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David J. Gould: BUREAUCRATIC CORRUPTION AND UNDERDEVELOPMENT IN THE THIRD WORLD. THE CASE OF ZAIRE.

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About the author

David J. Gould died in the tragical crash of the Pan Am Flight 103 in Lockerbie, on December 21, 1988. Professor Gould's name was closely associated with Belgium because of his relevant studies on Zaire. He was a personal friend of Professor J. Van Bilsen and well known at the faculty of Law at Ghent University as a visiting professor (in 1977, 1981 and 1982) for the post-graduate course 'Public Administration in Developing Countries'. Personal contacts with David Gould, in the context of the mentioned course and during my visit to the University of Pittsburgh (USA) in 1985, showed not only a warm personality but also an enthusiastic lecturer, an indefatigable organizer and an experienced Africanist.

David Gould was, beside his function as professor 'Public Administration' at Pittsburgh University, also director/founder of the International Management Development Institute of the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs. The institute is specialized in the training for public and private officials from Third World countries. Those training programs, in Pittsburgh, are conducted in French, Spanish, English and Arabic. Specially the Francophone programs for officials of the former French and Belgian territories in Africa are recognized as being the finest of their kind in the United States.

Gould was known as an international authority, and active publisher and visiting-professor, on public administration in developing countries. In 1973 after one year Venezuela, he started teaching at the National University of Zaire. His courses left not only a memorable souvenir to a lot of Zairian academics and officials but his five year stay enabled him to study the way

the Zairian public administration worked and the role corruption played in it. The research was a basis for remarkable theory about bureaucratic corruption linked to underdevelopment. The study resulted in several publications, in English and in French, in international periodicals, to co-editions and in 1980 to the book "Bureaucratic Corruption in the Third World : The Administration of Underdevelopment in Zaire".

David Gould joined through his scientific work the group of Crawford Young and Guy Gran, of critical American specialists on Zaire. Notwithstanding the progressive (or liberal in US terms) approach of this scientific work he was highly appreciated by US officials. His knowledge and analysis of the Zairian regime made him a valuable consultant not only for the World Bank but also for the US Foreign Service Institute. In 1979 he testified on a request for aid to Zaire for the subcommittee on Africa of the US House of Representative, when aid to Zaire was debated. As more recent publications and courses show, he didn't limit his theory of bureaucratic corruption to the Third World but compared and indicated a lot significant elements of systemic corruption in "developed" countries like the US. Already in 1980 he presented a paper in San Francisco entitled : "Zairianisation of the World : Bureaucratic Corruption in Comparative Perspective".

A terrorist group cut off this active life at 45. This tragedy coincides with a revival of the discussions about Zairian politics. David Gould's book of 1980 on bureaucratic corruption in Zaire is a part of his heritage that may help to explain the present situation of underdevelopment in the Belgian former colony.

About the book

D. Gould rejects the moralist approach of corruption as well as the revisionist approach, the approach that pretends that corruption could promote development. He uses an approach based on historical materialism because it allows us "to see both the forest and the trees, to understand the structure of the system while remaining sensitive to its actual functioning, to grasp both its internal dynamics and the play on it of exogenous forces" (p. 8).

The starting point for D. Gould's thesis on corruption is based on the generally known centrum-periphery theory of underdevelopment. The economic center, the industrialised world, holds the periphery, in this case Zaire, in its power by the upbuilding and the consolidation of a relation of dependency and exploitation. This leads to a process of underdevelopment. An essential bridge in this process is the collaboration of the local bourgeoisie. To D. Gould bureaucratic corruption and underdevelopment are dialectically linked components of the mentioned process.

The theoretical and methodological aspects are treated in the first chapter. The following chapters (2,3 and 4) give the analyses of the three relevant conjunctures: the colonial period, the early independence period and the 1965-1979 period. Two important appendices set out the fundamental techniques to pursue corruption within the bureaucratic system. Those appendices, considered as essential components of the study, constitute a remarkable source of detailed first hand information on the numerous patterns of bureaucratic corruption in Zaire. The described patterns vary from the peeling stamps off letters; the military barricades; the payroll frauds to the selling of jobs; the phenomenal import and export fraud and the large judicial fraud. D. Gould finds in the colonial period, in the Belgian Congo, the birth of bureaucratic corruption. As main argument he states that the colonial administration used the customary chiefs as intermediaries, giving them in return recognition and protection. Without denying the fact that colonialism led to important patterns of bureaucratic corruption, the arguments the author gives, are not completely convincing. He sees bureaucratic corruption in the colonial period as a new phenomenon for the African inhabitants. But as the historian Vita Foutry rightly argued, the so-called precolonial equilibrium and coherence was not so universal (1). We also believe that bureaucratic corruption is linked not only to the colonial state, but to state-formation in general, thus also to pre-colonial African kingdoms etc.. Another disputable part about the colonial period is the classification of the population, at the eve of the country's independence, in six quasi-classes. A number of categories, as the missionaries, the local clergy and certain Africans from the administration or the army, can hardly be fit in this classification. Although this weaker aspects in the chapter about colonialism, it contains very interesting elements to understand the disorganisation and corruption after independence.

For the next period, 1960-1965, D. Gould shows that the independence brought no real change to the foreign-dominated economy, and no improvement in the status of the masses. The administration, and the army, "were transformed into privileged places and stages for struggles between political tendencies and interest groups" (p. 29). In this hyper-politicized climate, one of the major kinds of corruption became the purchase of political loyalties or clientelism. Another aspect of corruption was the transformation of small, disunited bureaucratic and business groups into true capitalists. The bureaucratic corruption was often carried out with the blessing and support of foreigners, individuals or companies. Before 1965 the new bureaucratic bourgeoisie was still weakened by its internal struggles over the control of the state apparatus.

In the following chapter, the author explains how after 1965 the bourgeois class is unified and consolidates its power. The consolidation "was carried out on three levels, economic, political-administrative, and ideological" (p. 31). D. Gould clearly

(1) Foutry, Vita. *Corruptie en onderontwikkeling in Zaire*. De Nieuwe Maand, XXV, 1:47-53.

points out on a well-documented way how, with the assistance of international loans and military support, the national bourgeoisie succeeds in assuring its control over the state and in "privatizing" the state apparatus. This enables "the international bourgeoisie, in turn, to exploit the country further and to benefit from the transfer of its surplus" (p. 31). The whole system can survive by "giving the proletariat the bare minimum to survive, allowing petty corruption to be engaged in by minor functionaries and other citizens so that they might abject starvation. This becomes apparent in examining the down-to-earth quality of the Zairian vocabulary regarding corruption, i.e. corruption is referred to in such phrase as 'beans for the children' and 'something to get to the end of the month with'" (p. 32.).

At the economic level, D. Gould shows that the Zairianizations, as an expression of the illusory nationalist doctrine, were measures to meet the patron class's necessity to guarantee the middle bourgeoisie's loyalty and the internal patron class-client relationships. The author gives here as example a very illustrative pattern of the clientelistic nature of the Zairianization measures and the retrocession to (European) owners in Lubumbashi (pp. 53- 56).

The main part of the book treats the political-administrative aspects and is without doubt an invaluable contribution not only to the study of bureaucratic corruption in Zaire but also to the ongoing endeavour to analyse and to understand the working of public administration in a lot of Third World countries. It is explained how loyalty to single-party MPR became the primary criterion for a bureaucratic career. At the other hand, a general impoverishment of the civil servants left them to their own, corrupt devices. The so-called decentralization measures turned out to more administrative centralization that led to a colonial type law-and-order emphasis. At the central level there was an important concentration of functions to the Presidency. Ministers were downgraded in title and responsibility to become "state commissioners" or "state clerks" and undergo frequently reshuffling or dismissal. President Mobutu accumulates not only the presidencies of the Party, the State and the Executive Council but also the function of chief lawmaker (with autonomous legislative powers), of chief magistrate (with power to appoint and dismiss the judges and to exercise ultimate appellate authority) and of commander-in-chief of the armed forces. To implement all those responsibilities Mobutu also acts as chief of the whole public administration with a central staff in addition to the regular line agencies and ministerial departments.

Administrative reforms only changed the formal structures and principles but "the rule of the game did not" (p. 93). Analyzing the placement of foreign "experts" in key positions, as E. Blumenthal, the author properly questions about "the extent to which a few expatriates on the top - for the most part without

any previous experience in Zaire - can influence a 400.000-person-strong state apparatus with ingrained systemic patterns of corruption" (p. 95).

Bureaucratic corruption, institutionalized as it is in Zaire, can not be characterized in terms of mismanagement. D. Gould proves that it became, with the help of the western world, the main instrument of the local bourgeoisie to control the state apparatus and to obtain the loyalty of the petty bourgeoisie. He insists on the fact that "the encouragement and tolerance of corruption even extend to the lower classes, although systemic corruption claims them as primary victims of underdevelopment" (pp. 121-122). The corrupt state bureaucracy incarnates nonproductivity and even counterproductivity.

Disorganization and corruption in Zaire have been the subject of many global and detailed studies but the phenomena were seldom so systematic analyzed and clarifying the twin processes of underdevelopment and bureaucratic corruption in Third World states.

This process seems to have a fruitful development: more recent publications and reports prove that the bureaucratic corruption and underdevelopment in Zaire became even worsen than anyone ventured to predict some years ago. The valuable work and heritage of David Gould show clearly that the reasons for the Zairian disaster to-day are not so complicated, but that consequent remedies can belong partly to Belgian government responsibility.

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