The New Turkish - African Economic Relations and the Old obstructive Discourse: Afro - Pessimism

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I. Introduction

Africa has recently been firmly placed on Turkey's international agenda in a way that was perhaps unthinkable a couple of years ago. Television documentaries, newspaper articles, photo exhibitions, music concerts and above all, current government's unprecedented support have all helped invigorating this recent interest on African 'affairs'. Africa have become one of the main tourist destinations for many Turks. Despite a long history of Turkey's involvement in the continent, particularly in North Africa this recent upsurge of interest is a new one with a variety of underlying dynamics worthy of investigation.

Two particular developments can be put forward to claim central prominence for this recent rise in interest on Africa.

The first is external. The debates across the globe following the launch of Commission for Africa (CFA) report set up last year by the British Prime Minister Tony Blair, compromising 18 commissioners, did not escape the attention of the Turkish intelligentsia. The CFA report was published in the month before G8 Summit in Gleneagles, Scotland, in July 2005, with the hope that G8 leaders might endorse some of the report's recommendations. The second is internal and relates to the announcement made in the beginning of 2005 by the Turkish Premier Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, that 'this year is going to be the Africa Year'. Soon after, following his words Prime Minister Erdoğan carried out official visits to Ethiopia and South Africa.

There also exist some fundamental reasons for the recent surge of interest on Africa, in Turkey. The apparent political and geo-strategic reason comes in the from of 'Greater Middle East and North Africa Project' proposed by the US administration under President George W. Bush. The ambitious aim put forward by that project, calls for the introduction of democracy that would

promote a more publicly responsible and transparent government in the region. The other fundamental reason is the rise of South-South trade and increased demand for African primary sector goods both by Turkey and other fast growing economies of Asia which will be explained in detail later on in this study.

This paper focuses on Turkey's recent interaction with sub-Saharan Africa. It draws on the seminal study by Professor John Sender (1999) and warns about the limits of Afro-pessimism, the perspective that presupposes African experience as a tragedy. In the Western milieu, journalists, politicians and academics across the spectrum appear to agree on a pessimistic prognosis of Africa. In the words of a South African academic John Sender (1999) "they commonly use a language that evokes disappointment, moralistic outrage, repugnance and a barely concealed, if not overt, contempt for African 'barbarism'. The predominant and stomach churning metaphors are medical/biological: blood, rot, scars, mutilation, plagues, deterioration, starvation, and pathological crises are said to be endemic." The pessimist interpretation of Africa's experience is prevalent in the West. Most Western governments, Bretton-Woods Institutions (BWIs) and International Financial Institutions (IFSs) adopt such understanding. Unfortunately, Afro-pessimism is also prevalent in Africa

Undoubtedly Africa has its own problems and turning a blind eye on them helps no one. Corruption, civil wars, mismanagement, disease and crooked leaders exists in some countries across the continent. History of the continent tells us that, Africa and Africans are not the sole causes of these problems. In fact the problem lies somewhere else as is the case with debt. For the problem of debt to become this severe requires not only crooked leaders but also lending at enormous magnitude for some vile reasons.

This paper argues that influence of Afro-pessimism in Turkey can be damaging to the fledgling relations with Africa. Here, following Professor Sender's approach, I argue that Afro-pessimist view is an inadequate starting point to develop a serious economic relationship. This warning is timely and necessary. Although Turkish literature can be viewed mainly as realistic and objective as highlighted later on in this paper there also exist the use of some malevolent vocalizations with reference to Africa.

It would be erroneous for Turkey to begin understanding African development, performance and economic potential through the prism of Afro-pessimism. Sender (1999, p. 90) warns us that "the simplicity of this approach fails to appreciate the complexity of processes of social and economic change by focusing too exclusively on only unappealing dynamics of capitalist develop-

ment while other important features of the recent economic history of Africa that have been neglected by the protagonists of nausea, marginalization and disdain". For Sender, any critical view of such rushed judgments will serve us to understand Africa's real economic potential.

This paper is organised as follows; the next section establishes the dimensions of Turkey's trade relations with sub-Saharan Africa. Section 3 then begins to highlight the underpinnings of the Afro-pessimist view and its dangerous reverberations on the Turkish milieu. That section suggested avoidance of Afro-pessimism not only because it is offensive but also because it is scientifically flawed, particularly when analysed through the prism of a historical perspective grounded on the solid foundation of political economy framework. Then the following section 4 reports on the historical findings particularly those relating to human progress, agricultural development and economic growth. In this section it is shown that African development since independence during 1950s and 1960s has been very rapid. Despite damaging impacts of the colonial period and despite being a late starter, when compared to the other regions, development of forces of production in Africa have been impressive. This line of reasoning sheds a different light to the African experience, as a whole. Hence, it helps interrogating the policy prescriptions by international organizations prepared on the basis of Afro-pessimist view. The last section draws some lessons and concludes.

II. Africa - Turkey trade relations

Large number of publicly available evidence indicate a recent surge in economic interaction between Turkey and Africa (Çakıroğlu 2005, Kırbaşlı 2005, Kara 2005). This recent economic interaction demonstrates itself mainly in the volumes of trade. Investigating trade relations help establishing the degree and intensity of any economic collaboration between countries and regions. In this respect, one needs to analyze the differences in influence of the recent and ongoing changes on both product composition and direction of trade in Turkey and in Africa[1].

In this section trade statistics are studied to establish the level of economic interaction between Turkey and Africa.

The rise in economic interaction largely comes from current economic cycle in the world trade. During recent years, importance of South - South trade has increased considerably due to output growth in some large developing economies, particularly China and India. The rise of South - South trade has allowed Africa to recoup some of its market shares in primary products. UNCTAD (2005) report insinuates that the rise in South - South exports of primary

commodities is likely to evolve into the most resilient feature of what has come to be called the "new geography of trade".

A quick scanning of Turkey's foreign trade data reveals an increasing trend in the share of overall exports and imports from sub-Saharan Africa reflecting the recent trend of improvement in the South – South trade as reported by the UNCTAD 2005 Trade Report.

During 2000 - 2004 period Turkey's total exports increased by 44% from $27,775 bn to $63,075 bn (estimate). Turkey's overall exports to Africa (North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa) increased by 46% reflecting a faster growth than overall export growth. Exports to the African continent increased from $1,372 bn to nearly $3 bn in four years. In terms of export composition Turkish exports mainly consisted of manufactured goods and processed food.

Table 1. Exports by group of countries ($ Million)

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004*
TOTAL	27,775	31,334	36,059	47,253	63,075
North Africa	1,087	1,150	1,267	1,577	2,203
Sub-Saharan Africa	285	371	430	554	765
EU	15,086	16,854	19,468	25,899	34,417
North America	3,309	3,297	3,596	3,973	5,176
Near and Middle East	2,573	3,261	3,440	5,465	7,910
Other Asian	1,298	1,331	1,790	2,348	2,543

*Estimate

Source: *State Statistics Institute (DİE), 2004, p. 284.*

The above table 1 indicates that sub-Saharan Africa's importance as destination for the Turkish products is rising faster than the North African markets. Although exports to the continent makes approximately 5% of total Turkish exports, the growth rate of trade volumes, the recently signed bilateral trade agreements and favorable global trends are set to improve importance of African markets for Turkey's exports.

Turkey's imports from the African continent is larger than her exports. In 2000, Turkey imported $2,714 bn. worth of goods and services from the African continent that made 5% of total Turkish imports. In 2004, as Turkish imports grew by 55% to $97,362 bn from its 2000 level of $54,503 bn, imports from the African continent remained at 5% reflected a figure of $4,782 bn reflecting a dramatic rise in the amounts involved.

Table 2. Imports by country groups ($ Million)

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004*
TOTAL	54,503	41,399	51,554	69,340	97,362
North Africa	2,257	2,115	2,138	2,519	3,231
Sub-Saharan Africa	457	704	558	820	1,551
EU	27,388	18,949	24,519	33,495	45,434
North America	4,167	3,390	3,421	3,741	5,067
Near and Middle East	3,373	3,016	3,186	4,455	5,579
Other Asian	6,933	4,884	6,530	9,644	15,487

* Estimate

Source: *State Statistical Institute (DİE), 2004, p. 285.*

Table 2 above shows that Turkey's imports from the African continent during 2000 – 2004 period increased by 56% reflecting a faster growth rate than overall imports. In terms of composition of imports, Turkey mainly bought raw materials and primary products from Africa. This trend is also in line with the rise of demand for African products by developing countries with manufacturing industries. As such mutual welfare and income affects of terms of trade with Africa can be expected to be more beneficial when compared to the trade affects of developed parts of the world.

When we turn to trade figures from Africa as a whole, it is possible to detect expansion in export volumes during 1990s, at a pace not seen since the late 1960s. According to UNCTAD (2005) report, terms of trade for some of the African countries has improved especially due to the higher prices of oil, and mineral and mining products. In some countries in Africa, the positive effect of price movements on the purchasing power of exports was reinforced by an increase in export volumes. Export diversification in Africa was slow and the purchasing power of Africa's exports recovered to its level of 1980, in 1996. Since 2000, Africa's terms of trade have risen more than those of the other regions as a result of higher demand from the fast growing Asian developing countries for certain primary commodities. Between 1999 and 2004, changes in the international prices of these commodities have resulted in an improvement of about 30% in Africa's terms of trade, compared to some 8% for Latin America, and a decline of 11% for East and South Asia[2].

Despite Africa's positive stance, UNCTAD (2005, p. 94) report states that "the region remains more vulnerable than any other region to a deceleration of global demand,… the recent positive evolution in Africa's terms of trade

might well be just another temporary boom rather than the beginning of a sustained recovery". Since it can not be clearly predicted which region is more likely to be hit by any economic downturn Afro-pessimism glimmers through these sentences.

The distribution and use of income gains from terms of trade changes is the most important aspect of the rise in terms of trade. The terms of trade improvements since 2002, had little effect on the domestic incomes of most of the developing countries with Côte d'Ivoire (10.3%), and Ghana (5.0%) but from sub-Saharan Africa being the exception. The African exporters of minerals and mining products, South Africa and Zambia, both also had large relative gains in domestic income.

The rise of incomes as a result of improved terms of trade led to an increase in aggregate demand which made Africa an important destination for Turkish exports. This situation can be captured in the words of Mr. Kürşat Tüzmen, Minister of Trade and Industry that "Turkey aims to increase exports to Africa to $10 bn, by 2008 from its $3 bn level in 2004" (Sabah, 2005).

From Turkey's point of view, increased momentum of trade and economic collaboration with Africa requires a balanced and objective evaluation of the continent that it deserves. In the next section this is done by questioning Afro-pessimism as a method of understanding Africa.

III. Afro-Pessimism: "Not Even In Uganda!"

The Turkish literature on Africa is generally compassionate without being patronizing. It was journalistic writings of Dr. Hıfzı Topuz during 1960s and 1970s, a UNESCO official and a vanguard African specialist of Turkish origin, and his subsequent books on the continent were influential for the benevolent feelings for Africa. However, for most Turks, sympathetic views are based on the disturbing evidence derived from Africa's experience with Western colonialism (Kıvanç, 1979). In the sense that, the ugly face of colonialism in Africa is the embodiment of what would have been in Turkey had they not defeat the colonialist assault through a national liberation war led by the founder of modern Turkey Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and his associates.

The strength of anti-colonialist sentiments in Turkey is well documented and studied. In many ways, Turks were able to relate their own experience of anti-colonial nationalist war of independence with the African liberation movements of the 1960s. In this regard, Dr. Hıfzı Topuz's work on *Lumumba*, an African hero and the founder of modern Congo murdered by the colonial Belgium, stands out as an important contribution in raising consciousness, in Turkey.

More recently a highly respected intellectual magazine called *Birikim* dedicated one of its issues specifically to the African affairs. The title of this special issue reads "*Africa: Our Twin, Our Mirror*" (*Afrika: Aynımız, Aynamız*). "Our" here refers to the people in Turkey. There also exists a large amount of anti-colonial literature in Turkey from both sides of the political spectrum, left and right. These studies try to interpret African experience with a more objective eye employing pre-dominantly a anti-colonial tone.

On the other hand, in Turkey there also exist another type of discourse on Africa. This discourse equipped with irredeemable ignorance, sees Africa as a dark, unknown continent, ripped by wars and corruption. Further, this discourse portrays Africa, as "poor, unimportant, criminal, ignorant, backward, diseased, hopeless, ridiculous etc." One remarkable feature of this discourse is the tendency to see the entire continent of Africa as one homogenous big country. This view assumes that economic, political and historical experience of 53 countries on the continent can be seen as an identical one, despite apparent differences between each country from North to South, East to West, from Sahel to Savannah on the continent.

Unfortunately, such views, ignorant of the realities of Africa, can be found in the writings of many journalists, in the mass media, amongst academic circles and in the broader community. Some view Africa as tribal and backward. A yardstick for the measure of malevolence[3]. This degrading discourse is a tactless one fed with insensitivity and outright ignorance. For instance, a popular dictum "*Uganda'da Bile Olmaz*!", (*Not Even In Uganda*!) can appear in the writings of some respectable columnists when they wish to describe their outrage with an appalling and dreadful event that took place in Turkey. Similar views about Africa can be found across the board, sometimes in the popular press, sometimes in the popular culture and sometimes in the opinions of learned people. In Turkey, this type of views on Africa has been invigorated and influenced by more sophisticated Afro-pessimistic literature produced in the Western world.

If Turkey is to develop mutually beneficial relations as equal partners with the countries in Africa it should be beware of the dangers stemming from the use of Afro-pessimist approach. This type of approach is venomous and could easily render relations fragile. Afro-pessimism dis-respects differences and it is open to manipulation. Afro-pessimist view help creating an environment where Turkey's newly developing relations with Africa can be undermined easily in the hands of insensitive politicians, businessmen and pseudo - intellectuals. In fact, Afro-pessimism can turn into an effective weapon in the hands of competing powers.

Widespread view on Africa in the West, is a cynical and mostly inaccurate one. For instance The Economist (May 13 - 19, 2000) published a special issue on Africa titled "Hopeless Continent". In this issue Africa's leaders and donors are characterized as morons. This may well be true for isolated cases but characterizing the entire continent as such and to blame it all on "African society" can not be accurate at all. This approach probably comes from a mindset of some insensitive and tactless individual.

According to such individuals Africa is malnourished, poor, dusty and governed by crook dictators. For instance, referring to a failed coup attempt by a group of Western mercenaries, 'The Guardian', respectable British daily, recently reported that "the men on board the Boeing 727-100 had allegedly been on their way to mount a coup in Equatorial Guinea, a small, malarial country in west Africa ruled by a tyrant but newly and filthily rich in offshore oil".

The men on board are inevitably (!) led by a James Bond 007 figure, "the Old Etonian and former SAS officer" (hence a well established gentleman!) Mr. Simon Mann who was arrested at Harare Airport, in Zimbabwe, UK's arch enemy in Africa, alongside a plane load of mercenaries who landed there to pick up consignment of AK47 rifles, mortar bombs, and 75,000 rounds of ammunition." Having realized the severity of his situation Mr. Mann began writing letters from his cell in maximum security *Chikuribu* prison firstly implicating Mark Thatcher (Scratcher in Mann's notes), an arms dealer and former Prime Minister Iron lady Margaret Thatcher's son. Mr. Mann then linked "what had at first seemed to be little more than a doomed Boy's Own adventure in a forgotten corner of west Africa to a coterie of rightwing businessmen with links to the highest echelons of the British establishment"[4].

So much for "white man's burden!".

It is not only that such Afro-pessimist views are offensive and damaging but they also hinder understanding the true potential and economic performance of Africa. Turkey needs to develop a discourse that emerges through its own specific interaction with Africa. Turkey should also avoid established Afro-pessimism developed in the West and evaluate African experience by drawing on its own experience with the world which is mainly manifesting itself in the process of full membership talks with the European Union.

The next section looks at African economic performance by concentrating on primarily human progress. It compares human development with the HICs (High Income Countries) of the OECD and Turkey. African agriculture

and urbanization are also compared with the experiences of other developing countries.

IV. African Progress In Comparative Perspective

Most of Africa is late starter in economic development. In many ways, Africans are still tackling with the devastating affects of the colonial era. Since the 1950s, when Africans began to take their fate into their own hands after defeating colonialists, there appears some strong evidence on human progress and improvement in their welfare[5].

A staunch critique of Afro-pessimism Professor John Sender emphasizes that, (Sender 1999, p. 100 – 101);

Thinking about development in Africa requires holding at least two sets of ideas in one's head at the same time. It is not sufficient to stress the ubiquity of failure, malnutrition, disease, predatory states and war, or to become overwhelmed by revulsion in the face of misery still experienced by so many Africans. In addition, it must also be recognised that some important aspects of the lives of millions of ordinary people have been transformed over the last five decades. It is on the basis of a clear perception of the complexity and unevenness of all these processes, as well as a critical analysis of the consequences of economic policies in the past, that politically realistic development strategies can be formulated.

John Sender's criticisms provides a valid and important insight to the intellectual failures of the policy makers. Their ability to hold "two different ideas spontaneously together in their head" is hindered mainly by the Afro-pessimist interpretations of the African experience. In fact, Africa's story is more complex than the one suggested by the commonly used macro-economic indicators and the one interpreted simplistically by Afro-pessimism.

Political economy of development approach attempts to link human welfare improvements to the causal economic processes underlying such occurrence. This suggests that improvements in human welfare ought to be captured by a wealth of evidence emerging from changing class relations that are crystallized around the increases in the numbers of wage earners. This kind of development signifies transformation of a society from a rural – agricultural one to an industrial – urban one. Accompanying process is the improvement of the use of skilled workers, technology and other forces of production. This type of transformation requires more dynamic relations of production. The view that present capitalist development as the progressist dynamic in the history of humanity is very much underway in Africa and this process is led increasingly by indigenous African capitalist classes. This process anticipates a

relative decline of the role of agriculture in the economy and the rise of industry and urbanization.

Using the set of data produced in Sender (1999) this section focuses on human development indicators. During 1950s life expectancy at birth was less than 40 years. In 1995, life expectancy was well over 10 years than it had been in the 1960s. Before the 1950s under – five mortality rates suggests that half of the babies died not long after birth in Kenya and Zimbabwe. In Burkina Faso in 1948 under – five mortality rate was over 400 babies per thousand but declined by about half on average. In 1935, in Ghana under – five mortality rate was three times greater than the present rate. HIV- AIDS prevalence rate accounts for a 10% or more reduction on average life expectancy in 9 sub-Saharan countries. In other words if it was not for the HIV – AIDS African on average would have lived 5 years longer[6].

Table 3 below, compares sub-Saharan social data with Turkey and OECD countries. A comparison Turkey's life expectancy at birth and infant mortality figures indicates a much improved situation from the African ones.

Table 3: Comparative Social Data

	2000	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH					
OECD	-	-	78.39	78.53	
SSA	-	-	45.83	45.62	
Turkey	68.04	68.24	68.70	68.64	
MORTALITY RATE UNDER 5 (PER 1000)					
OECD		-	-	6.61	-
SSA		-	-	-	171.15
Turkey		45.00	-	-	39.00

Source: World Development Indicators (2005)

John Sender (1999) focuses on female literacy at primary, secondary and tertiary levels, as an indicator to human progress[7]. In terms of literacy rates, 90% of population in sub-Saharan Africa were illiterate fifty years ago. Women were unlikely to attend schools. By 1995, almost half of all adult females in sub-Saharan Africa were estimated to be literate. This reflects an achievement that many other developing countries in South Asia the Middle East and North Africa could not match[8]. In Chile 80% of adult females were literate at that date, in Mexico and the Philippines more than 50%, in Thailand more than

third and in Singapore more than 5th. In the mid-19th century only about a third of adult females were literate in some English and Welsh countries. In late 1930s in Taiwan the primary enrollment rate was already close to 80% or in Korea, 45%. In 1949 – 50 male and female gross primary enrollment rates were 6% in French West Africa, in Tanzania 10% and 16% in Nigeria. In sub-Saharan Africa between 1980 – 1993 primary school enrolment rate has increased by ten million. Larger African countries like Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania have seen a five fold increase in the annual number of girls enrolled in primary schools since 1970.

Table 4: Comparative Social Data

	2000	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (PRIMARY% NET)				
OECD	96,27	95,55	95,42	-
SSA	-	-	63,67	-
Turkey	-	87,94	86,37	-
ELECTRIC POWER CONSUMPTION				
OECD	8.683,05	8.663,69	8.769,28	-
SSA	431,31	449,89	457,15	-
Turkey	1422,03	1390,87	1458,25	-
FIXED LINE AND MOBILE PHONE SUBSCRIBERS (PER 1000)				
OECD	1.116,29	1.200,51	1.240,30	1.254,66
SSA	32,25	40,37	52,26	61,93
Turkey	528,83	580,57	628,63	661,9
IMPROVED WATER SOURCES % OF POPULATION WITH ACCESS				
OECD	-	-	99,42	-
SSA	-	-	58,16	-
Turkey	-	-	93	-
INTERNET USERS PER 1000 PEOPLE				
OECD	323,07	362,57	407,82	433,31
SSA	8,54	12,03	16,96	19,65
Turkey	30,63	51,07	61,76	84,85

Source: *World Development Indicators (2005)*

According to the data used in Sender (1999), in the early 1950s most African countries had fewer than 500 girls enrolled at the secondary schools. In Mozambique there was one secondary school in 1930, in the capital city and the records show that only 1 girl was enrolled. By 1950 the number has increased to 321 girls and in the beginning of 1990s more than 66,000 girls were enrolled. Female enrollment rates remained low in the sub-Saharan Africa until 1960s, varying between 0.1% - 4% but increased substantially in every country. In fact according to UNESCO figures the proportion of all secondary pupils who are female sub-Saharan Africa is now larger with a figure of 44% than South Asia or China, 37% and 43% respectively. The accelerated provision of primary and secondary schooling after 1960s has been followed in the period since 1980 by a very rapid overall growth rates of female enrollment in tertiary education. The female enrollment rates in sub-Saharan Africa is the fastest at 12.4% per annum than in any other region in the world.

Africans have also benefited from improved physical infrastructure. It is possible to trace these improvements from the comparative social data presented in the Table 4 above that access to drinking water in rural areas has improved. Now more than half of African population have access to sanitation and clean water whereas in 1970 the proportion was below 10%. The length of paved roads increased from 3.8 km per 1000 km^2 to 8.9 km per 1000 km^2 in 1990. Electricity production increased by 56% between 1980 and 1994. Expansion in transport and power networks facilitated African's access to other important means of communications, cultural exchange, radios, television and more recently internet. The daily circulation of the most important newspaper in Nigeria in 1914, Lagos Weekly Record had a total circulation of 700. In the early 1990s total circulation of newspapers was close to 2 million.

Table 5: Comparative Growth and Population

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
GDP (Current US$)					
OECD (tr.)	24.5	24.18	25.26	28.37	31.4
SSA (bn.)	331.00	329.00	341.00	445.00	544.00
Turkey (bn.)	199.00	145.00	184.00	240.00	302.00
GDP (Growth Annual %)					
OECD	3.60	1.07	1.47	2.20	3.31
SSA	3.42	3.33	3.40	4.27	4.44
Turkey	7.36	-7.49	7.94	5.79	8.93
POPULATION (Total in mil.)					
OECD	899	905	910	915	919
SSA	658	674	689	705	719
Turkey	67	69	70	71	72
POPULATION (Growth %)					
OECD	0.63	0.62	0.61	0.49	0.48
SSA	2.31	2.38	2.28	2.25	2.03
Turkey	1.69	1.59	1.59	1.55	1.43

Source: World Development Indicators (2005)

In sub-Saharan Africa one of the poorly measured components of the GDP is agriculture. Agriculture is very important in Africa and currently estimated to account for 30% to 55 % of the GDP. Almost 70% Africans live on agriculture and more than 50% of employed are women. Agriculture is the most important source of foreign exchange earnings, contributing over 50% total exports in recent years in 20 SSA. Pessimistic ideas on the performance of African agriculture exists and it does not generally receive good remarks.

However, Sender (1999) criticize such evaluation on the basis of the weaknesses of available data and presents a less pessimistic analysis of the most widely used agricultural statistics. He shows that changes in agriculture is not inconsistent with other evidence of progress and examines existing evidence through a historical perspective.

Despite the claims about 'declining agricultural output' African agricultural growth has been as rapid as could reasonable be expected. According to Sender (1999), the compound growth rate of agricultural production in sub-Saharan Africa as a whole over the 31 year period between 1965 and 1995 was 2.34%. In eight countries (containing almost half of the total population of sub-Saharan Africa) compound growth rate over this period was even faster above 2.6% per annum. In Nigeria it was 3% per annum and in Cote D'Ivoire

over 4% per annum. In the region as a whole the growth in agricultural output accelerated after 1984, increasing to 3.1% per year between 1984 and 1996. Growth rates of advanced capitalist countries including Japan during early stages of their industrialization were generally below 1.5% per annum for long periods.

Table 6: Industry and Agriculture

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
INDUSTRY VALUE ADDED (% GDP)					
OECD	28.04	26.86	30.11	31.00	28.31
SSA	29.79	30.31	23.68	21.89	27.06
Turkey	25.29	26.09	-	-	-
AGRICULTURE VALUE ADDED (% GDP)					
OECD	1.91	1.86	18.45	16.51	13.38
SSA	18.31	18.44	12.99	13.38	1.99
Turkey	15.36	12.81	-	-	-

Source: World Development Indicators (2005)

On a disaggregated level the agricultural output of individual crops grew much more faster. For instance maize production increased by 3.4% per annum over the period of 31 years, poultry-meat production 4.6%, tea 5.6%, fruit and vegetable exports over 5% and paper and paperboard production 9%. What is remarkable is that these growth rates were achieved in the context of rapid urbanization. West African urbanization has been much faster that the urbanization in Western Europe during industrial revolution. Although urbanization was not so rapid in other parts of Africa, the agricultural workforce has achieved significant productivity gains. This is most impressive particularly when economically active population in agriculture was growing more slowly than the growth in output, 2.2% vs. 2.8%.

The rise in labor productivity in the African agriculture was due to technological change and changes in some of the techniques used. The area under irrigation increased by over two million hectares about 75% during 1965-1993. Consumption of fertilizers and the use of tractors also increased significantly. As a result of rising productivity and technical change per hectare yields of a range of crops, including maize, rice, wheat, potatoes, cassava and te-

a has increased. The rate in growth of per hectare yield during 19th century Europe was much slower.

Some other factors also contributed to the change in the level of the productive forces in agriculture. Relevant to the adoption of new techniques the use of skilled workers also increased. The number of graduate scientists working in the national agricultural research systems in sub-Saharan Africa increased by 600% over the last 3 decades. The number of full time researchers at universities has increased at an annual rate of 10% and in the last three decades many of these achieved post-graduate qualifications. Tanzania at the time of her independence had 15 graduates and Mozambique had 4. Democratic Republic of Congo had only one High School in 1960.

It is important to note that grain output per hectare was much higher and has increased at a much faster rate in many other developing regions. But their initial conditions were much different than sub-Saharan Africa. For instance, 1/3 of Thailand's arable land is irrigated, reflecting centuries of prior investment in improved land infrastructure.

Overall, compared with other regions in a historical perspective African human progress and economic growth has been impressive and remarkable. Evidence refutes the view named here as Afro-pessimism.

V. Conclusion

I have maintained that most arguments raised on the economic potential of Africa tend to focus on a pessimistic view of aid-dependent continent with criminalized and paternalistic states, corrupt bureaucrats, failed markets and societies. I have presented here, by referring to a variety of historical and statistical data, that African economic potential is heterogeneous, complex and requires objective and secular study carried out with a mind that is open to all lines of inquiry.

So in response to the Economist's arrogant title "Africa: A Hopeless Continent" and other similar Afro-pessimist evaluations of the continent, I would dare to put forward that African experience is like any other in the world with many people with a hope of their own, history and memory. Africans throughout thousands of years millimeter by millimeter devised ways and methods to secure an existence that also fed and helped the growth of Western industrial giants while they 'scrambled for Africa'. Many would agree with me that solutions to the problems of the continent, the hope and inspiration lie within the continent itself as is the case with fighting against malaria, HIV – AIDS and other problems.

The trade patterns and the terms of trade effects reported above indicates that it is beneficial for Turkey to develop closer partnership with Africa. Therefore, it is imperative at this point to draw attention to the perilous and toxic discourse of Afro-pessimism which might damage mutually beneficial affiliations.

Turkey entering into a new era of improved relations with the African continent needs to properly explain her own history of anti-colonialism and understand African experience properly but not through the arrogant prism of Afro-pessimism but through objective and scientific studies. This paper can be consider successful if it provides one step towards that direction.

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Notes

[1] The main difference of influence comes from different labour market conditions Sender John, Cramer Chris, Oya Carlos (2005). In Turkey recent productivity gains due to flexible labour markets and lower wages realized after the customs union agreement with the EU. Price formation for low-skilled manufactures in Turkey very much resembles to that of primary commodities. In Africa relative decline in export prices for primary products has been associated with lower volume growth (and vice versa), due to the much lower price elasticity of demand. On the export side, the impact differs according to the shares of manufactures and primary commodities, and on the import side, it is especially the dependence on fuels and industrial raw materials that determines the outcome for individual countries. The same factors that improved the terms of trade of some groups of countries, especially the higher prices of oil and minerals and mining products, led to a worsening of the terms of trade in others.

[2] Since 2002, some of the African countries with a high share of oil, and minerals and mining products in their total exports have improved their terms of trade. Among the countries with a dominant share of exports of minerals and mining products, exporters of uranium (Niger) and copper (Zambia) saw the strongest improvements in their terms of trade. Mozambique an exporter of bauxite and aluminium saw a slight deterioration in its terms of trade between 2000 and 2004. Cotton exporters, Benin and Burkina Faso, the terms of trade were subject to wide fluctuations around a declining trend during the period 2000–2004. In Malawi, terms of trade declined dramatically since 2000, due to weakness in the prices of tobacco and sugar. Coffee-exporting Burundi witnessed a slight improvement in the terms of trade in 2003 and 2004 and in Cote d'Ivoire, the world's leading cocoa exporter, the terms of trade rose by more than 20% between 2000 and 2004. Briefly, since 2000, Africa's terms of trade have risen more than those of the other regions as a result of higher demand for certain primary commodities.

[3] Mr. Bekir Çoşkun known as the most respectable and allegedly sensitive columnist of Hürriyet, notorious with his frequent campaigns for animal welfare wrote the following words on 27 December 2005, "while the 'legality' works much better even in the African tribes, how could you call a country like this (Turkey – S.A.) a 'state of law?'. (Afrika kabilelerinde dahi **'hukuk'** daha iyi işlerken, böyle bir ülkeye nasıl **'hukuk devleti'** dersiniz?).

[4] The whole reporting of the plot seems like coming out of a 1968 movie called "The Dark of the Sun" with Rod Taylor in it, leading a group missionary soldiers on a mission to help rescuing (!) a Belgian company's diamonds from falling into the hands of an African national liberation movement. Or the plot is almost similar to the story-

line of a famous 1978 film the "Wild Geese." In the "Wild Geese" a British multinational firms plots to overthrow a vicious dictator in central Africa and hires a band of mercenaries. These gentlemen are sent to save the imprisoned virtuous opposition leader who is also critically ill and due for execution. The mercenaries organise an excellent rescue but the firm cuts a deal with the vicious dictator and leave mercenaries in difficulty. It is difficult to predict to what extent these large number of mercenary films influenced Mr. Mann and his colleagues but the outcome of their attempt certainly has been a diplomatic embarrassment and an international scandal for Britain's Mr. Tony Blair and Spain's Mr. Mario Aznar.

[5] A note of caution is necessary. Much of the statistical data and its quality is problematic. Nevertheless it is possible to establish some clear trends.

[6] When compared to England and Wales at the turn of the century and Russian Federation since 1989, sub-Saharan African performance has been superior. In England and Wales female life expectancy in the early 20th century was five years shorter than this, 49 in 1901. In the Russian Federation life expectancy at birth fell between 1989 – 1995 by 6 years while infant mortality increased significantly.

[7] Sender follows the intuition that a strong correlation exists between the expansion of female secondary school provision with reduction in infant mortality and fertility.

[8] In South Asia 36%, (24% in Pakistan, 26% in Bangladesh, 15% in Afghanistan, 14% in Nepal) of women were illiterate by 1995. When initial literacy levels of other developing countries are taken into account sub-Saharan Africa's performance in removing illiteracy is also impressive. For instance, female literacy had already reached much higher levels by the early 1950s in the most rapidly industrializing economies.