

AFRICA – A CONTINENT IN TRANSFORMATION

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Abstract:

Africa is a continent wonderful with natural riches, a fascinating history and a population, still insufficiently known, appreciated and valued, which has changed considerably in the last 5-6 decades, when most countries this continent gained their political independence somehow. The changes in Africa are summarized formulated and implemented from the different perspectives on the evolution of this continent. The study identifies these different perspectives and emphasizes the need for new work assumptions in economic plan concerning future of the African continent.

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The demographic transition

JEL classification: B10, N97, R11

Introduction

As area, Africa has about 30 million square kilometers, is the second in the world after Asia; Africa represents 1/5 of the surface of the total land area surface. Sahara is the largest desert in the world, and together with other two deserts - the Kalahari and Namib - formed the largest desert areas on Earth, after the Australian continent. Africa is a huge continent, after Asia and America, with straight sides generally with little peninsulas and islands; It is the only continent symmetrically disposed equator, hence the climate is the warmest compared to other continents of the Earth - 3/4 of the area of Africa is arranged between the two tropics of Cancer and Capricorn north, south.

In Africa, 54 countries are geographically located in the 189 of the planet and an autonomous territory (not self-governing), the Western Sahara. In the eighteenth century and the nineteenth century, during the colonial period in Africa were about 10,000 state and colonial possessions (territories) different. Africa is a vast land area of the planet where - through scientific research - have been identified as homo habilis appeared first.

In Africa, about 1.4 billion people living in the planet's 7 billion (this represents 20% of the total), and demographers estimate that their number will double in about 30 years. A quarter of the approximately 9,000 languages on the planet are spoken in Africa, the most widely used languages are: Arabic (spoken by about 200 million people), English (150 million), French (135 millions) Swahili (120m), Portuguese (40 million) and Spanish (30 million). Approximately half of the population of Africa is illiterate. People connected to the Internet, usually all of the white population, are less numerous than in any big city on the planet developed.

Description of the problem

Unique curiosity of Africa

Africa holds 30% of the existing mineral resources on Earth, the continent with the largest mineral deposit in the world. Nigeria is the fourth largest oil exporter in the world and the largest oil producer in Africa, with about 2.2 million barrels produced every day. The top 10 largest oil producers in Africa consists of: Nigeria, Algeria, Angola, Libya, Egypt, Sudan, Equatorial Guinea, Republic of Congo, Gabon and South Africa. Africa has the largest reserves of precious metals, with over 40% of gold reserves, over 60% of cobalt and 90% of platinum reserves on the planet.

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Over 90% of the continent's soils are unsuitable for agriculture and only 0.25% have a moderate to low potential for crop production. Rainfall variability is very high - from 0 mm / year in the Sahara to 9,500 mm / year near Mount Cameroon. More than 250 million Africans suffer from chronic malnutrition. Although the continent is the richest hydropower potential in the world (holding 40% of the world total), water scarcity has in Africa impacts of the lives of over 300 million Africans, of which 75% rely on groundwater as their main source of Drinkable water. Global warming only exacerbates the situation. Limited groundwater reserves represent only 15% of the total renewable water resources. The new findings groundwater in large sedimentary basins in Libya, Algeria and Chad may not be enough to quench the thirst constant growth in Africa in the coming decades.

Six of the top 10 countries with the largest annual net loss of forest area are African. Existing forests in Africa are shrinking annually by about 40 square kilometers; countries with the largest losses are the countries that hold the largest wooded areas, such as Gabon and Democratic Republic of Congo. Over 1,270 large dams were built along rivers on the continent. Lake Victoria is the largest lake in Africa and the second largest freshwater lake in the world after Lake Baikal in Asia. Africa burn more biomass on the globe produces only about 4% of all carbon dioxide emissions worldwide. Africa has eight of the 11 major natural habitats and largest populations remaining lions, elephants, rhinos, cheetahs, hyenas, leopards and hundreds of other species.

Riches of Africa

Petrol. Oil reserves held by Mali, discovered in 1970, have in recent years attracted a large number of Westerners stole. Not long ago, it was discovered at a depth of 107 meters, a huge reservoir of gas at Bourakebougou, just 60 km from the capital Bamako. It is one of the major gas fields, as Petrom oil company representatives announced in Canada.

Gold. Mali is the third largest gold producer in Africa, currently seven mining fields, including Kalana and Morila in the South, Yatela, Sadiola and Loulo in western and Tabakoto and Syama - mines that have recently resumed production.

Uranium. The exploitation of uranium is now made by several Western companies. The most important deposit of uranium currently being explored by a Canadian company is the mining area Fale (150 sq km), estimated at 5,000 tons Equally important is the deposit of Kidal in the north-east of the country (19,930 sq km) which holds about 200 tonnes.

Diamonds. Africa holds 45% of deposits of diamonds and Mali has huge potential for the development of the exploitation of those gems. The Kayes region there is a diamond mine, and Sikasso region in the south, were discovered such gems.

The deposits of bauxite, iron, magnesium, tin and copper are also known. According to estimates, Mali has over two million tonnes of iron reserves and the bauxite exceed 1.2 million tonnes.

Essential elements of African History

Africa is one of the 7 continents of the Earth, inhabited since ancient times. The cradle of human civilization today, was Africa. After one of the most important books on African history - Atlas of the peoples from Africa - African territory was inhabited for the most part of it: the Nile Valley, Ethiopia, Maghreb, West Africa, the old Bantu Africa, Madagascar and the islands. After Jean Sellier, behold main stages of the history of this important part of Africa:

- Nile Valley: a) Egypt - from the Arabs to the Ottomans; Mehmet Ali mastering the British; the years 1350 and 1700; the slave trade; road to independence; b) Sudan - fungilor time; Turkish-Egyptian regime; mahdist State; Anglo-Egyptian condominium; Sudan after 1956; populations in Sudan;

- Ethiopia and its neighbors: a) old Ethiopia: Aksum dynasty Zague; The golden age of Solomon's dynasty and problems of this dynasty; It was Main Tewodros Yohannes II and IV; b) Somalia until the nineteenth century; c) northeast Africa in the twentieth century: the Grand Ethiopian colonial powers; colonies to 1936; Ethiopian war and its aftermath; Contemporary Ethiopia; Ethiopian peoples; Eritrea, Djibouti, Somalia;

- Maghreb: Berbers, Carthaginians, Romans; a) Muslim empires: the Islamization Maghreb; Fatimid era; Almoravizii and Almohads; new Berber kingdoms; regențele (pașalâcurile) from Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli; Morocco XVI century until 1912; b) Maghreb since the nineteenth century: French Algeria; Algeria's war for independence; Contemporary Algeria; Tunisia during the protectorate; Contemporary Morocco; Western Sahara issue; Mauritania;

- West Africa: a) savanna Western nations: Ghana and expansion of the Mande people; Mali Empire; Songhai Empire; Mande lands in the eighteenth century to the nineteenth century; voltaic peoples; wolofii and their neighbors; peulii; Weather jihad sites; b) the central savanna peoples: Hausa people up in the eighteenth century; Sokoto Caliphate of; Kanem Bornu and; Ouddie; c) forest peoples: Yoruba; Edo people; Ibo and their neighbors; Fon and Ewe peoples; akanii; Upper Guinean people;

- West Africa in the nineteenth century: a) the colonial period: the race for colonies (1883-1898); conclusion of conquest; French West Africa; British colonial policy; b) contemporary West Africa: Senegal; Gambia; Cape Verde Islands; Guinea-Bissau; Guinea; Sierra Leone; Liberia; Mali; Burkina Faso; Ivory Coast; Ghana; Togo; Benin; Niger: Chad; Nigeria;

- Old Bantu Africa: a) Central Africa: Adamawa-speaking peoples ubanguiene; Bantu populations in the Gulf of Guinea; peoples of the Congo; peoples of the southern savannah; b) East Africa: Great Lakes region; peoples of the plateau; Swahili world; Sultanate of Zanzibar; c) Southern Africa: Zambezi river borders; Khoisan and Bantu populations of the South; zulușii and weather disturbances; Zambezi river land in the nineteenth century;

- Bantu Africa since the nineteenth century: a) colonial Central Africa: competition for Congo; French Equatorial Africa; Colonial Cameroon; Congo Free State; Belgian Congo; b) contemporary Central Africa: Cameroon; Equatorial Guinea; Sao Tome and Principe; Gabon; Congo-Brazzaville; Central African Republic; Congo-Kinshasa; c) colonial East Africa; d) contemporary East Africa: Kenya; Uganda; Tanzania; Rwanda; Burundi; e) colonial Southern Africa: Boers and the Cape Colony; British expansion; Boer War and the formation of the Union of South Africa; South West Africa; Rhodesia and Nyassaland; Angola and Mozambique; f) contemporary Southern Africa: Angola; Zambia; Zimbabwe; Malawi; Mozambique; Botswana; Namibia; Swaziland; Lesotho; South Africa;

- Madagascar and the islands of Malagasy; colonial period; Madagascar since 1960; Comoros; Mayotte; Reunion; Seychelles.

A informed reader, might notice that throughout history, all these parts and bits of the African continent amounted your real regional growth poles or local.

African demographic transition

Speaking about the population Afro-Asian which occupy northern and northeastern continentului. Could be distinguished four main groups: 1. Egyptian (ancient Egyptian language); 2. Berber (throughout North Africa, in western Egypt and the Atlantic Ocean); 3. kușitic (massif of Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa) and Chadiac 4. (west of Lake Chad).

Expanding the demographic Before Christ (BC)

It seems that the Congolese populations nigeru has as swing training the headwaters of the region of Senegal and the Niger rivers. From what is known, the nigerian people which are language-speaking nigeru-congolese, population of the current Congo, were arrived Cameroon during II millennium BC.

Migration has continued gradually to the east and then southeast to turn into a major process: expansion of Bantu population by three horizons: Central Africa, Eastern and Austria.

Some of them have spread to the northern edge of the rain forest and arrived in the Great Lakes region in the late first millennium BC, if not earlier. The expansion appears to have followed both exterior forest watercourse: Bantu tribes came down the right side tributaries of the Congo River, then climbed it and its tributaries from the left to reach the savannahs south of the forest. From

East Africa region and then continued southward extension: Bantu populations have thus reached the south of the Zambezi in the fourth century AD, and in the next century south of the Limpopo. Arabs occupied northeastern Africa (Egypt), many thousands of years before Christ. Funjii occupied Sudan and the Ethiopian Jews occupied Ethiopia.

Expanding and demographic transition After Christ

Similarly, the population demographics Bantu expansion in the south and southeast of the African continent before Christ, began and unfolded demographic expansion of other populations in other parts of the African continent after the birth of Christ, thus:

- Arab population in Egypt and North Africa; Turkish people - all in North Africa (Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Morocco and Algeria today);
- Population Ghana and Mali mandate; Hausa population in the central African savannah; Akan peoples, Edo, Ibo, Fon and Ewe in the central African; Somalia East Africa, Somalia; Boers in South Africa;
- European nations were the colonies in African countries: Egypt English and Africa South; French in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia and occidentală coast of Africa; Italians in Ethiopia; Portuguese, Dutch and Spanish - on the western coast of Africa etc.

The demographic transition experienced special issues during the colonial period of Africa, centuries XIX and XXI th. Do not forget that here, have gone, being sold into slavery, tens of thousands of blacks who recolumned then the southern United States, but also the islands of archipelagos US: Greater Antilles and Lesser, Dominica, San Salvador or northern South America (Guyana British , French Guiana etc.).

Africa was not only the "Cradle of Humankind" where was signaling the first people in here like Homo habilis and Homo Sapiens, but also the demographic source for the North American continent and numerical expansion - unprecedented in the twentieth century - world population. In late 2007, the world population was 6.6 billion people, of which more than half live in Asia (60%).

The Asian Continent was 5 times more populous than the African Continent, 6 times more populous than Europe, 7 times more populous than Latin America.

China alone, has the number of people meet as two whole continents (Africa and Europe), and India as the Americas and Japan combined. The total population of Africa, 1/3 is found in three countries: Nigeria, Egypt and Ethiopia. In Africa, the demographic transition has its specificity: Maghreb population has multiplied 5 times, from 11.5 million in 1900 to 60 million in 2007, and in West Africa 7 times, from 27 million 216.9 million in the same period. The population of the former colonies became much larger than the old metropolis.

Among the most populous 10 countries of the world in 2006, only one - Nigeria - was on the African continent and in 2050, according to forecasts still one African country - the Democratic Republic of Congo will be from this continent (see table below):

2006		2050	
State	Population (millions)	State	Population (millions)
China	1311	India	1628
India	1122	China	1437
S.U.A.	299	SUA	420
Indonesia	225	Nigeria	299
Brasilia	187	Pakistan	295
Pakistan	166	Indonesia	285
Bangladesh	147	Brasilia	260
Russia	142	Bangladesh	231
Nigeria	135	Rep. Dem. Congo	183
Japan	128	Ethiopia	145

Source: *The World Almanac and Book of Facts, 2007*

"In Africa there are now 1.2 billion people, and projections show that in 20 years their number will reach 2.4 billion. They need to eat, to dress, to sleep," said the businessman Ovidiu Tender Forbes 500 billionaires launch on October 25, 2013

France's Optics in his relations with Africa

14 African countries - Benin, Burkina Faso, Guinea Bissau, Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Togo, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon - are still forced to pay France taxes colonial .

When France sent troops to Africa in 2013, which has interests in oil, gas, gold, uranium, diamonds and ferrous minerals with EU and NATO endorsement, nobody revolted. France's military intervention in Africa. supported in the diplomatic field by other European countries and of course the US, was for riches, these was the objective for french side.

The largest military bases that France holds in Africa is Djibouti (Ethiopia), on the island of La Réunion in eastern Madagascar, Dakar (Senegal) and Libreville (Gabon). France also has operational bases at Bangui (Central African Republic), Abidjan (Ivory Coast) and N'Djamena (Chad).

In Chad, N'Djamena, France has stationed 1,200 troops to support President Idriss Déby Itono government. To the south, the capital of Central African Republic - Bangui, there are no fewer than 300 troops, sent to take part in Operation "disease". In Abidjan, with American United Nations authority, France has deployed about 3,000 soldiers, meant to ease the conflict between rebels controlling the north African state and government, it occupies territory in the south. The situation in Ivory Coast strikingly resembles that of Mali, at least from this point of view.

China's Optics in his relations with Africa

China is the basic trading partner of Africa, the annual volume of Sino-African annual turnover approaching \$ 200 billion. China's direct investment in Africa exceeded \$ 50 billion annually. Over 1 million Chinese citizens now live on the African continent. Only in Angola are over 350 thousand Chinese. 55% of the workforce of the Chinese in Africa working in food production, cultivating vast arable land and pastures that support even those African agrarian economies.

In 2013, at the beginning of his presidential term in the forefront of China, Xi Jinping visited the first Russia, then went to Tanzania, South Africa and the Republic of Congo, thus announcing his term external priorities. If the visit to Moscow was easily understood by the desire to strengthen the partnership between Russia and China - seen as a counterweight to the global influence of the US tour Xi Jinping in Africa confirmed what analysts have noted in recent years: China is in full offensive the conquest of the black continent, while Europe and the US seem to lose more ground.

Announcing the first visit of Chinese President abroad in mid-March 2013, former Chinese foreign minister, Yang Jiechi, said: "China and Africa are good brothers, good friends and good partners. Visit the new leader of China in Africa shows the importance that we give full Chinese-African relations ". Beijing authorities woos Africa for decades, but their efforts have intensified in recent years, given that China seeks to satisfy the growing needs for energy and raw materials. China imported 1.5 million barrels of oil a day in Africa, about 30% of its total imports.

In 2012, former President Hu Jintao offered African countries loans worth 20 billion over the next three years, part of which China called unconditional aid policy. The move was highly appreciated in Africa, but heavily criticized Western governments criticizing Beijing because the blink human rights abuses and endemic corruption in the region just to get access to oil, copper and timber.

China's interest in Africa has sparked concern especially in Western Europe and the United States, assisting offensive stunning political, economic and energy Beijing black continent. Senator Chris Coons, chairman of the subcommittee on the Senate's Foreign Affairs AU has asked for rapid renewal of trade benefits offered by USA for Africa as part of a broader strategy to combat the influence and investment in growth of China on the continent where täiesc close 1 billion people.

"All countries are currently boosting for the cooperation with Africa. China sincerely welcomes such a development. At the same time, we hope that all parties will see China-Africa cooperation in an objective light and will respect the decision of Africa to choose their own development partners. Hopefully there will be more exchanges and mutual understanding and less suspicion and accusations," he said the former head of Chinese diplomacy, Yang Jiechi.

In turn, the special envoy of China Affairs African Ambassador Zhong Jianhua, said the economic and industrial development of Africa could overtake that of China if the "continent sees Chinese companies working there as an economic competition healthy and not as instruments of exploitation. Our obligation is to see Africa becoming industrialized; we see this as a win-win situation, so our new president will visit three African countries in March (2013 - Ed) ... to underline our commitment to Africa's growth. Africa may decide to take the reins of its economic development; to foloescă in the best way and the economy has the potential to compete with China in a positive manner. "

Conclusions

Africa is a continent wonderful with the natural riches, a fascinating history and population, still poorly known, appreciated and valued, which has changed considerably in the last 5-6 decades, when most countries of the continent gained their political independence somehow .

In those decades, the African continent - which is known historically only from the reports of those who saw in it only resources exploited - provided numerous testimonies of its periods of glory on oral traditions, historical and demographic and studies undertaken by botanists, zoologists, climatologists, soil and geologists.

The phenomenon that marked the last half-century Africa is that of increased urbanization. From descriptions of Africa rural - as could be seen by the 50s of last century, we now have some studies on demographic momentum of Africa (which evolved from 110 million in 1900 to about 500 million in 1950 and over 1 4 billion in 2015 today) spectacular population growth especially in cities where the annual demographic growth averaged 7 per thousand people, over 7-8 times higher than in European countries, for example. Although still feed the cities, the villages have the weight to provide subsistence food for the entire population, especially for the urban the area. Simultaneously, large masses of people moving from rural to urban areas in search of a new existential horizon.

In most African cities, bypassing the rigors of urbanization, insists the nostalgia of the old life. In the midst of this new urban civilization, are deeply disturbed relationship with nature. Actors new development areas - mining, ports, industrial plantations etc. - Seeks help from cultural associations and unions, to maintain social cohesion and soul. No large study has not been done with seriousness and professionalism of these new trends, which fundamentally changed, millennial African continent.

Few studies address from the perspective of African and European specialists, current issues, characteristic "black continent". Paraphrasing a Mrs. Gabriela Leahu, once said this: "Now when the high political demands, that worked sometimes as censorship, sometimes as self-censorship disappeared, we consider it appropriate to put to reach those interested in another terms by which the landscape quite poor, the Romanian historiography in this field ... then Africa is exemplary case of European colonial expansion from the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, continent << >> becoming dark area where they confrunat mainly European powers. In this way, the study of colonial powers in Africa allows a global analysis, but also nuanced facts colonial motivations that have pushed the expansion Powers and people hitherto little interest in overseas territories "

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