly one billion illiterate people in the world; of these 40% lived in South Asia, 14% in sub-Saharan Africa and 4.4% in Latin America. Considerable variation exists within regions. In Africa, for example, illiteracy was 19% in Madagascar but 81% in Djibouti. In the most populous countries it was 50% in India, 48% in Nigeria and 18% in Brazil. Regional averages were 41% in South Asia, 50% in Africa and 14% in Latin America. Gender disparities in illiteracy have important consequences for social development. For example, in South Asia, Thailand, which was the literacy leader in 1980, had a illiteracy rate of 13% for men but 30% for women; in Afghanistan, the region's least literate country, 81% of men were illiterate versus 96% of women. Illiteracy of women is most severe in Africa. For example, female illiteracy is over 90% in 35 countries of the world; of these 26 are in sub-Saharan Africa and 4 in South Asia. On the other hand, 12 countries have male illiteracy rates over 90%, of these 10 are in Africa.

Formal education is an essential means of human development. Progress as well as problems are revealed by data on enrollment, gender inequality, rural-urban disparities,

pupil-teacher ratios and per capita expenditures for education. Elementary Level 1 enrollment has risen significantly in most developing countries since 1970, however, in many cases rapid expansion has reduced the quality of education. In addition 30% of elementary students leave school before completion; many others repeat grades. Nevertheless, important gains were made in the decade 1980-1990; in Africa enrollment rose from 59% to 66%; in South Asia from 73% to 87%; and in Latin America from 78% to 109%. Gender disparity occurs in Africa where enrollment of boys in 1990 was 74% versus 60% for girls; it is even more serious in South Asia where the ratio is 101% to 75%. On the other hand near gender equality exists in Latin American at Level 1 schooling with a ratio of 111% of boys and 107% of girls. Wide variations are found in each region; in Africa, for example, the 1980 elementary enrollment was 116% in Togo but only 19% in Upper Volta.

Enrollment in secondary Level 2 schools in all developing countries has risen since 1970 from 25 to 40% of the age grade. Nevertheless, disparities within each region and country are the norm. In general higher degrees of industrialization correlate with increased access to secondary schooling. Gender disparities in Level 2 are most severe in Africa where enrollment of women was 8% below that for men and also in South Asia where it was 20% below men. Tertiary or Level 3 higher education enrollment also rose in the 1980's. Women, however, again lost ground in maintaining parity with males in postsecondary enrollment. Moreover, developing countries fell further behind developed nations in higher education enrollment; in 1960, for example, the North-South enrollment rates were 15% apart but in 1990 the divide had widened to 29%.

Significant portions of the population in developing countries have never had any schooling. Considerable variations exist within and between regions. Data from the early 1980's for South Asia show the unschooled population was highest in Afghanistan at 92% and lowest in Sri Lanka with 16%; in Africa the range was 95% in Mali to 25% in South Africa. Rural-urban inequalities in the provision of education occur in most countries, however, these differences are most marked in resource-poor developing nations. All levels of education exhibit such disparities and the gaps increase at higher levels. Rural-urban inequality also entails greater missed opportunities for women than for men.

Quality of education is partly reflected by expenditures per capita of population for maintenance of school systems. Structural economic adjustment due to rescheduling of debt forced many of the poorest developing nations to reduce all levels of educational expenditures between 1980 and 1988. Per capita school expenditures in 1980 show a pattern of wide variation in each region. In South Asia, the range was $2.00 in Nepal to $230 in Brunei; in Africa it was $3.00 in Mozambique to $358 in Libya; and in Latin America it was $14 in Paraguay to $135 in Venezuela. In the most populous states per capita expenditure was $6.00 in India, $34 in Nigeria and $64 in Brazil. The global average for all developing nations was $27 contrasted with $435 in developed countries.

Pupil-teacher ratio is a highly significant indicator of education quality because it suggests the degree of time that teachers can attend to the learning needs of individual pupils. In 1980 the global average in developed countries was 26 pupils per teacher versus 56 in developing countries. Regional averages were 50 pupils per teacher in Asia, 90 in Africa and 44 in Latin America. Within regions the range was considerable. In South Asia, Brunei had 22 pupils per teacher versus 143 in Afghanistan; in Africa, Libya had 25 but Upper Volta was 608; in Latin America, Cuba had 23 while Guatemala was 96.

Quality of life measures comprise a more balanced measurement of human development than economic growth. These have been gauged by the Index of Human Development (HDI). HDI is a composite of 4 measures: life expectancy at birth, adult literacy, years of school attendance and real purchasing power. The index reveals much about attainment of basic needs embodied in the United Nations Development Program. These include provision of education, health care, social services and employment. In this context human development involves enlarging opportunities for people to achieve a decent

standard of living. The HDI index reveals significant differences in the three regions; in South Asia 9 of 17 countries were below .500; in Africa 37 of 44 countries were below .500; and in Latin America only 1 of 24 countries fell below .500.[2]

Democratic political culture, which includes political freedom, guaranteed human rights, self respect and tolerance for others, is the third dimension of development. Democracy is a volatile, fragile, slow and inefficient political system. From its beginnings in Athens to the present democracy has rarely attained the ideal of de facto equality of opportunity and rights for all the governed; moreover, as a political system it has usually operated on the basis of qualifications which exclude some from participation. Constitutions have been written by political elites to enfranchise some but not all the people. However, in the 20th century democracy has been evolving toward the ideals of equal opportunity and rights for all. Paradoxically in large democracies like the U.S. apathy causes nearly half the eligible citizens to disenfranchise themselves by failing to vote. This raises the question of whether democracy works best in small polities and loses its meaning and force in larger political settings where power is diffused through representation.

Another issue involves the compatibility of democracy with development. Many developing countries have tried to achieve rapid economic development over the last fifty years. The process of modernization has frequently empowered authoritarian regimes in the third world through connections with corporations and governments in the industrialized world. The concentration of power in the hands of small ruling elites may undermine democracy and deny equitable distribution of basic needs to the majority. Many developing societies have deep divisions based on education, ethnicity, gender, language, literacy and social class which cause inequality and function as obstacles to social or political integration.

Some traditional cultures were more authoritarian than democratic or egalitarian in spirit and organization; in some cases this provided a weak foundation for adaption of a political culture based on choice, open debate, equality and participation. Nonetheless, democracy evolved in Europe by resistance to the same type of closed and exclusionary social structures. In medieval Europe, for example, democracy emerged in towns along with the rise of the middle classes whose economic development gave them a sense of ownership in civic affairs. In this respect democracy is more of a dynamic process than a final state of affairs. It grows as people gain self-interest and concern for their political status. A sense of common entitlement with others is part of the democratic mind; this requires respect and tolerance for those others as equals with oneself in civil and political rights. The political system of democracy should enable conflict of interests to be resolved through a process of making and revising laws. If this is to occur, all participants must first understand their interests and possess both the will and the means to engage the system. Education should be a means to this end.

Education begins inside the boundaries of family and community which, in much of the developing world, embodies the mores of traditional beliefs, values and social structures. The school can reinforce or disrupt these earlier learning patterns. The organization of the school, its style of leadership, the manner of teaching, the relativity of its curriculum and the construction of knowledge are critical factors in deciding whether education will lead toward authoritarianism or democracy. In stable societies schools traditionally transmit culture. However, developing countries are rarely stable because their culture and institutions are evolving rapidly. In this transitional environment schools face the problem of what economic and political culture to transmit.

Democracy in each of the three regions is conditioned by varied degrees of civil liberties, freedom of assembly, political rights and access to information. Cultural homogeneity is also a widespread variable which has pervasive effects on political participation and empowerment. Freedom House, an organization which monitors changing world conditions annually, maintains an index of political rights based on five variables: free and fair elections, political decision-making by an elected parliament, open competition between

political parties, freedom of association and protection of minorities. Countries are rated on a scale as free, partly free and not free. Freedom House ratings of political rights in 1991 showed that 2 countries in South Asia were free, 5 were part free and 10 not free; in sub-Saharan Africa 5 countries were free, 6 were part free and 30 not free; in Latin America 10 countries were free, 6 part free and 5 not free.

The state of civil liberties is also watched by Freedom House. This measurement includes freedom of association, press and religion, the right to assemble in meetings or organize trade unions, the right to own property, the existence of equality before the law, and protection from political terror and government corruption. The ratings for civil liberties revealed that no countries in South Asia were free, 12 were partly free and 5 not free; in sub-Saharan Africa 2 countries were free, 26 partly free and 13 not free; finally in Latin America 6 countries were free, 14 part free and 1 not free.

A composite assessment based on both political rights and civil liberties provides a more complete picture of the state of democracy in the three regions. In this survey 2 countries in South Asia were free, 8 were partly free and 5 not free; in sub-Saharan Africa 5 countries were free, 16 partly free and 19 not free; finally in Latin America 12 countries were free, 10 partly free and 1 not free. By these standards democracy appears most advanced in Latin America. emergent in South Asia and least developed in Africa.[3]

The picture that emerges from the foregoing data is one of great variability in both democracy and development within and between the three regions. In general it appears that political conditions are in transition toward democracy in many countries, however, progress is hindered by ethnic conflict, inexperience with the practice of democracy, authoritarian rule, economic and political instability, exclusion of minorities from the polity, scarcity of independent sources of information and lack of functional literacy applied in political participation.

II.

The role of schools in preparing youth for life can not be conceived in isolation from the social realities that govern life in each society. Visions of future development and political order in each country can provide meaningful input for the reconstruction of education. If schools are to play a part in building a new social order, their curriculum and organization should respond to needs that arise from socio-economic issues and problems. Critical social thought and reform initiatives in each region provide insights that have potential value as guidelines for the planning of new educational programs.

Representative democracy and constitutional government are established traditions in most South Asian countries. Today, however, these institutions are being tested by social conflicts rooted in ethnic differences, poverty and frustration. Many leaders in South Asia recognize a need for alternative grassroots development that includes economic growth with more equitable distribution and the provision of basic needs to alleviate disease, hunger, ignorance and poverty. The problems of environmental destruction, gender inequity, human rights violations, population explosion and community disintegration demand solutions.

In South Asia a region where 70% of people live in rural villages, rural development based on self-reliance and autonomy is a strong tradition. On the other hand, large scale techno-economic development is regarded by some critics as a form of neo-colonialism serving the interests of foreign investors, wealthy rural landowners and government bureaucrats but doing little to alleviate rural poverty. Such development is also seen as a threat to democracy. Remigio Agpolo warns that modernization in third world countries has a "tendency toward authoritarianism" through its emphasis on widening control and integration of people which tends to extinguish individual and group freedom.[4] One alternative illustrated by the Sarvodaya Movement in Sri Lanka used Gandhian principles

and Buddhist values to build self-help communities that work for the welfare of all in a "no poverty, no affluence society."[5]

Since independence, African countries have experienced numerous approaches to development; these policies include capital formation, economic nationalism, socialist development, basic human needs and current programs of economic stabilization. Unfortunately, most programs have failed to deliver either stable economic growth or wide distribution of benefits. Recent economic decline has caused a worsening of poverty in Africa and spurred a search for more realistic approaches to development. On the one hand, Benedict Mongula would combine socialism, basic needs provision and economic stabilization for growth with social equity and national autonomy.[6] Others like Uche C. Isiugo-Abanihe look to grassroots organization and delinking development from government policies designed to serve foreign interests.[7] This parallels the concern in South Asia for resisting alienation and marginalization through local organization and community development. There is growing dissatisfaction with Western paradigms of development which require huge loans and debt that may undermine the social and economic stability they intend to create.

The plight of democracy in Africa is for some analysts inextricably linked to the process of development driven by neo-colonial arrangements between African political elites and capitalist multinational corporations that control world markets. Bernard Muna describes the process by which democracy was dismantled after independence in many African countries:

> Self government and independence were granted to the new nations, but the revolution was hijacked by the new indigenous leaders. The African people were never handed their full sovereignty. In the name of national unity and rapid economic development, many basic human rights and democratic freedoms were sacrificed. Dictatorships, minority governments and single party regimes became the order of the day. The peoples of Africa watched helplessly as their countrymen became the new oppressors.[8]

This African analysis correlates with the aforementioned perspective of Agpolo that authoritarianism has been nourished by the conditions of rapid modernization in South Asia. In either case the bridgehead between first world economic interests and third world political elites is a potential disabling structure for democracy and human development.

The task of reconstructing democracy in Africa is formidable but there are some hopeful models being proposed. Masipula Sithole maintains that democracy can be structured to accommodate intergroup competition, compromise and a process of give-and-take; he notes that ethnicity and regionalism are demographic conditions that lend themselves to representation.[9] Okwudiba Nnoli has considered ways to accommodate ethnic conflict in democracy; he proposes reliance on federalism, ethnic proportionality and affirmative action for underprivileged minorities.[10] On the other hand, African critics argue that democracy aggravates tribal conflicts and may disrupt development. Osita Eze regards illiteracy and ignorance as conditions that undermine the integrity of elections and prospects for real equality before the law.[11] Several political writers would return development to the people through a renewal of democracy as the surest way out of economic stagnation and underdevelopment. Samir Amin, for example, identifies democratic re-politicization of the masses, particularly self-organization and self-development, as the key condition for the renewal of democracy.[12] Ernest Wamba-dia-Wamba maintains that there are several essential conditions for a new democracy and development; first, deconstruct the colonial legacy and its traditions; second, abandon the process of 'de-indigenization' of traditional society; third, democratize the knowledge process currently dominated from outside; and

fourth, de-marginalize the masses of women, youth, workers and peasants and empower their creativity.[13]

Dialogues on education youth and development held in 1988 and 1989 in Nigeria prescribed several ways that education could be related to development. Formal education was criticized for its marginalization of traditional African culture. Emphasis was placed on the continued importance of education for productivity. Education was also seen as a potential force for cultivating political involvement, creativity and high moral standards. There was interest in teaching youth to value both physical labor and academic inquiry to counteract the popular perception that education should remove a person from the world of manual work. Concern was expressed about the need to preserve adult and family role models in socialization. This concern is related to the secondary boarding school, a vestige of colonialism that is still common in Africa; these schools may delink students from community and family socialization without providing strong alternative values and moral standards. Schools were also viewed as an important source of local community building.[14]

In Latin America national independence came in the early 19th century well ahead of Africa and South Asia which were then just beginning to be colonized. However, Central and South America have a long-lasting residue of colonialism that prevails in what Jorge Castenada calls the region's "ancestral social structures and political culture."[15] Political instability, inequitable distribution of income, land and wealth, and corruption of justice by money and politics have occurred even in some of the most democratic countries like Colombia, the Dominican Republic and Venezuela. In many other less democratic countries, authoritarian government, economic stagnation and social injustice are often present. Some countries have gross disparities in development; Brazil, for example, which is one of the top ten industrial states in the Western world, also harbors a subsistence economy of poverty in which 30% of children are out of school and 26% of the population is illiterate. How has this situation arisen? The Argentine writer Manano Grondona thinks that the region's predominant Ibero-Catholic culture which devalues labor, innovation and enterpreneurship is the main obstacle to development. He believes that societies are either prone or resistant to development; development-prone societies are future oriented, approach the world as manipulable, value individuality, community, work and creativity and seek education. Development-resistant societies, by contrast, focus on the past or present only, have a fatalistic view of life as something that happens to people rather than something that they can change; such societies also limit the circle of trust and identity to the family and regard education as a low priority.[16]

The road to full democracy and development that benefits all sectors of Latin American societies is likely to be long and hard. In the past, democracy, when tried, has often mainly served the interests of the dominant classes instead of benefiting the poor. Whether the current rebirth of democracy can deliver economic and social reforms and bring needed redistribution of power remains to be seen. Latin America, like Africa and South Asia, faces an ongoing struggle to reorient development toward strengthening the social, economic and political capacities of the poorest and most neglected sectors of society.

III.

The role of education in efforts to achieve democracy and development in Africa, Asia and Latin America is complex. Schools in each region have functioned in a climate of turbulent change; in many countries political upheavals, rapid policy changes and shifting models for development have produced instability in educational development. In this context the contribution of education to economic and political growth presents a picture of negative and positive effects.

On the positive side education has expanded at all levels in each region since 1960. Enrollment multiplied fivefold in Africa from 1960 to 1983; significant but slower growth also occurred in Asia and Latin America. Many formerly excluded groups have gained access to

schooling; average educational attainment has risen and dramatic gains have come in adult literacy. New departures were made in redefining the role of teacher as a catalyst for democratic community participation. For example, school reforms in 1982 in the Central African Republic proposed that teachers should not only teach but also act as community leaders to involve parents and others in school affairs.[17]

Curriculum reforms improved the climate of democracy associated with development of educational programs. In Namibia, for example, adult workers contributed ideas for a program designed to train agricultural extension workers.[18] Reforms in Swaziland aimed to increase the involvement of parents and communities in developing self-help schemes for early childhood pre-K programs.[19] In Tunisia participation expanded on subject committees charged with curriculum development and the national parliament gained the right of final approval on new programs in place of the Minister of Education.[20]

Initiatives in basic education have improved access and learning for poor children in several countries. In Latin America, for example, Escuela Nueva, a rural education program in Colombia, the Program of 900 Schools in Chile and Fe Y Alegria, a Jesuit project linking community development with education in 12 countries have improved grassroots democracy and boosted learning by integrating schools with the life of the community.[21] Two basic education projects in Brazil, Baixada Fluminense in Rio and Cabo in Recife, helped adult learners organize to reclaim their rights to electricity, sanitation, water and education.

Curriculum developments have tried to improve the relevance of schooling for local culture and economic needs. For example, a democratic socialist reform in Mali in 1962 charged schools with the task of decolonizing the minds of citizens and promoting Malian, African and universal values. However, progress in this area has been difficult because of structural resistance within inherited colonial education systems. Language diversification is an even more controversial frontier of change. In Mali other African languages were allowed as mediums of instruction in the 1980's; hitherto, such diversity was feared as a threat to unity.[22] Mexico provides non-Spanish speaking children with indigenous language materials; curricula are also adapted for ethnic groups in remote areas.[23]

Reforms in Panama in the 1970's created the "productive school," an experiment which aimed to teach rural students modern farming techniques and marketing; the project failed, however, because of conservative opposition and resistance by teachers who were not involved in the planning. This case illustrates the necessity of building ownership in reforms by incorporating a democratic process in the planning of change.[24] Other efforts to ruralize curriculum occurred in Sierra Leone and Tanzania with pre-vocational primary activities, inclusion of home economics, agricultural science, technical studies at the secondary level, health and family life education, AIDS education and environmental sanitation.[25]

A persistent problem in African Education is the lack of instructional materials and facilities. Textbooks in many African countries are imported from Europe; these books often do not relate well to the social or environmental contexts of African life. In the 1970's Mali developed new texts with learning activities based on familiar cultural settings. Many secondary schools in Africa have no science labs; however, portable lab kits developed in Zimbabwe in the 1980's have improved the teaching of experimental science.[26]

Retention and school success may improve when community involvement and ownership are linked to schooling. The Village School Program in Malawi, sponsored by Save the Children, built elementary schools in remote rural locations where distance to government schools made school attendance difficult. Students in these schools had an 85% pass rate; their dropout rate was 21% lower than the rate in government schools.[27] In this case community commitment may have strengthened student motivation to succeed as a way of honoring the efforts made by adults in the village.

Education may foster gender inequality through differential access and quality of instruction. Such conditions, which are a hindrance to democracy and development, are

entrenched in all three regions. Provision of basic education for women is a key factor in development and democracy because it is linked to improved health, increased economic productivity and lower fertility rates. Female literacy and knowledge also enables participation by women in political activities that are related to human welfare and community improvement. South Asia was the only region where the gender gap in years of schooling went unchanged in the decade 1980-1990; in sub-Saharan Africa, Southeast Asia and Latin America the gender gap declined by nearly half a year reflecting improved school attendance by girls.[28]

Other initiatives have tried to close equity gaps in the provision of schooling that are related to geographic location, economic status and cost. In Mali school calendar and curricula were adjusted to fit closely with the demands of rural life; the price of school texts was fixed to encourage affordability and wider access. In Mexico special programs were developed to reach teenagers who dropped out of school in rural and urban areas. In Vietnam socialist policies combined with decentralization have maintained a high level of equity and literacy (86%); programs are focused on the needs of less fortunate, disadvantaged and minorities.[29]

Signs of emergent local democracy exist in all regions; many local people have the will to solve their own problems and have provided for education where the need was neglected or underfunded by government. However, all regions have a strong political tradition of central government bureaucracy which is reluctant to relinquish control. In Africa, for example, grassroots support for basic education was essential in sustaining school services during the fiscal crisis of the 1980's. However, communities and parents did not gain a wider share of power in school management, curriculum input, policy revision or teacher recruitment and discipline.[30] Nevertheless, other trends favor the growth of political participation. Literacy, for example, has improved steadily in all regions since 1960 and is a foundation for democracy and human development because it can facilitate lifelong learning, acquisition of new capacities and political empowerment.

Efforts to relate curriculum development to the improvement of local resource-based economies are another promising breakthrough. In the Maldives, for example, secondary schools teach fisheries science to encourage student involvement in the fishing industry.[31] In Kenya the Pied Crow Project included units on "starting a business" and "making a living."[32] A change of attitudes about the outcome and potential of education is linked to decolonization; in the colonial era schooling was mainly concerned with production of clerical workers for commerce or government. Today this structure is no longer functional given the diverse categories of skilled labor required for human development.

Cuba and Tanzania implemented revolutionary change in the structure and function of education based on policies of state socialism. Gains were impressive in spite of resistance by inherited structures of education associated with colonialism. Strong emphasis was placed on reorientation to develop a new basis for self-motivation. The monolithic single party focus and commitment to rapid economic development precluded Western forms of competitive multiparty democracy and entailed a degree of repression. Nonetheless, significant achievements were made in education. Before the Cuban Revolution in 1959, 50% of children never attended school and 23% of adults were illiterate; today the duration of schooling is 11 years and only 3.8% of adults are illiterate. In Tanzania the duration of schooling rose from 2.9 to 7.4 years in the decade 1970-1980; illiteracy which was near 90% in 1960 was reduced to 55% by 1992. Education in each society has assisted the development of human capacities through non-formal initiatives, pre-school programs and equity policies.

Current educational practices in developing countries also have deficiencies which impact negatively on democracy and development. These problems exist in the areas of student enrollment and retention, quality of teaching, the relationship of curriculum to culture

and economic needs, sufficiency of resources, system output, inequalities of access or opportunity and overall relevance of schooling for democracy and development.

Not all students who desire education are accommodated in the regions. In the decade 1980-1990 enrollment at all levels rose in Latin America and South Asia; in Africa, however, it declined 10% for the primary level and grew only slightly for the secondary and tertiary levels. Stagnation of primary enrollment is most marked in sub-Saharan Africa; here 27 countries enrolled less than 80% of children ages 6 to 11, 9 countries were below 50% with a low of 10% in Somalia; by contrast 4 countries in South Asia were under 80%, 3 countries were under 50% with a low of 24% in Afghanistan; in Latin America only 2 countries were below 80%, El Salvador and Guatemala, each with primary enrollment ratios of 79%.[33] The range of high and low primary enrollment ratios within regions is far greater in Africa and South Asia than Latin America even after allowance for inflation due to grade repetition and returns by older students. Regional variations of enrollment ratios within countries reflect widespread inequality of opportunity. In Brazil, for example, Francis Boakari reports that 14 of 26 states had primary ratios below 50% and concludes that this lack of schooling was correlated with maintenance of poverty which served "the latent interests of the dominant groups who would not want to see their socio-economic, political and cultural hegemonies threatened by schooling and underprivileged masses."[34] N.V. Varghese reports that non-enrollment in India is strongly correlated with "backward regions" and "deprived groups." Thus, 60% of the non-enrolled age 6 - 11 group in rural areas and 80% in urban areas come from the poorest 40% of the population.[35] Here education acts by default to reinforce inequality and poverty.

The progress of children through school systems is hindered by wastage which results in early school leaving, grade repetition and failure. These problems are not new or unique to developing countries; they exist today in first world school systems and have been prevalent from the beginning of public education in Western industrial societies. Economic realities and parental resistance often led to withdrawal of children from schools; economic transformation and compulsory education laws were needed to replace traditional patterns of child labor with school attendance. The percentage of children retained in primary school by grade 5 in 1990 was about 50% of the age cohort in Africa, South Asia and South America but 70% in Central America. There are considerable variations of access within regions.[36] Fernando Reimers reports the percent of children ages 11 to 14 without schooling was just 1.1% in Argentina but 26.2% in Brazil. In Brazil this varied from 47.1% in rural areas to 14.3% in urban communities.[37] Boakari indicates that the dropout rate in Brazil fell to 30.7% in 1978 but rose to 48% in 1984; such fluctuations were most likely a response to the economic recession which increased hardship most for poor families.[38] Africa is the only region that experienced an increase in its age 6 to 11 out-of-school population; by 1990 there were 41 million children out-of-school, a 60% increase from 1960. This reflects the inability of states to expand education to keep pace with population growth. In Latin America in the same period out-of-school children declined 50% to 8 million; in South Asia they remained stable at 48 million.[39]

Several negative factors have caused a decline in the quality of teaching in many countries. In parts of Africa, particularly rural areas, there has been an increase in the number of untrained teachers. As existing schools struggle to accommodate the rise of enrollment from population growth, class sizes have expanded; overcrowded classrooms, increased workload and reduction of individual teacher-pupil interaction have undermined teacher morale. In some systems individual teachers have been required to work both ends of double shifts. Adverse teacher-pupil ratios are also reported from India. Structural adjustment in Latin America, as in Africa, caused reductions in teacher pay. Rapid teacher turnover, absenteeism and shortages of qualified instructors have further diminished the quality of education.[40]

Teaching methods in many developing countries are problematic as means to encourage democracy and development based on individual enterprise. Traditional methods involve students reading texts, teacher lecture and testing, rote memorization and passive reception of knowledge by learners. Teachers rarely rely on methods that utilize questioning, critical thinking, problem solving and application of knowledge to life situations. These modes of learning seem more likely to foster democratic participation, self-motivation and an entrepreneurial approach to life. Another incompatibility involves the mismatch of authoritarian teaching styles with the idea of encouraging democracy, dialogue and participation. B.J. Obebe, a Nigerian educator, notes that a teacher who assumes the role of being the "only source of authority in the classroom" is in conflict with democratic traditions of African markets where bargaining requires mutual interaction and agreement before an exchange can occur.[41] Monologic uni-directional teaching seems to obstruct the potential for schools to inculcate skills in questioning, discussion, critical thinking, problem solving and transformation of knowledge into action; these capacities are essential for functional life in democratic polities.

If schools are to enhance development potential, curriculum should have some relationship to the productivity needs of any particular country. However, planning in most countries has been disrupted by political instability; because most educational systems are highly centralized, changes of government can result in widespread staff turnover. In some states, like Sri Lanka, consensus on policy direction has proven elusive. In Latin America some education bureaucracies are riddled with patronage and clientelism which often undermines reform initiatives. Lack of resources and managerial expertise is another obstacle to planning and implementation of new programs. Widespread reports from Africa and Latin America indicate that school curricula are unrelated to the economic and social needs of local life. In South Asia critics maintain that advanced levels of technology education do not synchronize with existing economic opportunities; this often leads to emigration which results in brain drain. Two efforts that relate education to economic needs, the vocational school and the comprehensive secondary school, have proven ineffective due to high costs and incompatibility with needs of changing labor markets. Another curricular shortcoming in Africa has been the lack of job counseling for youth who leave school.[42]

The role of curriculum as a stimulus to democracy is dampened in some countries by a climate of official censorship which limits teacher's ability to engage students in controversial issues. On another plane, because many developing countries are polylingual, the issue of language of instruction may be devisive. Acceptance of mother tongue instruction is a form of democratization, however, in some cases it is feared as a threat to unity.[43] One of the greatest threats to democracy is the perception of many people that school curriculum is unrelated to life. This situation undermines a major premise of democratic schooling which maintains that the school should be part of the community just as the community should be part of the school.

In many parts of Latin America the dominance of Spanish culture and language in school curriculum has excluded or marginalized the learning potential of non-Spanish indigenous peoples. Rigoberto Menchu, the 1992 Nobel Peace Prize winner, recalls that her father withdrew her from primary school because he felt dishonored by the policy that prohibited students from wearing traditional dress to school.[44] In Africa one of the unintended effects of schooling is alienation of youth from the culture and values of their parent's world. Schools that operate in a society which remains largely illiterate have the potential to disrupt culture and destroy community. An observer of this process in Africa reports that:

> Modern education has not only cut off the younger generation from the knowledge and teaching methods of their elders, but has made them disparage those very elders who are in effect their parents and towards whom all cultures, traditional and modern ...

advocate filial piety and reverence.[45]

Cultural alienation may gravitate towards disorientation when modern schooling fails to implant lasting learning, commitment to a clear ethical code and values that preserve the bonds of social continuity. Nevertheless, this type of discontinuity often occurs when modernization and rapid economic development undermine traditional processes of cultural transmission in the process of laying the foundation for a new society.

Education in many parts of the developing world has been set back by resource scarcity and underfunding. The economic restructuring of the 1980's in Africa and Latin America worsened this problem; it is ironic that first world creditors were secured while the education of future productive human resources was cut back. In Africa states and families now have less money to contribute to educational costs; school buildings, teachers and books are in short supply. Rapid population increase has created a demand for schooling that exceeds what can be provided; consequently, enrollment has fallen in some areas. Female completion of primary school has declined as more girls leave school to help support family survival needs. Many African schools, particularly those in rural sectors, are poorly equipped; science labs and libraries are uncommon.[46] In South Asia similar problems are found; in India, for example, 40% of schools have no blackboards and single teachers instruct 3 or 4 classes in 35% of schools. Corruption by school officials in Bangladesh is another cause of resource deficiencies.[47] Schools in Latin America are also weakened by poor budgets and lack of texts; in addition, there are a number of incomplete schools, which, due to inadequate resources, have fewer grades than usual.[48] In countries devastated by war, civil strife and political upheavals, education may cease to exist; the destruction of schools and teacher mortality necessitate costly recovery that can take years to achieve.

Unemployed school leavers and graduates are another symptom of a flawed relationship between education and development. This condition has been widely reported in all three regions but is especially acute in Africa where over 100 million people were jobless in the 1980's. Declining performance in math and science in Africa has been identified as a major factor retarding development. Several countries imposed admissions quotas to boost university enrollments in science and technology. Many African countries have overinvested in university programs while neglecting adult vocational-technical training. The payoff has been poor in many parts of Africa where universities are marginalized as research centers by poor budgets, low quality, high costs and lack of resources. Another factor complicating development in each region is the reluctance of educated and skilled persons to work in remote areas where living conditions are poor but the need for teachers, doctors, engineers and agronomists may be great.[49]

Historical macro-analysis can partially explain the failure of schools to produce the human resources needed for contemporary social and economic development. in all regions existing school systems are either carryovers from a colonial past or represent the neo-colonial structures prevalent in contemporary third world societies. In Latin America school structures existed to reproduce the social conditions of a small ruling elite dependent on a large illiterate mass of manual laborers. In Africa and South Asia the European colonial powers designed education systems to produce a subservient class of bureaucrats and functionaries for employment in government offices or trading companies. Since independence the struggle for political and economic development has empowered a native ruling class, however, the colonial social structure with a small wealthy elite controlling a large poor population has remained intact in most cases.

Schools are only partly responsible for reproducing this social structure. Neo-colonialist connections between first world economic interests and third world leaders may be more influential in maintaining the monetary conditions of dependency that underpin these social conditions. Vipula and Mahesh Chaturvedi examined this problem from a South Asian

perspective and found that resistance to change was a function of the interdependency of education and neo-colonialism.

> Educational systems that functioned under constraints of colonial policies for long still have not been able to create an independent intellectual or pragmatic climate of their own. Further, international institutions continue to influence educational policies in low income countries. Thus, the reform policies in these societies often resemble those that preceded them.[50]

The absence of democracy in this system led H.S. Bhola to conclude that education continues to function as an "instrument of power of the governing elite for directing and harnessing of social power for preferred social outcomes."[51] In Africa Michael Kelly reports the same structural conditions in his analysis of education in Zambia. He concludes that the system responds poorly to students' actual needs and functions mainly as a sifting mechanism, an academic program which progressively sorts students by means of successive examination hurdles.[52] Two conclusions emerge from the data surveyed here. If schools are producing unemployable persons, some adjustment is needed in either school programs or development goals. Furthermore, incongruence has arisen between the goals of formal education systems and the actual needs of the majority population in many countries; the discord involves issues of language, cultural reinforcement, community building, self-sufficiency and application of knowledge to the improvement of the local environment and economy. Modern democracy enshrines the principle of equality of opportunity as an ideal in social development. However, inequalities of wealth often translate into inequality of opportunity.

Political participation and economic growth are linked to improvement of educational opportunity for functional literacy, self-sufficiency and empowerment. Unfortunately much evidence shows that inequality is being reinforced by maldistribution of education in Africa, Latin America and South Asia. Those who are negatively impacted are people in rural and remote regions, ethnic minorities, women and the urban poor. It should be noted that these problems also exist in developed first world countries albeit in less extreme forms. Privileged minorities have dominated education in several countries; such regional, class and ethnic disparities contribute to social conflict and political instability which may undermine democracy by necessitating authoritarian controls in government. The prevalence of class, regional and gender inequalities in literacy is another limiting factor for democracy and development. Open political systems require that citizens understand political procedures so that they can act to protect their own interests; illiteracy may weaken or cripple this capacity, thus blocking a fundamental condition for democracy.

Progress toward social democracy is hindered by cultural conditions and schools which function as barriers to participation. These conditions include hierarchical organization, skepticism, lack of information, low levels of education and lack of confidence.[53] In some instances the practice of democracy has been discredited among the poor by its association with political upheaval, corruption and maintenance of middle and upper class privileges. Democracy has always had flaws in its workings, yet it creates expectations that demand something better. When these demands or hopes appear to be denied, disillusionment may lead to withdrawal. This effect is well known in the U.S. where fewer than half of eligible voters participate in elections. The problem of perceived disempowerment is the condition that Paulo Freire has tried to correct; it requires effective political education to convince people that they can gain power through choice and participation. Democracy has always been vulnerable because it depends on popular faith and political will. These essential attitudes need to be revived through education and reinstilled in each generation. Even long-established democracies like the U.S. require this type of recommitment; today a civic

education movement in the U.S. is promoting the teaching of democracy in schools. Other scholars are exploring ways to reinvent democracy in schools where authoritarian and hierarchical structures block full participation by students, parents and teachers.

Schools sometimes function in ways that counteract the social climate needed for effective democracy. In Latin America, for example, education has a contradictory role. On the one hand, schools are supposed to increase social mobility; on the other hand, education is structured in ways that disadvantage the poor and maintain the power of the rich.[54] An anti-democratic climate exists in many schools. In a review of pedagogical obstacles to respect for human rights Dieter Misgeld identified "social practices which encourage deference to authority, dependence, unwillingness to assert one's own interests and the absence of a culture of rights."[55] In support of this point Reimers found that schools in Latin America were preparing children for acceptance of authoritarian government by not developing critical thinking and social skills essential to political participation like discussion, debate, questioning and inquiry related to problem-solving.[56]

Faced with rising costs and inefficient management some monolithic centralized systems of education have moved toward limited decentralization. The failure and collapse of the Soviet Union as a highly centralized state system has influenced this restructuring. In principle these changes look like democratization of power, however, it is significant that the main impetus for change was expediency related to lack of resources and poor service delivery rather than any definite plan to restructure power relationships. Thus it is not surprising that most central bureaucracies have strived to maintain control while delegating minor management responsibilities to local authorities. In Africa, for example, parents have had to bear more of the cost of their children's education, however, they have not gained a commensurate share of power in school management or teacher selection. Where decentralization has occurred conditions have worsened in some cases and expected qualitative gains have not arisen.[57] Reliable resources, local management training and real extension of power are essential if decentralization is to function in an effective democratic way. The reality of centralization in most national education systems makes them prone to imposition and continued control by governing elite classes.

The critical question for democracy, education and development is whether governing officials have broad enough interests and concern to make the centralized system function well for the needs of all people and national economic growth. Each country's political situation is unique. History records wide variation in the benevolence of ruling elites; moreover, revolutions which make universal idealistic claims can often degenerate into tyranny and oppression. Modernization that focuses only on economic growth without giving balanced attention to diverse human development needs is a policy of short-term gains for the few. Long-term growth for all requires policies that distribute opportunity and build economic capacities at all levels of society. How this might be fostered by educational reforms is explored in the next section.

IV.

Emergent reforms in all regions are in various stages of transition from theory into practice. Policies which seek to address educational deficiencies have been identified in nine areas of praxis; these include access, curriculum, relevance to life, culture and language, literacy, quality, democracy and development. As mentioned above many countries in each region have school systems designed in the past to serve colonialism; today nearly all these systems have dysfunctions that obstruct the goals of universal education, democratization and development. Radical restructuring is rarely an option in education. It is more common to pursue piecemeal solutions which respond to problems as they arise. This is true of current reform efforts, however, the process is limited by lack of financial and human resources in many countries.

Efforts to improve access to basic primary education are planned or being implemented in many countries where enrollments are low. In Botswana, for example, fees have been abolished to eliminate economic barriers. Nepal has increased the years of required primary education. An initiative in Morocco aims to improve pupil success by reducing grade repetition. Policymakers in several countries are creating new programs to bring basic education to the rural and urban disadvantaged, minorities and students with learning difficulties. The Costa Atlantica project in Colombia, for example, developed pre-schools in parents' homes which achieved gains in language improvement, socialization and cognitive skills while also providing better nutrition and health services for children in poor districts.[58] Indonesia has developed pilot programs for out-of-school children and adults along with open plan junior-secondary schools for teenagers in isolated areas of the archipelago. In the West African country of Guinea-Bissau night classes were organized in basic education and adult education was introduced in the workplace to increase educational opportunities. Resources severely limit special education in many countries; nevertheless, an effort to help slow learners has been made in Morocco and other countries. In India residential schools, the Navodaya Vidyalayas, have been established to provide more basic education access for children in rural and remote regions. Ecuador is trying to improve basic education in both rural and urban marginal zones.

One strand of current theory on linking education with development stresses the priority of improving access of girls to basic education. The complex interrelationship of culture and development surrounding this issue was noted in recent proceedings of the International Council for Adult Education in Cairo:

> There is a strong connection between women's illiteracy and social economic, religious, and cultural factors prevalent in a society. Poverty and marginalization; the tradition and cultural biases against daughters; the influence of conservative fundamentalist thought; . . . The low priority given to women's economic contribution and girl's education are all examples of factors that influence the the education and development of women.[59]

Some initiatives have emerged to improve the educational opportunities of girls; these include more basic education access in countries like Libya, Nepal and Sudan; in Bangladesh polytechnic education has been opened for women. Pre-school programs which facilitate the economic freedom of adult women have emerged in Swaziland and Vietnam. In Africa policies under consideration include limiting child labor, provision of day care facilities, labor saving technology to reduce the need for girls to stay at home, elimination of school fees for girls and tax incentives for parents who educate daughters to a certain level. Another recommended adjustment involves changing cultural attitudes about the role of women through curricula and texts that stress all work roles as possible for females.[60] Early marriage customs have blocked female access to education in many countries, however, in Bornu, a largely Islamic state in Northern Nigeria, special schools for married women with attached nursery schools were established.[61] Fay Chung, the Minister of Education and Culture for Zimbabwe, summarizes the reasoning and need for boosting women's access to education in Africa:

> without education, the girl is not in a position to control her life, her environment, her fertility, or her destiny. She becomes a victim rather than a decision-maker . . . The problems of developing countries . . . are closely related to the education and skill levels of their people, especially their girls and women.[62]

In Latin America where patriarchal cultural limits on women have a long history, women's organizations and community associations are exerting pressure for change in recent curriculum reforms resulting from decentralization and democratization.[63]

Curriculum reform has been influenced by several currents of change. More relevance for local needs and accommodation to anticipated future economic growth are two major trends. Reorientation has developed in the process of curriculum development, socialization and content. The context for curriculum planning includes consideration of the effects of changes in the global economy as well as the need for education to focus on the whole spectrum of human development. The process of decision-making remains highly centralized in most countries, however, there are openings that invite more input from the community, parents, teachers, NGO's and religious organizations. This process may improve the linkage of curriculum content to the interest, cultures and socio-economic needs of local communities. Vocationalization is another persistent force in current curriculum policy debates; in part this is a reaction to the large numbers of educated unemployed in many countries. Another concern of policymakers is provision of more flexibility and choice of tracks within educational systems.

Several reform initiatives have focused on new goals for constructive socialization of individuals. In Nigeria, for example, the social studies curriculum defined in the 1980's stressed problem solving which would help students develop as:

> people who can think for themselves, respect the feelings of others, respect the dignity of labor, live as good citizens, foster Nigerian unity, with emphasis on the common ties that unite us in our diversity.[64]

An African Leadership Forum in 1988 stressed that curriculum should foster appreciation of cultural traditions, openness to change, interpersonal relations, creativity, citizenship and personal productivity.[65] The Costa Atlantica Project in Columbia utilized community organization, participation and cooperation to improve the self-esteem and empowerment of poor people who learned how to take control of their own development. Countries like Mozambique, which have recently felt the scourge of war, have emphasized the need for peace education to improve intergroup understanding and develop skills of conflict resolution.

Ideas about the renewal of curriculum content reflect an interest in balancing academic subjects with more practical applied knowledge. Emphasis is given to ecology, environmental education, health, practical agriculture and manual work skills such as tool use. Values education is also stressed; in countries with strong religious traditions like Pakistan and Sudan, the focus in schools has been on reinforcing predominant Islamic values. There is widespread concern that basic education programs should be reoriented toward social and economic realities of the student's community. Population education is given consideration in some countries. The need to strengthen math, science and technology skills is also seen as a link to future development.

The third focus of reform involves the reconstruction of education to achieve more relevance for all sectors of society not just those served by academic education. In spite of gains in industrialization many developing countries continue to have large populations and economies that are rural, agricultural and village-centered. Consequently, one concern for educational reform in the 1990's is to accommodate schooling to the need to improve living standards and economic productivity in these local communities. However reasonable this shift may appear, in many countries it requires a major reconditioning of popular attitudes toward education. For years many people conceived of schools as a way to escape rural life, migrate to cities and qualify for government office jobs. In Mali ruralization of education entailed adaption of curriculum to economic production in the local environment and self-

financing of schools; in Chad emphasis was also laid on preparing students to work in the local economy. Kenya stressed self-employment as an outcome of education.[66]

Another challenge is reorientation of vocational-technical education to fit local needs. Some rural development policies, like that in Liberia, aimed to diversify skills and enterprises within local economies. Some countries that are experiencing rapid economic growth, like Mexico, have emphasized the need to balance acquisition of skills for modern economic life with retention of individual and national cultural identity. Various means have been adapted to improve the presence and relevance of education in rural areas. Mobile libraries in Bangladesh brought needed resources to villages. Vocational Institutes were established to broaden opportunity for skill acquisition. In Indonesia "small schools" were built in rural areas to offer multigrade basic education. Decentralized resource centers were created in Malaysia to distribute learning materials more widely. In Botswana community-run junior secondary schools responded to student needs in more remote areas.[67]

The fourth area of reform, language and culture, has caused extensive debate and to date no firm consensus on policy has developed. Nearly all countries have multilingual populations with majority and minority languages; in many cases indigenous languages are overlaid by one European language which began to be used in the colonial period and now may have the status of an official language. Recognition of the need for mother-tongue instruction in early primary years has grown; however, in Africa the sheer number of languages, over 800, is a problem. One breakthrough in using African languages for instruction occurred in Niger where 38 experimental schools are teaching in five tongues. Other former French colonies, Cameroon, Mali, Malagasy and Senegal, have also introduced indigenous languages for instruction. In Mali this policy required a conceptual shift from the colonial paradigm that only French language instruction could assure national unity. Such acceptance of the possibility of unity with diversity is a hopeful sign of post-colonial reconstruction based on reconciliation with pluralistic African identity. An African Leadership Forum in Nigeria in 1988 called for increasing emphasis on African language and culture in formal education.[68]

In Latin America bilingual and intercultural education has been introduced to bridge the gulf between the dominant Spanish and Lusitanian cultures and diverse indigenous populations of Central and South America. Most programs that provide mother-tongue instruction for Indian populations also emphasize assimilation. Nevertheless, a validation of Native-American identity is implicit in policies that recognize cultural pluralism. Two positive effects are anticipated. One is the improvement of learning, self-esteem and self-confidence for native peoples. The other is a reduction of political tensions and ethnic conflict in Guatemala, Nicaragua and Peru which may improve the climate for democracy.[69] In South Asia bilingual education has developed in Sri Lanka, a country which also faces serious and destructive ethnic conflict. On the other hand, Malaysia has tried to promote unity by making Bahasa Malaysia, the language of the Malay majority, the official medium of instruction; however, separate private schools for the Chinese minority are maintained.

The issue of culture is treated differently depending on the degree of homogeneity or diversity. In states like Libya and Tunisia with rather uniform ethno-religious cultures, schools have engaged in deepening understanding of the Islamic and Arabic heritage. On the other hand, countries with high levels of pluralism like Nigeria have tried to integrate different ethnic cultures in "Unity Schools" that enroll students from many groups to counteract patterns of regional segregation and isolation.[70]

Many countries in all regions continue trying to reduce illiteracy through mass campaigns and community-based adult education programs. The problem is widespread and in some areas it may never be overcome due to rapid population growth. Some programs have given special attention to functional literacy that fits with the needs of local economies and everyday life. The potential value of literacy for democracy was demonstrated with great effect in the influential work of Freire who connected the process of learning to read and

write with cultivation of political awareness and empowerment. Through such critical literacy there is hope that those whom Frantz Fanon called "the disinherited" may find a way to improve their condition.

Teaching style is one of the most influential variables in education. The prevalence of authoritarian teacher-centered classrooms, rote memorization and low levels of student participation creates a climate that inhibits democracy, critical thinking and initiative. Reliance on untrained or undertrained teachers further weakens the school's potential contribution to social growth. Efforts to improve in-service and pre-service teacher education have emerged in all regions. A critical need exists for more and better educated science, technology and vocational teachers. Reform proposals in the 1980's began to address the need for more democratic teaching styles; in Nigeria national policy development proposed that teachers should "change to active, inquiry-oriented teaching, enabling students to inquire . . . and find solutions to problems."[71] Teacher absenteeism in rural areas is another factor impacting negatively on school quality; Pakistan has added local supervisors in an effort to curb this problem.[72]

Quality of education is further constrained by poor buildings, outdated and irrelevant texts and a lack of blackboards, libraries and science labs. Several countries have tried to remedy these deficiencies with new school construction, in-country text production, mobile libraries, portable science lab kits and upgrading of school facilities. These needs are most critical in rural areas.

Political circumstances in the world today seem more favorable for the growth of democracy. The collapse of the Communist regime in the Soviet Union called into question the utility of highly centralized, authoritarian, one party government as a means for development. In Africa and Latin America multi-party competition and elections have reemerged as an alternative to the dominant pattern of control by single party regimes or military dictatorship. Cautious optimism seems warranted. Yet the fate of many political systems ultimately depends on economics. Many developing countries remain at the mercy of the international capitalist system; fiscal controls imposed by external lending agencies can determine social distribution within countries no matter what political system is in place. Thomas Axworthy writes that democracy is an essential condition for fair distribution and economic advance.[73] However, Herman Daly and John Cobb, in their book "For the Common Good," warn that globalization of the economy has destroyed traditional balances of government, market and society in such a way that "whatever form of government the state may have, its people cannot participate in the most important decisions governing their daily lives."[74] If democracy is to take root in developing societies some level of self-reliance, economic autonomy and commitment to social justice would seem essential. Another obstacle is vertical bureaucratic structures which effectively block democratic participation. Democracy can degenerate into authoritarianism when representatives and government officials lose touch with the problems and real needs of their constituents.

A substantial core of theory now exists regarding the role which education should play in facilitating democracy. John Dewey was a pioneer in stressing the necessity for a close interrelationship between schools and the community in which they are located. In describing the democratization of intelligence Luis Alberto Machado writes:

> Education for participation must involve all environments from family and classrooms to public service organizations and labor, cultural and recreation centers, stimulating inventiveness, criticism, responsible effort and creativity.[75]

Involvement of local communities in school management is another major part of educational democracy; village councils should take part in decisions about local school expenditures and management to build ownership and concern for the role of schools at the

local level. In Africa such empowerment requires a change in the perceived role of education; in the past, schools have alienated rural people by serving as a staircase out of the community; new programs are emerging which will seek to make schools a more credible force for local community improvement.

Democratization of schools invites a new kind of education which transforms students from passive to active individuals willing to take responsibility and participate in political life. This requires democratic teacher-pupil interaction and student participation in active learning; for out-of-school populations two innovative methods, conscientization and experiential learning, provide a framework for empowerment based on open dialogue, reflection, problem solving and action. The growing commitment to democratization in education is also reflected by two major initiatives in developing countries today. The first involves limited efforts to decentralize the control and management of schools in all three regions. There are many forms of decentralization; most involve delegation of minor decisions in administration involving resource allocation. Attempts to regionalize curriculum to reflect local needs have also occurred. Critics argue that real power sharing in these schemes is insignificant. Another problem is lack of local expertise due to many years of dependency on central control. Experience has shown that training and resource allocation are needed to assure the effectiveness of decentralization. The second trend in democratic development is the movement to increase the role of local communities and parents as participants in school management. Many means are being employed to this end. In Burundi schools for community development have been created; in Cameroon local input has been sought for curriculum planning. Parents and local organizations have been consulted about educational goals. Communities have also engaged in construction and financial support of schools. In Chile site-based management has given teachers and local communities more autonomy and ownership in educational programs.[76] These are hopeful beginnings; however, the growth of democracy in schools will only flourish if there are corresponding structural changes which implant more egalitarian conditions in other social institutions.

There has never been any long-lasting consensus on what road would best assure economic growth and human development in less-developed nations. Political differences, regional perspectives, variations in priorities and divergent global perspectives have all contributed to the multiplicity of viewpoints. Given this lack of agreement and the history of policy changes, it may be too much to expect schools to develop a coherent curricula that serves the general needs of development. However, virtually every developing country expects its schools to educate productive citizens who can contribute to the national economy. What seems to be needed is a better operational definition of development that could guide school programs. Martin Luther King Jr. once said that the first step toward development was "to teach people to believe in themselves."[77] This inspiration recalls Gandhi's concern for developing self-reliance as a means of liberation from oppressive social structures based on domination and dependency. In this perspective development begins in the human mind through awareness of the need for change within one's social condition. If development or growth is to occur through relationships, a means must be found to avoid exploitation of the weak by the strong. This requires a balance of autonomy and interdependence which can be facilitated by democracy.

One encouraging sign in all regions is the growth of indigenous perspectives on development and democracy. Agpalo, for example, proposes that civilization rather than modernization is the true road to development. In developing his position he delineates law, civility and social justice as necessary conditions. Civility entails restraint in the interest of general welfare; social justice involves the equal claims of all to basic needs such as food, happiness, health, life, non-discrimination, shelter and work. Agpalo views liberty and democracy as further conditions for development.[78] His position is underscored by studies conducted by the U.N. Development Program which found empirical evidence of a "high

correlation between human development and human freedom." An African perspective on education for development is found in the response of Ernestine Enomoto to the World Bank's 1988 report Education in Sub-Saharan Africa. In her view the primary role of education should be social more than economic development; in this realm she included quality of education, more access to school for minorities and women, job training, poverty reduction and self-reliance. Her development strategy calls for country-specific planning based on autonomy, reliance on existing resources, government coordination, reduction of socio-economic disparities and equal attention to social welfare and economic needs.[79]

In turning from theory to practice, it is evident that most countries respond to development demands by increasing attention given to math, science and technology. The secondary response involves adjustment of school programs to fit the needs of the labor market. These policies reflect the dominant view that defines development in terms of economic modernism modeled on the West, however, new perspectives in curriculum such as health and agriculture are indicative of emergent priorities which focus on basic human needs and community development. In the final analysis only a balanced approach makes sense; human welfare depends on fulfillment of many needs all of which are interrelated. In the broadest sense economic development cannot occur without a foundation of healthy, literate and well educated human resources. Democracy is a political dimension of development which can facilitate more equity in resource distribution whenever the system allows for open and competitive pursuit of economic interests.

ENDNOTES

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   Global Trends: The World Almanac; Human Development Report (1992, 1994); World Development Report; U.N. Statistical Yearbook 1979/80, 1990/91. (N.Y.: United Nations, 1981, 1993); U.N. Demographic Yearbook,1980. (N.Y.: United Nations, 1982); The New Book of World Rankings; UNESCO. Statistical Yearbook (1980, 1994); FAO Yearbook 1990. (Rome: U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization, 1991); UNESCO. World Education Report 1991. (Paris: UNESCO, 1991); Measuring the Condition of the World's Poor.

3. Statistical data for the section on the political aspects affecting democratic culture are found in the following sources:

   Freedom in the World: Political Rights and Civil Liberties (N.Y.: Freedom House, 1992); World Handbook of Political and Social Indicators - The New Book of World Rankings; Tatu Van Kanen. Power and the Means of Power: A Study of 119 Asian, European, American, and African States, 1850-1975. (Ann Arbor: University Microfilm, 1979); US Department of State. Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1991. (Washington, D.C.: U.S.G.P.O., 1992); Human Development Report (1992); Global Trends: The World Almanac.

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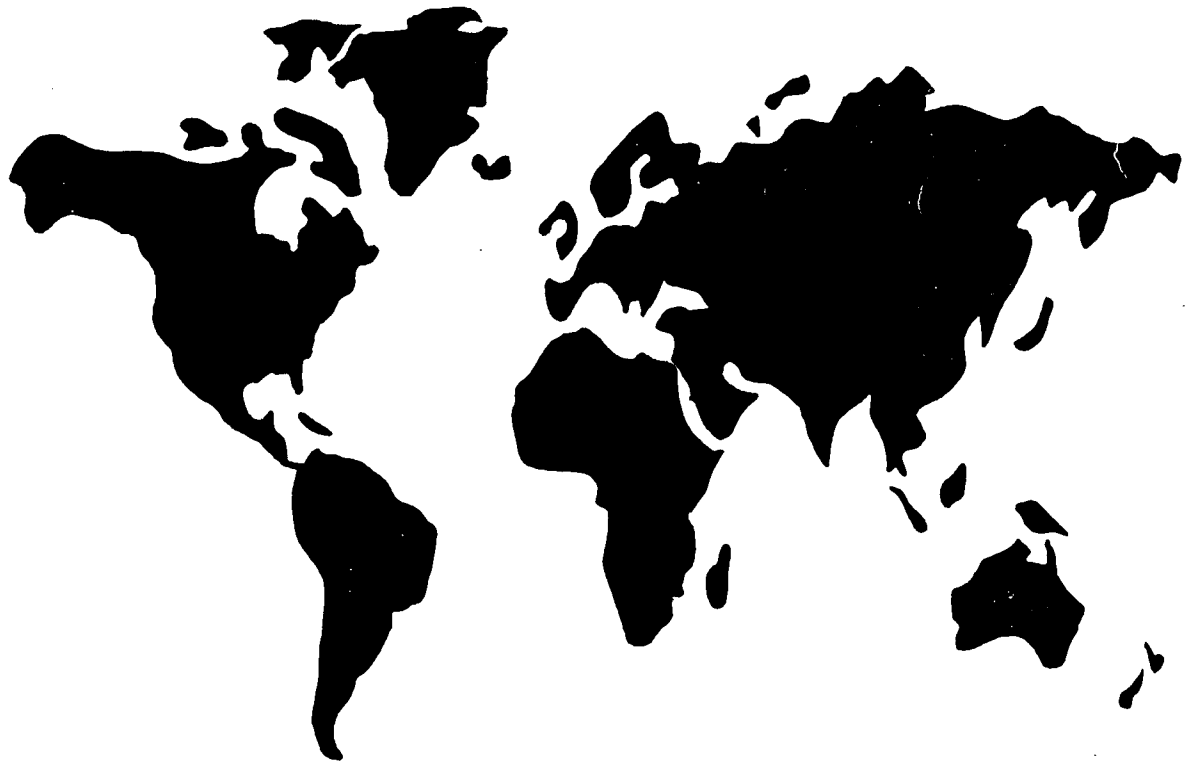

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"Networks and Net-works: A review of inter-institutional linkages in Southern African university education"

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"South African Universities in Transition: Past perspectives, future challenges"

Obsidiana 3 | **9:45-11:15**

8.3 Educational Reform: Contested terrain

Mark Hanson , University of California, Riverside
"Educational Reform and the Transition from Autocratic to Democratic Governments"

Hannu Simola, University of Helsinki
"Rationalism of Hopes: A discursive basis for educational reforms?"

Medardo Tapia Uribe, UNAM
"Subjects and Regions' Alternatives to National Culture and National Education"

David Woolman, Rhode Island College
"The Role of Education in Developing Nations in Building a Future World Based on Democracy and Development: Regional perspectives"

Obsidiana 4 | **9:45-11:15**

8.4 Inadequate Demand for Primary Education in Brazil

Chair: Robin Horn, World Bank

Ricardo Barros Paes, IPEA, Brazil
"Community Factors Affecting Attendance"

Robin Horn, World Bank
"Social and Economic Constraints to the Demand for Education Quality"

Sofia Lerche, Federal University of Ceará
"Social Assesment of Community Members on Education"

Rosane Mendoca, IPEA-Rio
"Rates of Return to Primary Education in Brazil"

Discussant: Maristela Rodrigues, Ministry of Education, Brazil

Obsidiana 5 | **9:45-11:15**

8.5 Language, Reading and Textbooks in Education

Chair: Analee Haro, University of California, Los Angeles

Emiliano Gonzalez and Patrick Lynch, University of Texas, Pan American
"Reading the Word, Revisioning the World: Colonia students take control"

Christy Lao, Hong Kong Baptist University
"Introducing Pleasure Reading In English into EFL Classroom Teaching"

Yaling Li, Teachers College, Columbia University
"A Study of The Feasibility Of Adapting American Choicest Children's Television Program For Chinese Preschool Education"

Elena Lisovskaya, Western Michigan University
"Language of Textbooks: Implications for civic education"

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