



GENERAL ASSEMBLY ASSEMBLÉE GÉNÉRALE ASSEMBLEIA GERAL جمعية عمومية

#CODESRIA14

Creating African Futures in an Era of Global Transformations:

Challenges and Prospects

Créer l'Afrique de demain dans un contexte de transformations mondialisées :

enjeux et perspectives

Criar Futuros Africanos numa Era de Transformações Globais:

Desafios e Perspetivas

بعث أفريقيا الغد في سياق التحولات المعولمة :

رهانات و آفاق

**Africa's Relations with BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa:
Search for Multipolar Development Paradigms or Reconfiguration of Unipolar
Liberal Globalization**

Tukumbi Lumumba-Kasonga



CODESRIA

08 - 12 June / Juin 2015

Dakar, Senegal

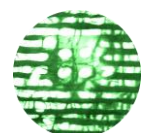




Abstract

African states' relations with the emerging powers in Asia and South America have been expanding over the past two decades, as they have also contributed at large to the improvement of economic, political, and cultural conditions as defined by the nation-states. Indeed, they have also had some positive impact on economic growth, which some tend to view as a panacea in the Africa's saga of her underdevelopment, reflected in the deepening and expansion of poverty. I claim that these relations have produced some indicators of trends for economic and trade's diversifications, which are needed for the continent to lessen its extreme dependency on the 'classical' partnerships with the former colonial/imperial powers. However, the major question is whether or not these relations are significantly challenging the existing principles and the dominant values of the unipolar liberal globalization, which is articulated through economic reforms and supported by the European Union and financial institutions, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organizations, and the U. S. Federal Reserve and its client states. In this research, I am interested in expanding my understanding of the nature of the African states' relations with the BRICS in interrogating their political motivations, their objectives, their policies and economic implications in correcting the existing paradigms.

Are the BRICS proposing a shift of paradigms in world politics? What are the African states' visions and economic agendas, which they are pursuing through the BRICS? Does the presence of South Africa, as a member of the BRICS, matter in its plan about Africa? While many scholars have recently started to deal with the commercial aspects of these relations, I intend to highlight the nature of the paradigms behind by BRICS, identify their philosophical and ideological foundation, and assess the relevancy of their societal projects within the frame of the current demands of, and movements toward, multipolarity. Although this work is essentially reflective and interpretative, using a critique of the theories such as neo-classical realism, neo-liberalism and neo-constructivism, I support my claims and clarify them with historical, comparative and political illustrations from selected African countries and African regional economic organizations.



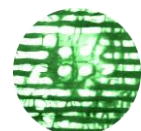
Introduction: Objectives, Issues and Claims

In this paper I first examine the general claims of BRICS, its political history, its members' views on the role of the state and that of free market, its defined distributive capability, and effective policy implications in its efforts to improving people's social conditions. Second, I reflect on the question of what kind of model of development that the BRICS is proposing? And third, I discuss the issue of whether or not Africa at large can or will benefit collectively from the political economy of BRICS.

These objectives are limited to a critical reflection of the nature of the origins, major goals, elements of the ideology, and the power structures of the BRICS states (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) as an organization and the nature of their relationship to the principles and ideology of neo-liberal globalization. Although it is still a new bloc, I am further interested in identifying, through its current policy objectives, the dominant characteristics of its development model. It is important to raise the issue of its institutional capabilities to distribute resources effectively and fairly and how South Africa would develop these capabilities and use them for the advancement of the benefits of the African continent.

Although I did not intend to respond to all the questions below in any systematic manner, they are used as guidelines to focus my analytical reflection: What are the BRICS states specifically proposing to the existing World order and the Global South in the areas of paradigms of economic and social development and systems of governance? What do these countries have in common? Can this commonality be instrumentalized and converted into favoring the demands for African progress? What is the ideological foundation of their solidarity? Will this solidarity be economically, culturally and politically beneficial and feasibly relevant to Africa as a whole within the existing conditions beyond South Africa? In short, is this multilateral bloc creating a new development model based on a new paradigm that might challenge the existing dominant model, which agreeably has failed many people the world over, especially those in Africa?

The emergence of the new economies in the Global South, namely those of China, India, Brazil, Russia and South Africa, which was admitted in March 2011 to this new economic bloc, contributes to the rising of new optimism and mobilization of new efforts towards the possible changing of the nature of the global political economy in favor of the nation-states and poor people. There is no law of gravity or natural law that stipulates an assumption that some countries will never grow and progress. As these countries are in the process of 'graduating' from their status of underdevelopment to a transitional phase towards the consolidation of their status of new emerging economies, many issues are raised about the impetus and the origins of this new dynamics and the nature of the relationship between the free market forces, the state and the society within global capitalist economy. Each of these countries still has a large proportion of its population that is poor, unemployed and cannot



effectively participate in the political process or in progress at large, because they are considered to be politically disabled, especially in the case of South Africa.

In 2001, Jim O'Neil, the former Chief Economist and Chairman of Goldman Sachs Asset Management at the London Office of Investment Banking Group, in a research report paper entitled: "Building Better Global Economic BRICs," coined the acronym BRIC to signify Brazil, Russia, India and China as the new fast growing economic powers in the world.¹ In 2008, Mark Atherton predicted that by 2050, the BRIC nations will dominate the globe.² Nearly 60 percent of the total increase in world output in 2000-2008 took place in developing countries and transitional countries, half of which occurred in the BRICs, their share of Global GDP during the same period rose 16 to 20 percent.³

With the admission of South Africa as a new member of the club or the bloc in March 2011, the acronym became BRICS. Based on the dynamics of this grouping and the movements of its members, it is argued that the emerging markets and economies in the Global South, regardless of the ideological contradictions and internal structural political weaknesses among its members, implies that the business-as-usual approach in the practices of the institutions of international political economy and world politics is no longer the only pragmatic way of conducting businesses. These new political actors have claimed that the paradigms and the policies based on the "savage capitalism" as articulated by the old industrial powers are responsible for the failures of the global political economy and their tragic social and environmental consequences.

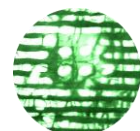
Political leaders within the BRICS countries are enthusiastically expected to review the implementation of the Action Plan this, after the summit in March 2012 in Delhi, India. Thus, in this paper, because of the review has not thoroughly been done yet, it will not yet be possible to assess effectively their policy outcomes. However, informed generalizations are made based on the available declarations and general trends of trade relationships between its members.

Although this paper is theoretically and conceptually reflective, the arguments are historically and politically framed with a dose of comparative analytical perspectives. I project a totality perspective in assessing the BRICS' objectives and mission. The demands for a multipolar world, which are formulated in various local and regional forms and social languages, have intensified, despite the rise of the level of poverty and social inequality gaps and their destructive consequences, with the collapse of the conventional East-West relationships based on the Cold War politics. The imperatives of these demands at the national and regional levels and the military, religious, political, and economic resistances to

¹ Valerie Noury, "What BRICS members Means to Africa?" *African Business*, June 2011.

² Mark Atherton, "The New World of Order," *The Times* (London), 20 March 2008.

³ Cynthia Roberts, "Polity Forum: Challengers or Stakeholders? BRICs and Liberal World Order," *Polity*, Volume 42, Number 1, January 2010, p. 3.



multipolarity are creating possibilities for questioning the paradigms of neo-liberal global political economy more rigorously in many parts of the world, including Africa.

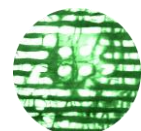
However, the Post-September 11th 2001 world security politics, the commercial competitions related to the rise of new emerging economies and the continuous degradation of the world economy under the principles and control of neo-liberal dogmas have negative ramifications for the consistent and determined dimensions of people's demands and their struggles towards multipolarity. For some people in Africa, the recent economic growth of 4-6 percent as forecasted by the African Development Bank and recent World Bank report also fosters some degrees of optimism about the potential contribution of this growth to social progress. Furthermore, BRICS states' location in the old Global South, with the exception of Russia, is an important factor to consider beyond the geo-political propositions. All these points are part of the context in which I examine the BRICS states' politics.

The emergence of the BRICS states has been recently highly publicized by the media, political fora, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the activists with various intentions. Some project them as possible mechanisms through which new groups could seriously challenge the existing powers in the economic and financial systems or that they constitute a threat to the status quo; others consider them as mediating powers within the dynamics of the global political economy between the countries in the Global South and those of the Global North, while, others consider them as new emerging economies with no clear agenda for all but themselves with some state's nationalism/centrism combined with some neo-mercantilism.

Regardless of the perspectives or approaches that one may consider analytically, the point of my interest is about the nature of their solidarity, and the policy implications of this solidarity to Africa. This solidarity is examined as a potential avenue towards acquiring new knowledge about the transition that is occurring in the world against Fukuyamaist linear reading of the global history. Within the pragmatism and ideology related to this solidarity, are the BRICS states proposing new development schemes from the failed old top-down, the "free" and anarchical market-based, linear, and the middle-class one-fit-all model of social and economic development?

Despite the efforts of the United States of America, the dynamics of world politics are ideologically creating a hybrid transition in which there is neither a single entity with monopolistic power nor is there any state, individual, or corporation with hegemonic governance, with the authority and legitimacy to create any new linear order that most states and people should follow and respect. Major political actors are pursuing "cold global peace" resembling the Cold War era.

The world politics has reached the dangerous stage of consolidated polarization, which is being instrumentalized by a large number of actors in various geo-political locations toward a multiplicity of objectives. Thus, the processes of dualistic protest syndrome have emerged from the discourses of rights, lefts and elements of populism and nationalism, the

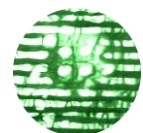


contradictions between the winners and the losers, the new alliances between Global South and Global North, new claims of the relationship between and among the actors of Global South, and new power struggles between the rich and the poor. Within this new polarization, the principles and ideology of neo-liberal globalization are being challenged through the restoration of contested liberal democracy and contested new orthodox austerity programs.

Since the end of Cold War politics and the beginning of the 21st century, the dynamics of international political economy have been challenged by how nation-states and people as locally are nationally reacting to the imperatives, especially the new management, new adoption and new usage of the dominant social paradigms (DSP), namely, technology, science and the free market. The demands to the states and other institutions at national and international levels of power for accelerating social progress the world over through new information technology, social media and popular movements have intensified. These demands, which have been influenced by the forces related to international and national judicial activism, civil societies, popular movements, and state's reforms push for establishing either some forms of multipolar world being shaped by new south-south and north-south relations or anarchic unipolarity, led by the United States and monopolistic features of a few multinationals. In any case, the law of colonial or imperialist vertical center of gravity of power, which was conceived as "natural," is being shaken. For instance, since 2010, China has become the number two economy, replacing Japan. In 2011, Brazil overtook Britain as the world's sixth largest economy. Officials have stated that Brazil's aim is to soon displace France at fifth. And it is forecasted that India, the 10th largest economy as of 2011, will hold that rank by 2020. These shifts will have a significant impact in the African political economy. In the next two decades, it is predicated that, with the exception of the United States, BRICS will replace France, Germany, and, once again, Japan.

Perspectives, Unipolarity and Bipolarity Versus Multipolarity and Their Based Assumptions

I argue that the shifts announced by BRICS through its summits and other meetings in themselves will not and/or cannot guarantee that through the membership of South Africa, Africa as a whole would likely change her place holistically within the liberal world economy and the existing nature of the international division of labor. It would be necessary to have targeted national political reforms such as constitutional, legal and administrative before BRICS' policies could be projected to have any significant impact at the national level. For instance, if African nation-states and people and their social agencies transform their technically defined "representative democracies" or "illiberal democracies" into real functioning social democracies in which people participate effectively in the political process, they can force their state's institutions and decision makers to take advantage of the new spaces in world politics and move forward. In fact, BRICS could become a danger for Africa if South Africa runs away from supporting pan-African projects and if African nation-states enter into BRICS projects without any collective national agenda.

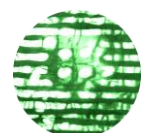


Using historical-structuralist approaches with a comparative perspective, I raise issue of these countries' methods of structurally conceiving and perceiving south-south relations; how they re-define politics, especially democracy; and how they deal with the old elements of the dominant social paradigms (science, technology, and free market). These approaches put a heavy emphasis on causal relations among the political actors and their systems.

Within historical-structuralist approach and its philosophical assumptions and claims with a dose of systems analysis as articulated by the advocates of the world system, the way social classes, states, and societies function in the world system is partially the outcome of the internal and external dynamics of their locations. But these locations are far from being historically fixed or static. The world is a system and an organic whole, whose behaviors are conditioned by the actors' locations and how they came to be in the system. The actors and the subsystems do not act similarly because it depends on their specific functions and attributes and their location within the system.

I consciously avoid intellectualism, historical determinism and conspiracy theory because they tend to lack a good understanding of the forces of history or historical factors. I interpret history as a changing phenomenon that is not predetermined by any circumstances or forces. I build my arguments on historical-structuralist assumptions and in finding correlations between historical facts or causations/correlations and structures of the African contemporary society. Historical structuralism raises the question of origins of these phenomena and the nature of the evolution of their structures. Within the structures of the African societies, I put more emphasis on the political institutions or the states and their relations to the Immanuel Wallerstein's world system (1974, 1980, and 1989). Furthermore, my interests in historical causation of social phenomena and critical examination of their structures are shaped by social constructivism. Adler (1997, 2002) and Fearon and Wendt, (2002) take social world of agreed upon collective social values more seriously in also a non-material world.

My qualitative analysis is mainly shaped by interpretative historical-structuralism that claims that systems, social phenomena, or social institutions do not function randomly. They have a certain coherent relational logic that is related to the role and the nature of each element within such a system. The system is not just the sum of its elements. In terms of its dynamics, it is more than what is tangible or what can be seen and touched. In order to understand why a system behaves the way it does, we have to ask the questions of the origins of its elements, examine the nature of the relationship among them, and discuss the nature of the interactions between the system itself and other phenomena within or around its larger environment.



Performing to reach their various objectives, the elements are maintained through a complex process of historical configurations. The behavior of an actor is determined by the dynamics of the subsystems, the systems, and the environment where one is located. This way of thinking goes beyond the cybernetics and the logic of functionalist scholarships.

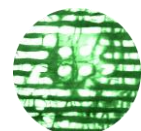
My holistic approach puts an emphasis on change. Things do not just happen. There are laws that force or pull phenomena toward certain directions. It is important to identify and analyze the nature of these laws.

One of the most important manifesting characteristics of the world system since the end of 20th century has been the movement of states and people's struggles toward their redefinition of themselves. This redefinition has been taking different forms and shapes in almost every part of the world. Some parts are more tragic than others like in the Balkans, many parts of Africa and the Middle East, and others more gradually and peacefully. But the substance of the content of this redefinition and its intellectual quality depend on the dynamics of the local political configurations, how a given people and state have become part of the world system, the location of these actors in the international political economy, what they are bringing into the global market, who the actors are and who their alliances are. This process of redefining themselves is facilitated by the means and forces of globalization.

Within the existing form of liberal globalization, the state centric approach of the classical realism to peace, security and construction is being challenged by multinationals or multilateral and transnational organizations. The global forces are forcing the state or the centralized authority to make accommodations in order to survive or to redefine the limits and the strength of its notion of sovereignty. Privatization of the state is one of the characteristics of the world system that is diminishing the power of the state to engage in productive manner economically and politically its citizens.

Concerning the evolution of a teleological world, it should be noted that in the past 600 years or so the world system (nation-state, international political economy, and financial, economic, military, social and political organizations) has evolved toward unipolarity. Unipolar world tends to be philosophically deterministic. Unipolar, bipolar and multipolar systems are about the mechanisms and processes of the location and distribution of power in the world.

The concept of unipolarity is both an ideological concept, as well as an analytical concept. It is about constructing the world and explaining and understanding it. It has been operating on a linear way of thinking and analyzing the world. This way is perceived as the best as compared to other perspectives. This so-called the best way has an absolute value. It embodies the notion of the survival of the fittest. Modern nation-state inherited through European traditions and practices the values of the capitalist economy and its free market (or the invisible hand of Adam Smith) and liberal democracy with its individual rights express the values of unipolarity. However, this contemporary 'unipolar evolutionism (especially its



militaristic dimensions that are commanded by the United States through the Washington Consensus) is being challenged by various movements toward some interpretations of multipolarity.

Since the end of the 20th century, the capitalist economy has been operating more forcefully toward the controlled dynamics of both regionalism and globalism. While capitalists at the regional levels have tendencies to advance some national and cultural interests in the process of making their surplus or acquiring and protecting their capital, the globalists tend to see the world more on the perspectives of the so-called free market. The free market principle determines what people sell and buy and what they produce. Regionalism is more associated with geo-politics and history than globalism, which has claims and tendencies of promoting 'universalism' from a perspective of a world without borders. Regionalists are more sympathetic to protectionism even if the actors who advocate globalism like United States also use protectionism as an instrument of advancing their national or class interests.

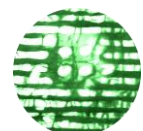
While capitalist regionalists accept the existence of other poles of influences in other parts of the world as they are defined politically, economically or culturally, the globalists emphasize universal human values as defined by the market and individualism.

Bipolarity is a complex phenomenon that explains dualism. On the one hand in the history of Western civilization, especially that of classical Greece, the body and the mind were always divided as the reason ought to conquer the irrationality of body, but on the other hand, ideologically political bipolarity of the Cold War era was a challenge to the "monistic" European civilization.

Bipolarity was defined ideologically, militarily, economically and culturally. It shaped local/national political behaviors and relations in such a way that the process of creating and supporting a complex system of clientelist regimes and patronage of hierarchy of powers was ideologically justified. But it has been a short-lived phenomenon. However, the demands for multipolar politics expressed also through multiculturalism that has a political agenda, have been rising. They are gradually manifesting in various forms in every region and sub-region of the world.

It is self-evident that, since the end of Cold War era, which is characterized by the brutal collapse of the formal bipolar politics, which was manifested itself in ideological struggles between the West, represented by the United States and its allies, and the Soviet Union and its alliances, world politics has been advancing many elements of multipolarity. The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1992 and the rise of the new Russian federalism is also the symptom of this multipolarity.

In May 2011, the World Bank published a report called "Multipolarity: the New Global Economy." According to the World Bank emerging countries like Brazil, Russia,



Indian, China, and South Africa will induce clear signs of change in the socio-economic power relations (World Bank, 2011). Multipolarity is “a measurement of the distribution of power concentrated in several poles of power, those poles being the great powers. BRICS are projected as becoming great powers along the United States and the European Union.

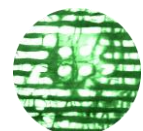
On June 14, 2014, while many leaders were preoccupied about the World Cup in Brazil and the situation in Ukraine, the G-77 summit took place in Bolivia. It celebrated the 70th anniversary of the non-alignment. This grouping counts now 130 members. Russia is being invited to join this organization.

The final declaration called for a new world order for living well and it supports the 8 Millennium Development Goals as defined by the United Nations. They also intend and plan to eradicate poverty by 2030. Evo Morales of Bolivia went far as to request the suppression of the Security Council of the United Nations. In March 2013, in Durban, South Africa the leaders of BRICS also agreed that the election for the next World Trade Organisation (WTO) Director-General should have a candidate from a developing country.

In short, the South-South agenda is to project the creation of a multipolar world. Thus, multipolarity is about a system of multiple global and regional powers, which exist simultaneously. It is about the dispersal of powers, the rise of new club of powers, and the new reconfiguration of trade, financial and economic activities at regional level. Global financial institutions are becoming effective statecraft challenging the nation-state sovereignty. Furthermore, more reflective dimensions of the multipolarity can be noted in the rise of China with its ideology of socialism with the market economy (or the state capitalism), the new role of Russia in its world politics the consolidation of the European Union, despite its internal weaknesses on the question of national politics, the gradual redefinition of the role of politics of the Economic Community of the West African States, the new role of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in promoting political and economic cooperation and regional stability and in defining the current economic crisis and economic position of its members, the building of the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa), to cite only these few illustrations.

I use and define the concept of multipolarity to be part of both a regular evolution of global capitalism as well as a ‘protest’ paradigm that is challenging both unipolarity and the old déclassé bipolarity. However, while the call for it is intensifying through indigenous, labor, social, women, youth and popular organizations and movements, its ideological basis is at the best hybrid. It is so because the forces associated with multipolarity (as we are using it) have not been able to interrogate sufficiently the nation-states. In many ways, it has also been challenging ethno-culturalism or culturalism of the state through civil societies but not the structures of the power system.

Calls for multipolarity underline political and economic decentralization of the world resources and their better management, and a fair distribution of these resources. It calls for more people's participation in the reconstruction of their economies, which implies that it puts



more emphasis on building communities rather than 'idolatry' of individualism. It also requires values of multiculturalism, diversity and universal humanity. In international system, it calls for the reconceptualization and establishment of new international partnership/cooperation based on the win-win theory. Regions and nation-states that are doing well economically are those, which have also capacities to negotiate. In a nation-state, it calls for the development of social welfarism and the implementation and respect for the laws of the ecology.

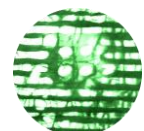
By and large, a multipolar perspective implies the coexistence of several equally used and respected spaces or locations of power with similar value systems. It can be advanced through dialogical relations between the subject and object of learning. It implies: (1) Multiculturalism (a movement toward intra-intercultural dialogues within every society); (2) Articulation of the centrality of humanism, development and democracy as the key elements for the foundation of a political life with the emphasis on human, progress and social security; (3) Challenges to the hierarchy of the vertical values of power system that is based on militarism, and oligopolistic and monopolistic tendencies and traits of the nation-state and its international political economy; (4) Democratization of the nation-state and its economic system, and society; And (5) finally, building of a common unity of purposes between the public and the private.

The multipolar perspective, which I am proposing should be inspired by 4 laws of ecology. The first law of ecology is that everything is connected to everything else; the second law is everything must go somewhere; the third is nature knows best; and the fourth law is that there is no such thing as a free lunch (Smith, 2009, pp. 2-3). As part of the protest paradigm, multipolarity should make the management of the current international system more difficult and the achievement of liberal global stability more problematic. In short, in social sciences, it requires the combination of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary methodologies and a critical theory, and at the political level it requires multilateralism at every level of state-societal relations, including horizontal social relations.

General Background of the BRICS States

As indicated earlier, this reflective piece is not intended to expand on the features of the nature of each country and state's political economy and compare them in a systematic manner. This is planned at another level of analysis. However, at this stage, only a brief discussion of some basic indicators and factors in the form of the profile of the nature of these states and their governance systems and economies are examined to help contextualize my reflection. This 'caricature' is used only to give us a general picture of each country.

Brazil is the only country from the Americas to be a member of this grouping. Covering 8,511,965 km² and harboring a population of about 198 million, it also boasts the largest area and population in the region.



Brazil's liberal democracy or a multiparty democracy as reflected by the maturity of the elections and that of civil society, and the respect of the rule of law, has been consolidating. The transfer of power through the electoral process has been without any major disruptions. For instance, from Fernando Henrique Cardoso, to Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva and Dilma Rousseff (First woman) within their political parties more people have participated in the political process. It does not have a single-party history that has monopolized power.

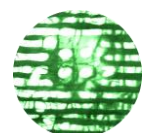
Brazil is a Federal Republic that consists of 26 states and one Federal District of Brasilia. The president is directly elected by people for a 4-year term and can be only elected for a second term. It has a bicameral National Congress, which has Federal (Upper House) and the Chamber of Deputies (Lower-House).

It is the only former Portuguese colony in the Americas. Its political path was different as compared to those of its neighbors, former Spanish colonies. Its independence was obtained in 1822 without a war against Metropolitan Portugal. A proclamation by regent prince effected the separation and turned Brazil into an "independent monarchy." It had a cohesive political elite related to monarchy, which was broadly defined as a coalition of the rural aristocracy with bureaucratic elite. Among these elites, they were landowners, urban merchants and miners trained with the spirit of Roman Law (Lamounier, 1995, 126). As a former colony and empire, Brazil has some sociological, political and economic features and infrastructures that made it different from others. However, the same factors can also explain the origins of its underdevelopment in terms of the nature of the production organization through the plantation and manufacturing and its elite relations with the Native Americans and the Black ethnic groups.

Although the Brazilian State claims that it does not have any sharp political conflicts among language or religious groups as compared to other countries in the region, until recently, Brazil has also dealt with enormous social inequality, as Lamounier states:

No matter how one measures them, levels of income inequality and mass poverty in Brazil are among the worst in the world. The main determinants of present income differentials and class structure undoubtedly have their roots in the pattern of land appropriation inherited from the colonial past. Concentration of landed wealth and use of the best land to produce export commodities have always been the major "push" factors behind the enormous supply of cheap labor constantly flocking to the cities (Ibid).

Brazil is a highly urbanized country with more than 80 percent of its inhabitants living in urban or semi urbanized areas. Thus, manufacturing and industrialization as urban-based economic activities are central in the Brazilian economy, though rural development has also been an important aspect of the Brazilian policy agenda.



Russia is the largest country in the world in terms of its surface with 17,075,200 km², approximately 1.8 times the size of the United States. It covers 11 time zones and has a population of 143,030,106 as per the official estimate in January 1st, 2012.

Like Brazil, Russia is a federation consisting of 89 republics and regions, including the federal cities of Moscow and St Petersburg. This form of governance was adopted in 1993. Its national legislature is also bicameral, which is comprised of Duma (Lower House) and Federation Council (Upper House).

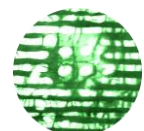
Unlike Brazil, which was colonized and located in the Americas, Russia during the Cold War era was a super power located in central Europe (with a significant population of Euro-Asian population) before the collapse of international and institutional socialism in 1992. This system was initiated, supported and spread over from its based the 1917 Bolshevik revolution. It had a strong Communist Party in the world with highly centralized political apparatuses and a command economy.

As confirmed by the March 2012 presidential election in which Vladimir Putin was re-elected for a third term with about 60% of votes, the Russian governance system and political culture have produced elections without any reliable liberal democratic process. Thus, its dominant practices are very close to “illiberal” democracy in which people vote without having many choices and within very limited participation. However, there is a strong movement inside the country dominated by the Communist Party to change those practices against Vladimir Putin and his associates. The transfer of power is still highly centralized with fragile democratic values as the values are slowly being rooted in civil society. Although the public discourse is changing, Russia can be characterized as a strong state with attributes of authoritarian police state. How, however, does this all impact BRICS?

In February 2003, the State Duma passed a law to making Russian the official language, prohibiting the use in public documents of foreign words or expressions that have Russian-language equivalents.⁴ The rise of nationalism is related to the choice of its leaders on security and stability versus individualism and participation. But it should be noted that the country is more culturally diverse than Brazil with its more than 100 of local languages and ethnic groups. Many scholars define Brazil as being culturally more homogenized among the countries in South America.

In terms of natural resources, Russia is the world's largest producer of iron ore, asbestos, manganese ore, nickel, chromite, platinum group metals and potassium salts, and the second largest gold, lead and phosphate ores. It is the second largest generator of electricity in the world, with total installed capacity of 217 GW and an output of more than 900 billion kWh. Furthermore, it has the largest forested area in the world of any country in the world.

⁴ MacKenzie, Leslie, *Nations of the World: Political, Economic, and Business Handbook*, New York, America: Grey House Publishing, 2011, p. 1397.



Finally, according to BP in 2010, Russia has the largest natural gas reserves, with 44.38 trillion cubic meters (Tcm), almost twice the reserves of the next largest country, Iran.⁵ Its political economy has produced a “Sushi” generation of middle class that aspires to be the game changers to change the game of Russian capitalism. They are new entrepreneurs who prefer to eat in the Japanese restaurants than in the Russian ones.

India, unlike Russia that was not colonized by the Western powers, was the largest single English colonial enterprise in the world. It is the second country from Asia to be a member of this group (China being another), though located in southern Asia.

India is a federal system of governance with 28 self-governing states and seven union territories. In the preamble of its constitution it states: “The people of India solemnly resolves to constitute a ‘sovereign socialist secular democratic republic’ and to secure to all its citizens, justice, liberty, equality and fraternity.” The specific references to secularism and socialism should be noted.

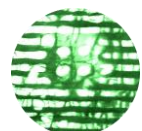
Like Russia, India also has a bicameral parliamentary system, which consists of Lok Sabha (House of the People or Lower House) and Rajya Sabha (Council of States or Upper House Chamber). It functions like the British Parliament with the Prime Minister as the Head of the Government and the president whose role is like that of the British Head of the Monarchy, more ceremonial with less direct political decisions, except in some nominations and political disputes. As Das Gupta states: “Political reconstruction in India since 1947 has been remarkable for its consistent and continuous use of constitutional methods for generating national coherence, political stability, and the development of economic and political freedom (1995, p. 274).

India is known as the biggest sustained democracy in the world as Rob Jenkins citing Kothari (1984) stated:

Whatever its shortcomings, India’s democratic system is known, even to those without detailed knowledge of the country, as a site of lively political contestation, with all manner of civic groups endlessly aligning and realigning with one another on every conceivable issue—from how to reform affirmative action provisions in government employment, to the appropriate nuclear doctrine for a country in India’s geostrategic position. Even during periods when India’s democratic institutions were undergoing decay, observers (within and outside India) have always had great faith in the ability of India’s vast and varied civil society to take up some of the slack (2005, p. 278).

Like Russia, India has a strong political organization, which is the Indian National Congress, but which functions within the context of political pluralism and democratic liberalism. Historically, it laid the foundation of the national political discourse that facilitated the

⁵ Ibid, p. 1393.



formulation of political goals and demands in the public arena.⁶ Most of the Indian political elites earlier adopted liberal thoughts as mechanisms of debating the cultural and social contradictions of their society. Thus, Indian nationalism was heavily influenced by the elements of British liberal thoughts.

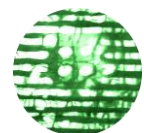
Demographically, India is the second largest country in world with the population estimated in 2012 to be 1.22 billion. Devendra Kothari has projected it to be 1.370 billion by 2021. It is well-endowed with mineral resources, mainly iron ore, manganese, uranium, good quality bauxite and chromite, though they are not all fully exploited. Furthermore, it has vast and diverse forest resources, comprising around 22 percent of the total land area. The surface of India is 1,269,210 square miles, or 3,287,240 square kilometers, of which about 9.56% is water. However, it is not as naturally rich as Russia.

China, like India, is located in Asia, specifically East Asia. It is a People's Republic. Its official ideology is constituted of Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong thought. The effective political power is in the hands of the Chinese Communist Party. The Chinese emphasize ideological homogeneity. However, an interpretation of the pragmatic dimension of this ideology since the formulation and the implementation of reforms of 1978 or Deng Xiaoping's reform has led scholars to call its ideology: "socialism with the market economy."

It is a unitary state with 22 provinces, four special municipalities under central government and five autonomous regions. Unlike India that has flourishing religious traditions and vibrant religious groups, China is officially an atheist state. The executive is the 15-member State Council, which is elected by the unicameral *Quanguo Remni Daibiao Dahui* (National People's Congress). The State Council members, including the premier of the State Council, who is appointed by the president, may not serve more than two consecutive five-year terms. The system can be characterized as highly centralized but with fluid elections within itself though not liberal elections.

In terms of demographics, China is the biggest country in the world, with a population of over 1.35 billion (2012). Its size of 3.681.089 sq miles is almost the same size as that of the United States. Only 13% of Chinese land is arable. By the end of 2010, the mainland of the People Republic of China had a total urban population of 665.57 million, or 49.68% of the total population, rising from 26% in 1990. It is more urbanized than India but less so than Brazil and Russia. Its mining industry is ranked as one of the largest in the world. The natural resources of China include: coal, iron ore, petroleum, mercury, tin, tungsten, antimony, manganese, molybdenum, vanadium, magnetite, aluminum, lead, zinc, uranium, hydropower potential (world's largest). China also has one of the largest reserves of non-exploited natural gas, perhaps coming after Russia and the United States.

⁶ Das Gupta Jyotirlingdra, "India: Democratic Becoming and Developmental Transition," in Larry Diamond, Juan J. Linz, and Seymour Martin Lipset (eds.), *Politics in Developing Countries: Comparing Experiences with Democracy* (Second Edition). Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1995, p. 266.



The Chinese story has been strongly influenced by the fact that the Chinese Communist Party succeeded in an unprecedented manner, between 1978 and 2005, to uplift more than 400 million people out of poverty, and by 2010 this number risen to more than 600 million. This enormous credential basis has given China a global passport in its world politics and international political economy.

South Africa is a quasi-Federal Republic (or is transitioning toward a full model) unlike Brazil, India, and Russia, which I consider to be full federations. In the case of South Africa, powers have devolved to provinces and the local communities without the formal creation of a federation, creating de facto federation or quasi-federation (McCormick, 2011, p. 34).

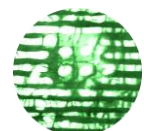
However, each federal system has its own particularities in terms of how power is organized both at the state and national levels. Each country's political history has determined how its federalism was created and what expectations were behind its creation. It consists of a central government and nine provincial governments. It has a bicameral legislature (National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces), which works through proportional representation. The regime is presidential. The president is elected in the National Assembly.

Since 1994, South Africa has become constitutionally a non-racial democracy but it has based itself upon a very liberal notion of nationality. As Robert A. Schrire stated:

The so-called rainbow nation has been built upon a rejection of the model of a nation conceptualized as people united around one identity, language, and set of national symbols. To give institutional content to this division, new institutions had to be created profoundly different from existing in former centralized and monocultural state. The foundation of a stable state order has thus been based upon recognition both of a common nationality and of important diversities (2005, p. 268-69).

South Africa as a "normal democracy," to use Nelson Mandela's expression, is also a multiparty one. This relatively vibrant liberal democracy has been consolidated through "peaceful transfer of power," the respect of the rule of law, the dynamics of the civil society and South Africa's active participation in the African affairs as the major power.

But this democracy comes with heavy responsibilities and expectations for tearing down the structures and the values of the vestiges of the past that deeply and sharply divided the society in ethnic, cultural and religious lines—apartheid. The apartheid laws were repealed in 1991 and the new constitution was adopted in 1996. However, ethnic consciousness is strong, as it also very much reflected in the organization of production and in the structure of the social class. It is expected that democracy would be able to change ethnic attitudes in South Africa.



South Africa, unlike Brazil but like India, has a dominant political party, the African National Congress, which has played both the role of a liberation movement and political party. Its political agenda has been shaped by historical claims related to these two forces plus the imperatives of neo-liberal globalization. The party functions under a centralized democracy model in which many innovative ideas from the outside have not been appreciated within the hierarchy of the party system. People's rights are in principle strongly protected by the constitution.

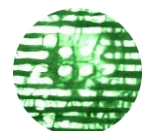
The Genesis, the Evolution, Vision and the Main Objectives of the BRICS States

Some may view BRICS, as a global actor, as *sui generis* (unique). Some people think that, at this point, it is yet “unidentified political object.” How much unique is it? And how much “unidentified” is it in world of the states and international capitalism? These are not the views of this author.

How did the new group emerge and for what objectives? The history of BRICS states has to be located in the efforts of developing countries to try, once again, to build alliances and coalitions in order to confront poverty, oppression and underdevelopment. It has to be examined within the frame of the struggles of many members of nations-states, which are trying to re-define their sovereignty and their capitalism. In general, most political leaders among formal colonial and neo-colonial countries and states have never fully accepted their dependent political status permanently even among accommodationists. Their inferior social and economic conditions created mostly by the complexity of the dynamics of imperialist and neo-colonial powers and their usage of a “savage kind of capitalism” to advance their causes was considered as transitional. Through its summits, we have been able to identify the main objectives of the BRICS states and the mechanisms through which these objectives were intended to be translated into policies and be implemented.

The vision of these states is also important as it can inform us about the kind of political world they intend to produce. Vision is essentially a philosophical concept first. It is an ideal concept in which one creates a plan for the self with a long-term purpose that ought to be beneficial to the collective self as well. In a nation-state, there is no vision if its political leaders do not know where they are taking a given country to and where the country was coming from politically, economically and culturally. As a philosophical concept, it implies futurism and progress. It also can be actualized through collective political actions and nationalistic leaderships. Although the BRICS's vision individually and collectively is still developing, through its summits, elements of its vision and goals have been defined. Vision and programs must be examined in relation to the goals and the locus of each country in the world of the states.

In the past, various attempts were made by new politically independent nation-states located in Africa, the Americas, Asia, and the Middle East during the Cold War international



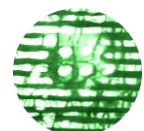
relations and politics to challenge the policies and the politics of industrialized countries, which were considered as negative political forces impeding the progress to take place in the former colonial countries. It is in the name of liberal globalization, especially the so-called free market dogma and free trade as articulated by the World Trade Organization that Western industrialized countries and the United States still dominate the world economy.

The Bandung Conference in 1955, which was held in Indonesia, is the first marking point in which an official public statement was made to voice collectively against imperialism and colonialism. It is out of the spirit of the Bandung that members promised to make a new political activism, which created the organization of non-aligned states within the United Nations system. Two major sponsors of the conference, India and China are also the co-founders of BRICS. India was also a co-organizer of the conference. Despite the ideological differences among them, they thought that their common enemies were stronger than their ideological differences. Their peripheral locations in the dynamics of the global political economy and the political vision of tomorrow on some forms of nationalism, led them to minimize their historical, cultural and ideological and political differences.

Although non-alignment as a movement of the weaker nation-states in international scene claimed to be ideologically neutral in world affairs, it was de facto an ideology in itself. It was articulating a collective way of thinking about world politics, which during the Cold War, was shaped by enormous contradictions. Its strengths were demonstrated at the level of the United Nations General Assemblies but its weaknesses were expressed at the level of world economy's functionality and international security. For various national security imperatives and the free market demands, many members of the Non-Alignment Movement allied themselves with the states that were oppressing them. However, despite its weaknesses, it contributed toward advancing the concept of the Global South.

The idea of the South can be traced to the 7th Special Session of the UN General Assembly in 1975 in which a resolution concerning development and international cooperation was adopted. Initiated by the semi-periphery group of countries, the section V of this resolution dealt specifically with cooperation among developing countries. In 1978, the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation in the UN Development Programme was established by the General Assembly. Its primary mandate was to promote, coordinate and support South-South and Triangular cooperation in the UN system and globally⁷. In short, it should be noted that this concept of the Global South has geographical, political, historical and economic connotations and meanings.

⁷ Osita Agbu, "Africa and the Emerging Global South," In Korwa G Adar, Monica K. Juma, Katabaro N Miti (eds), *The State of Africa 2010/11: Parameters and Legacies of Governance and Issue Areas*, Pretoria, South Africa: Africa Institute of South Africa and London: African Book Collective, 2010.



With Russia, a former super power during the Cold War era, as a co-founder of BRICS, which is also geographically located in the North, what kind of South-South grouping is this new organization?

In December 1999, a group of countries known as G-20, represented by the ministers of finance and Central Bank Governors, first met subsequent to the Asian financial crisis, the meeting brought together the major industrialized countries, the European Union and the representatives of the major developing economies⁸. Brazil, India, China, Russia, and the South were among the countries represented in the meeting. Former Canadian Finance Minister Paul Martin proposed the G-20. Later he became Prime Minister. His main goal was to set up a group in which members have solid functioning economies for cooperation and consultation on matters pertaining to international financial systems. Paul Martin is not known for being a progressive political leader.

Although the BRICS states, as a new bloc, were initially interested in talking about specialized investments, banking practices and new ideas about new financial strategic to be used toward the advancement of their economies, the declarations from the summits reflect a broad agenda, which includes paradigm shifts from the old stagnated development programs, a new political orientation about social progress, the nature of the global power, new agenda for political configurations or alliances.

The main reason for creating this new club was based on an underlying perception that the economic crisis of the world would not be solved from the industrialized countries which also are to blame as being part of the problem as they have been advocating economic reforms with orthodox austerity programs whose consequences led to the collapse of many economies and the states in the Global South.

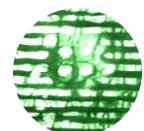
In their annual summits, the leaders of the BRICS have been discussing the issues related to the status of the international economy and finances. As Cynthia Roberts indicated:

In 2006, as BRICs Mania gathered momentum, the four governments, at the initiative of the then former Russian President Vladimir Putin, collectively lifted themselves from the pages of investment reports to hold their first foreign ministers' meeting on the sidelines of the annual UN General Assembly session. After a second meeting of the four foreign ministers in New York in September 2007, the BRICs launched a consultative process at the level of deputy foreign ministers to foster regular contacts and multilateral diplomacy.⁹

After the World Financial Crisis of 2008, the leaders of the BRIC states had their first summit meeting in Yekaterinburg, Russia. The goals were:

⁸ Tom Dwyer, "Relations between the BRICS: A Reflection from Brazilian Sociological Viewpoint," *Fudan Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences*, Vol. 4, 2011, p. 28.

⁹ Roberts, p. 2.



To achieve more influence in world governance forums, how their nations could contribute to improving the world economic situation and, by working together, could reform international financial institutions. Their financial declaration called for the establishment of a multipolar world order.

According to the Russian Foreign Ministry in 2008, active efforts by the BRIC to reform the world financial system were some of the factors that led to a decision at the G-20 Washington Summit in November 2008 to include emerging economic economies in a enlarged Financial Stability Forum.¹⁰

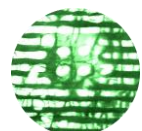
The second Summit took place on April 16th, 2010 in Brasilia and the Third in Sanya, China on April 14th 2011, during which South Africa was invited to the 2011 as a new member. Their final declaration of the 2011 leaders' summit supports what I have indicated earlier as it reads:

It is the overarching objective and strong shared desire for peace, security, development and cooperation that brought together brought together BRICS states with a total population of nearly 3 billion from different continents. BRICS aims at contributing significantly to the development of humanity and establishing a more equitable and fair world.... We are open to increasing engagement and cooperation with non-BRICS states, in particular, emerging and developing countries, and relevant international and regional organizations.... Accelerating sustainable growth of developing countries is one the major challenges for the world. We believe that growth and development are central to addressing poverty and to achieving the MDGs (Millennium Development Goals). Eradication of extremely and hunger is moral, social political and economic imperative of humankind and one of the greatest global challenges facing the world today, particularly in Least Developed Countries in Africa and elsewhere.... We review the progress of the BRICS cooperation in various fields and share the view that such cooperation has been enriching and mutually beneficial and that there is a great scope for closer cooperation and the further development of its own agenda. We are determined to translate our political vision into concrete action and endorse the attached Action Plan, which will serve as the foundation for future cooperation. We will review the implementation of Action Plan during our next Leaders Meeting.¹¹

The above declaration indicates the priority items of the new club and the projection of new perspectives to deal with economic development through the eradication of poverty and not the old approach of alleviation of poverty. Another very important dimension of this club not

¹⁰ Roberts, op. cit.,

¹¹ www.itamaraty.gov.br/temas-mais-infomacoes/saiba-mais-bric/documentos-emitidos-pelos-chefes-de-estado-e-de/sanya-declaration-iiibrics-summit/view quoted by Tom Dwyer, "Relations between the BRICS: A Reflection from a Brazilian Sociological Viewpoint," *Fudan Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences*, Vol., No. 4, 2011.





defined above involves democracy. Lula's view is a central view within the organization as he stated:

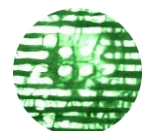
Luis Inacio Lula da, Former President of Brazil, defined the mission of the BRIC as follows:

We are countries where everything happens on a large scale. We represent nearly one-half of the world population, 20 percent of its land surface and rich in natural resources. Today, the BRICs have become essential players in major international decision-making. As such we are acutely aware of our potential as agents of change in making global governance both more transparent and democratic. ... When these orthodoxies collapsed, the visible hand of the state protected the economic system from the failures created by invisible hand of the market... As a group, we will continue to advocate the democratization of multilateral process of decision-making. Developing countries have the rights to be heard. From our perspective as emerging economies, the resources that need to overcome hunger and poverty may be considerable but are quite modest when compared to the cost of rescuing failed banks and financial institutions that are victims of their own speculative greed... The negotiating impasse on global issues is nowhere as serious as on climate change. In line with this, the BRIC countries are committed to helping close the deal that was elusive in Copenhagen. The balance established by the Kyoto Protocol is essential for us to move forward together... Neither the BRIC members nor any other countries are able to face them alone. In the past, unilateralism has led to impasses, if not human catastrophes, such as Iraq (2003, 21-22).

In a one-day meeting (the Fourth summit) of March 29, 2012 in Delhi, the leaders of BRICS notably Dilma Rousseff of Brazil, Dmitry Medvedev of Russia, Manmohan Singh, Hu Jintao of China and Jacob Zuma of South Africa, discussed closer trade links and a new bank. I am interested more in what Jacob Zuma had to say about the position of South Africa and the rest of Africa as projected from the BRICS' project.

The Fifth BRICS Summit (the first in Africa) was held on March 17, 2013 in Durban South Africa under the theme: "BRICS and Africa: Partnership for Development, Integration and Industrialization." The Summit outcome documents known as the eThekweni Declaration and Action Plan were adopted at the conclusion of the Summit. 5 leaders agreed on the establishment of:

- (a) New Development Bank and indicated that the initial capital contribution to the bank should be substantial and sufficient for the bank to be effective in financing infrastructure; (b) The contingent reserve arrangement (CRA) with an initial size of US\$100 billion. The CRA would help BRICS countries forestall short-term liquidity pressures and further strengthen financial stability; (c) The BRICS Think Tanks Council and the BRICS Business Council. The BRICS Think Tanks Council will link



respective Think Tanks into a network to develop policy options such as the evaluation and future long-term strategy for BRICS. The BRICS Leaders also agreed that the election for the next world Trade Organisation (WTO) Director-General should be a candidate from a developing country.

On July 15, 2014 the five leaders' meeting in Fortaleza, Brazil, agreed to locate their newly established development Bank in Shanghai (China) with a capital US\$50 Billion rising to US\$100billion. This was conceived in terms of lending policies and the role of the stakeholders as having an alternative perspective as compared to practices and policies of the existing financial systems of the World Bank (with its US\$232 billion) and International Monetary Fund.

The BRICS reiterated their proposition to creating an alternative financial institution to the World Bank. At the same, in its Delhi Declaration it agreed to expand the capital base of the World Bank and other multilateral institutions to ensure global economic stability.

It is important to compare and contrast some specific economic variables in order to have a sense of how they might advance their prescribed objectives. How would BRICS advance "a multipolar, equitable and democratic world order"¹² that it claims while there are still major political, cultural and economic policy differences among them?

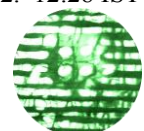
A Brief Comparison of Economic and Political Dimensions between the BRICS States

The imperatives of the world of nation-states and those of their citizens, and their complicated and complex relationships are still prevailing. While the world of the states means sovereignty, national security, citizenry, well-defined territoriality, the world of citizenry means rights to life, which embodies all the cognitive liberties. BRICS claims to articulate a visionary state system, which has to emancipate people toward these rights. How will this new organization deal with the assumptions embodied in the above statement?

Before comparing some main features of the BRICS group, it is necessary to indicate that as of 2012, it accounts for 26 per cent of the world's landmass, 42 per cent of the global population, nearly 28 per cent of the global economy and 40 per cent of the global GDP (\$18.486 trillion). Intra-BRICS trade is growing at an average of 28 percent annually and currently stands at about \$230 billion.¹³ BRICS countries also have accounted for over 50 per cent of global economic growth in the last decade. BRICS is not yet known in African ministries of planning and development, let alone in the African business circles, rural areas and non-governmental sectors. In fact, I have realized recently that even in the community of researchers, this new grouping is still less known. It is hoped that South Africa will be able to bring the agenda of BRICS to African political and economic debates, through the African Union's activities, SADC, COMESA, etc.

¹² Caroline Bracht *Plans for the BRICS Delhi Summit: March 29, 2012*, unpublished document.

¹³ NDTV Correspondent, "BRICS Delhi 2012: Your 10 Facts Cheatsheet," Updated: March 29, 2012. 12:28 IST



What kind of power does each state represent in the world politics? Economic position and its political involvement in international affairs determine much of the state's place in the world politics. The supranational space that the BRICS states has created functions in a world that is dominated by the imperatives of the neo-liberal globalization and their consequences in developing countries such as large unemployment, lumpen-intellectualization, political instability and rampant poverty. At the same time, civil society is also consolidating itself while democratic consolidation is zigzagging in many developing countries, despite some economic growth, for instance, in parts of Africa and South America.

Brazil has come into this club (BRICS) with confidence as a mixed economy with a strong state's interventionism in the factors of production. It has been developing an independent foreign policy since Lula. It wants to become a global power—a voice for developing countries. It has become the 6th largest economy in the world over taken that of the United Kingdom. Brazil's trade has increased faster between itself and other BRICS states, as stated by Dwyer: "In a single decade the BRIC states—Russia, India and China—have gone from being responsible for 3.42% in 2000 to 18.3% in 2010 of the total Brazilian trade imports and exports with the world. Of special relevance is China, which now represents nearly 15% of Brazil's total foreign trade."

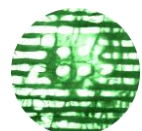
In 2011, within this group, Brazil has the second GDP per capita of \$11,600 after Russia with \$16,700 and a GDP of \$2.284 trillion after India with \$4.463 trillion and Russia with \$2.284 trillion. Brazil also had GNP of \$2,144,884,440,510 with a GNP per capita \$9,390.

Although, as of 2011, Brazil's GDP per capita is still a third of that of United Kingdom, its economy overtook that of United Kingdom as the world's sixth largest economy. It rose 2.7% as compared with the United Kingdom's 0.8%.

Brazil has about 20% of the world's fresh water supply. It is one of the few countries in the world that still is able to increase its agricultural frontier and research played a major role in increasing agricultural productivity. It has a comparative advantage in growing and exporting food. It should be noted that Brazil is also self-sufficient in energy production.

Brazil's total commercial exchanges with BRICS in million US Dollars between 1990 and 2010 have been gradually increasing, from \$52,0755 in 1990 to \$383,636 in 2010, more than any other country in the new grouping. BRICS as % of all Brazilian trade has jumped from 3.42% in 2000 to 18.3%.¹⁴ Brazil has an ambition of becoming a superpower in South America, as well as a strong power within the United Nations system. With its large population of 203,429,773 in 2011 and the population growth of 1.13% and a growing middle class, Brazil has a large market of everything that its economy can produce.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 38.



China joined the World Trade Organization in 2001 after several years of probation. It has access to more resources associated with membership. Since 2010, China has become the number one economy in the world in terms of quantitative output of both its export-import. It displaced Japan, which has become the number three. Both China's GDP and GNP of \$11,3 trillion and 410,221,684,440,510 respectively are the largest in the world. However, its GDP per Capita of \$8,400 is smaller than that of Russia, \$16,600, Brazil with \$11,600 and South Africa with \$11,000 as of 2011. China has invested heavily in Brazil and South Africa. In 2010, for instance, it became the largest foreign investor in Brazil.

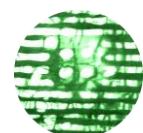
In 2011, China spent more in industrialization plus manufacturing about 47% than any other country member of the BRICS. The second country was Russia with 37%, and India was the last with 26%. South Africa was close to Russia with 31%. China's exports and imports in 2011 are larger than any country within BRICS states with \$.897 trillion and \$41.664 trillion respectively. Although its foreign investments are based on the cost-benefits related to capitalism, they are state based as defined by the Chinese State.

The Chinese political ambition is to become the number one economy in the world. Its power is reflected in its investments in the world, including in the old axes of power, the United States and Western Europe. Almost every power is doing business with China as it offers cheaper labor, the market and the determined citizens and the state to progress. With its population of 1,336,718,015 billion as of 2011, China has a large reservoir of the agents of change. Its security resources' needs, which are the combination of energy/petroleum and strategic minerals, are higher than that of any country within the group.¹⁵

India has a GDP of \$4.463 trillion higher than those of Russia, Brazil, and South Africa and with also the GNP of \$4,159,721,220,009 higher than those of Brazil, Russia and South Africa. Its GDP per capita is lower than that of any country in the group, \$3,700, and a GNP per Capita of \$1,330 as of 2011. Indian total exports and imports in 2011 were \$298.2 billion and \$451 billion, respectively. Exports were higher than those of Brazil and South Africa but smaller than those of Russia and China. In the combined industrialization and manufacturing, India and Brazil have almost the same amount of spending at almost 26%. In the area of development and research, India spends about .80% lower than South Africa, which spends about 0.93%. It needs not to be emphasized that more than 60 percent of the Indian population is still characterized massively as poor.

South Africa is the smallest economy of all in the combination of GDP and GNP. For instance, its GDP and GNP were \$554.6 billion and \$517,926,210 (billion) respectively in 2011, while its GDP per capita was \$11,000 and GNP per Capita was \$6,090. However, in the

¹⁵ For furthermore information on this topic, see Tukumbi Lumumba-Kasongo's article: "China-Africa Relations: A Neo-Imperialism or a Neo-Colonialism? A Reflection," *African and Asian Studies*, Vol. 10 No. 2-3, 2011.





areas of education and health, for instance, South Africa has been doing better than Russia, Brazil and even better than India and China in health areas. South Africa is the fourth-largest source of gold and diamonds and has more than three quarters of global platinum reserves.

What are BRICS Possible and Potential Benefits for Africa?

It is clear that BRICS states do have a grand agenda for the countries involved to challenge the policies and the structures of the existing systems and that other countries in developing world could also benefit from their protective policies. However, at the same time, the BRICS states have not proposed a tangible and practical unified ideology to be used toward the actualization of its policies.

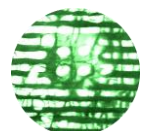
In the world of global liberalism, the main important questions would be: What are the free best trade practices or best preferential arrangements/agreements among the BRICS countries which value fairness? How have their trade systems been contributing to build democracies in Africa? What would BRICS do in the area that has produced devastating social and economic consequences of many Africans: the privatization of the state through the neo-liberal economic paradigms and political patronage of multinationals, despite current elections? How would the economic activities of BRICS, especially free trade relations, foreign investments, technological transfer, the construction of infrastructures contracts, through South Africa, reach the African villages and people, and transform their low production capacity, improve their management of the rural resources and advance the needed sustainable self-sufficiency schemes upon which local economies can be built?

In the fall of great powers, BRICS states are establishing a tall agenda making. They are challenging a post-American unilateral world as well as a non-polar world articulated by the mid-size economic and political powers. They are repeatedly calling for diversifying global services away from the United States dollar toward a global currency and began experimenting with using their currencies for regional commerce.¹⁶ It is through globalization that this agenda is likely to be realized. However, it cannot be done through neo-liberal globalization. There is a need to reconstruct new globalization paradigms in trade practices and in democratic governance, which should lead to more citizens of the BRICS' participation in this organization's activities in integrating the market into the economy and in also controlling the free market in the name of national and regional interests.

The call for democratizing the rules and the functioning of the World Trade Organization as alluded to in the quotation of the former president of Brazil, Mr. Lula, is necessary if the BRICS states would be able to actualize their action program soon.

The role of South Africa is determinant in the mobilization of resources that can be used beyond South African national interests. Furthermore, the inclusion of South Africa,

¹⁶ Roberts, op.cit., p. 6.



which has a smaller economy than, for instance, that of Korea, Indonesia, Mexico, Poland, or Turkey, may imply that the major players have some strategic interests to advance in Africa. Thus, this inclusion could be viewed more as a political move than only simplistically economic ambition.

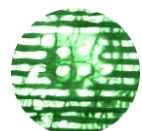
It is not clear what ideology the BRICS states might invent or adopt to promote multipolarity. There are also historical rivalries between some of them and their conflicts also are due to their positions in the global system. China, for instance, perceives itself as the most important player in the global system, as it works toward challenging the United States place in the economic world, but South Africa perceives itself as a young respectable player with potential to play a solid role in world affairs but has not been mature enough to acquire the wisdom needed in international relations except in Africa, which sees South Africa as the major power in the region.

Brazil, India, and South Africa are liberal democratic states, while Russia is in a non-liberal democratic transition, despite the elections, and China is still socialist, with the market economy based on Marxist and Maoist perceptions of world politics. The Chinese Communist Party works on the premise of centralized democracy. Russia and China are more suspicious of the American-European power intrigues than Brazil, India and South Africa. Therefore, Russia and China project more the place of the state sovereignty and national security thinking in their attitudes and policies than other members. However, all are visibly strong nation-states with their own national policy agendas and all wish to change their political statuses in regional and international arenas.

Although they share some common attributes and higher political and economic goals, the domestic, internal, social class conflicts, the manner in which labor organizations operate and how each state is responding to the demands of democratization will challenge the good intentions of this organization. The biggest question, however, is how the BRICS states will deal with the neo-economic reforms that were adopted in these countries prior to its formation—orthodox policies, which led to the devastating economic consequences in almost each of these countries.

As to the potential benefits that the whole African continent could gain from the BRICS, there are no strong data multilaterally to suggest that there is any correlation at the moment between their trade arrangements and policies and their redistributive capabilities of goods and services in other countries. Perhaps at the level of bilateral relations, this kind of assessment would be plausible.

However, South Africa's Minister of International Relations and Cooperation Maite Nkoana-Mashabane stated: "We will be a good gateway for the BRIC states. While we may have a small population, we don't just speak for South Africa, we speak for Africa as a



whole¹⁷.” President Jacob Zuma recently stated that: “South Africa’s and the continent’s, future prosperity is increasingly linked to the BRICS economies and that the grouping is well placed to “decisively assist in tackling our development deficits.”¹⁸”

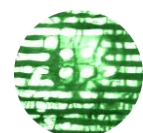
Although the BRICS states constitute now Africa’s largest trading partners and investors, the question of their political ideologies and that of their political regimes will determine how this grouping will impact Africa. It has to contribute to solving the unfinished story of the African pan-African economy and pan-African governance. Currently, neo-liberal globalization and its policies have been the enemies of such a project. In this author’s view, it is only through a pan-African political economy that poverty in Africa can be eradicated. How would the South African economy articulate pan-Africanism in terms of trade practices and policies, labor relations, industrialization, export-import policies, etc.?

At large, South Africa is a smaller economy within the grouping. Its manufacturing is also smaller. But the national and regional demands on South Africa are relatively larger than in other countries. Although there is no survey made on how other African states would expect South Africa to perform, I can only anticipate that other countries would like South Africa to play such a central role in investments, job creation, fiscal policies, free movements of goods and services, technological transfer, wage parity between men and women—all economic, commercial and financial activities that would be beneficial to other African economies beyond the Southern African Development Community (SADC). It is not clear how BRICS, through South African economic and political actors, will be able to integrate intra-African trade and economic development schemes, which operate through regional communities or organizations such as Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA), Arab Maghreb Union (UMA), Mano River (MRU), etc., and positively transform their activities for the benefit of all.

I strongly hope that South Africa would not be reduced to the dumping cheap goods and services place that would originate from the most powerful members such as China and Brazil like many Eastern European members of the European Union. Although the issue of equal treatment of each member is alluded to in all the summit’s declarations, as a nation-state centered organization and its realism, its actions are essentially power based. It is through its democratization that I hope BRICS can reach other African countries. The BRICS’ story is the one of powerful institutions and individuals. Its perspectives are generally a combination of the top-bottom with a dose of decentralization. To have a significant impact in Africa, BRICS’s activities should be shaped and guided by the bottom up perspectives. Will South

¹⁷ Noury, op. cit., p. 38.

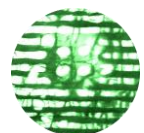
¹⁸ Noury, p. 39.





Africa be able, or be politically interested in considering the bottom-up perspective as a new approach to reach the majority of Africans with their agendas and views of social progress?

Finally, is the BRICS only packaging the heterodox policies of the 1980s and the 1990s? The answer is clearly no. Its policy guidelines as articulated in all its summits are not simplistic in its proposed interventionist programs of the states. It strongly calls for shifts of paradigms in realm of the world power and for a qualitative state's intervention in the management of the invisible hand of Adam Smith.



References

- Adler, Emanuel. 1997. "Seizing the Middle Ground. Constructivism in World Politics," *European Journal of International Relations* 3 (3): 319-363.
- _____. 2002. "Constructivism in International Relations," In *Handbook of International Relations*, edited by Walter Carls-naes, Beth Simmons and Thomas Risse. London et al.: Sage.
- Agbu, Osita, 2010 "Africa and the Emerging Global South," In Korwa G Adar, Monica K. Juma, Katabaro N Miti (eds), *The State of Africa 2010/11: Parameters and Legacies of Governance and Issue Areas*, Pretoria, South Africa: Africa Institute of South Africa and London: African Book Collective.
- Atherton, Mark, 2012 "The New World of Order," *The Times* (London), 20 March 200Bracht, Caroline, *Plans for the BRICS Delhi Summit: March 29*, unpublished document.
- Beausang-Hunter, Francesca A. 2013 *Globalization and the BRICs: Why the BRICs Will Not Rule the World For Long*, New York City: Palgrave Macmillan, or Kindle Edition.
- Bracht, Carolina, 2012 *Plans for the BRICS Delhi Summit: March 29*, unpublished document.
- Das Gupta Jyotiringdra. 1995 "India: Democratic Becoming and Developmental Transition," in Larry Diamond, Juan J. Linz, and Seymour Martin Lipset (eds.), *Politics in Developing Countries: Comparing Experiences with Democracy* (Second Edition). Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Dwyer, Tom, 2011 "Relations between the BRICS: A Reflection from Brazilian Sociological Viewpoint," *Fudan Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences*, Vol. 4.
- Jain, Subhash C. (edited) 2006. *Emerging Economies and the Transformation of International Business: Brazil, Russia, India, China*, Edward Elgar Publishing, Northampton, Ma: Inc. William Pratt House. (Paper)
- Jenkins, Rob. 2005 "Civil Society: Active or Passive India," In Peter Burnell and Vicky Randall, *Politics in the Developing World*, New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Fearon, James and Alexander Wendt, 2002. "Rationalism v. Constructivism: A Skeptical View," In Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse, and Beth Simmons, *Handbook of International Relations*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Gwynne, Robert N. and Cristóbal Kay. 2004 *Latin America: Transformed Globalization and Modernity*, New York and London, Oxford University Press.
- Lamounier, Bolivar, 1995 "Brazi: Inequality Against Democracy," In Larry Diamond, Juan J.





- Linz, and Martin Lipset (Eds.) *Politics of Developing Countries: Comparing Experiences with Democracy*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.
- Lumumba-Kasongo, Tukumbi, 2011 "China-Africa Relations: A Neo-Imperialism or a Neo-Colonialism? A Reflection," *African and Asian Studies*, Vol. 10 No. 2-3.
- Lumumba-Kasongo, Tukumbi, 2010 "Africa and Its Traditional Partners," In Korwa G Adar, Monica K. Juma, Katabaro N Miti (eds), *The State of Africa 2010/11: Parameters and Legacies of Governance and Issue Areas*, Pretoria, South Africa: Africa Institute of South Africa and London: African Book Collective.
- Lumumba-Kasongo, Tukumbi. 2005 *Who and What Govern in the World of the States: A Comparative Study of Constitutions, Citizenry, Power, and Ideology in Contemporary Politics*, Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America.
- MacKenzie, Leslie, 2011 *Nations of the World: Political, Economic, and Business Handbook*, New York, America: Grey House Publishing.
- NDTV Correspondent, 2012 "BRICS Delhi 2012: Your 10 Facts Cheatsheet," Updated: March 29: 12:28 IST. Noury, Valerie, 2011 "What BRICS members Means to Africa?," *African Business*, June.
- Silva, Luis Inacio Lula da, *The BRICs Come of Global Age*, Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Schrire, Robert A. 2005 "Fragmentation or Nation-Building? South Africa," In Peter Burnell and Vicky Randall, *Politics in the Developing World*, New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wallerstein, Immanuel. 1984 *The World Politics of the World Economy: The States, The Movements and The Civilizations*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Wendt, Alexander. 1992. "Anarchy is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization*, 46(2): 391-425.
- World Bank, 2011 *Global Development Horizons: Multipolarity the New Global Economy*. Washington, D.C.: World Bank.
- www.itamaraty.gov.br/temas-mais-infomacoes/saiba-mais-bric/documentos-emitidos-pelos-chefes-de-estado-e-de/sanya-declaration-iiibrics-summit/view quoted by Tom Dwyer, "Relations between the BRICS: A Reflection from a Brazilian Sociological Viewpoint," *Fudan Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences*, Vol., No. 4, 2011.

