AFRICA BETWEEN NATIONALISM AND NATIONHOOD
A Political Survey

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Africa is caught between the birth of her modern nationalism and the quest for nationhood. Her nationalism is a reality that played a part in ending territorial colonialism but nationhood itself is an ambition rather than a reality. The agonies of Africa in the second half of the twentieth century have been ultimately derived from the pains of intermediacy between nationalism and nationhood.

We shall discuss in this article the rise of the new political consciousness in Africa, its potential, and its limitations. We shall also examine the fortunes of political parties in the continent across that historic divide between colonialism and formal independence. We shall grapple with the emergence of new social classes in Africa, and the impact of civil-military relations on this system of stratification.

THE EMERGENCE OF PAN-AFRICANISM

A basic dialectic to understand in Africa is that while the greatest friend of African nationalism is race-consciousness,

the greatest enemy of African nationhood is ethnic-conscious-ness. Modern African nationalism was born and prospered under the stimulation of racial solidarity and shared blackness. On the other hand, the struggle for viable modern nations within Africa is considerably hampered by acute ethnic cleavages, often separating Bantu from Nilotes, Ibo from Hausa, and the like. We shall examine this fundamental dialectic, since it is precisely this which has made the transition from African nationalism to African nationhood so painful and demanding.

The discovery of shared blackness under the pressure of colonial control resulted in part in the emergence of pan-Africanism. Here we must distinguish between sub-Saharan pan-Africanism, meaning the solidarity of black people within the African continent south of the Sahara, and trans-Saharan pan-Africanism, encompassing not only the Africans south of the great continental desert, but also the Arabs in the northern section of the continent. There is also transatlantic pan-Africanism, which is the solidarity between the peoples of the African continent and the Black Diaspora in the Caribbean and American continents.

Historically one would have expected pan-Africanism to start from the smaller units of the subcontinent south of the Sahara, and then move outwards to encompass North Africa, and then ultimately reestablish contact with the Black Dias-pora. But it is arguable that, in the twentieth century at any rate, pan-Africanism started with the transatlantic version before it focused more narrowly on the African continent itself. And in the birth of transatlantic pan-Africanism the Black Diaspora was critical. It might even be argued that the movement started with alienated black nationalists in the Caribbean and North America, sometimes eager to start the process of a black return to the African continent, while at other times merely emphasizing the need for black liberation both in Africa and the Americas. We know that the founding fathers of transatlantic pan-Africanism include black Ameri-cans like W.E.B. DuBois and West Indians like George Padmore and Marcus Garvey.

Partly as a result of initiatives by black nationalists in the Diaspora, sub-Saharan pan-Africanism also began to gather momentum. Black Africans in West Africa began to feel a greater bond with each other, and to discover more fully the shared predicament of black Africans elsewhere within the continent. As the twentieth century unfolded, East Africans gradually learned that there were countries called Nigeria and the Gold Coast with black people in situations similar to their own. West Africans in turn discovered the existence of a Kenya, Uganda, or Nyasaland.

Transatlantic pan-Africanism developed as a movement of ideas and emotions, with little institutionalization apart from periodic conferences without a standing secretariat. Sub-Saharan pan-Africanism was even less institutionalized on the scale of the subcontinent, though it did influence the formation of smaller subregional economic and functional communities like the East African Community and OCAM.

Although race-consciousness was the original fountain of pan-Africanism, it was neither the transatlantic movement nor the sub-Saharan movement that found institutional fulfillment at first. It was in fact trans-Saharan pan-Africanism, in spite of the significant racial differences separating parts of North Africa from parts of Africa south of the Sahara. The beginnings of pan-African solidarity at the institutional level provided a foundation for joint action in some spheres between Arabs and black Africans. The Organization of African Unity was finally formed in 1963, encompassing states across both sides of the great continental desert, and providing a framework for periodic meetings of African Heads of States and Government.

The older transatlantic movement continued at the level of emotions and ideas of unity without an institutional framework. Yet another transatlantic pan-African congress was scheduled to take place in Dar es Salaam in June 1974—the Sixth Pan-African Congress, separated from the Fifth Pan-African Congress held in Manchester, England by nearly thirty years. The Fifth Pan-African Congress took place in 1945, and among the relatively unknown participants at that Congress

was a young man called Kwame Nkrumah and a more mature, but still relatively obscure man called Jomo Kenyatta.

Nearly thirty years later in the capital of independent Tanzania an additional Congress in that transatlantic movement was at last inaugurated. Transatlantic pan-Africanism has so far found greater articulation in the cultural domain than in the political. The festivals of black pan-African art, held in places ranging from Paris to Lagos, Dakar to Algiers, have provided greater demonstration of transatlantic fervor than some of the political congresses within the same movement.

As regards sub-Saharan pan-Africanism, its strongest supporters have been among the less radical and more conservative African nationalists in the modern period. It has been preeminently those with strong reservations about the Arabs who have championed platforms of solidarity limiting themselves to the black part of the continent. Voices, which over the decades have sometimes championed this brand of pan-Africanism, have included Chief Obafemi Awolowo of Nigeria in the 1950s and early 1960s, Dr. Hastings Banda of Malawi in a fluctuating manner, and President Felix Houphouet-Boigny of Ivory Coast in at least some of his moods.

The more radical black African leaders in the modern phase have preferred trans-Saharan pan-Africanism, insisting on ignoring the desert as a divide, preferring instead to use the continent as a whole as the unit of solidarity.

Trans-Saharan pan-Africanism was not only a matter of foreign policy but sometimes included significant domestic consequences. For a number of generations black nationalists both within the continent and in the Diaspora took pride in old civilizations of Africa—the ancient civilizations of Egypt and the historic civilization of Ethiopia. Cultural nationalism among otherwise humiliated African intellectuals found a moment of pride in contemplating the achievements of pharaonic Egypt and the uninterrupted history of Ethiopia as a sovereign African nation.

But for quite a while neither modern Egypt nor Ethiopia reciprocated this identification with black nationalists. The black nationalists moved forward to embrace the memories of Egyptian and Ethiopian achievements, but modern Egyptians maintained their political and cultural distance from the rest of Africa.

And then, in the second half of the twentieth century, two individuals began the process of restoring the balance of identification. One of these individuals was an Egyptian soldier, who reminded his countrymen that they were Africans as well as Arabs and Muslims. The other individual was an Ethiopian Emperor, who reminded his countrymen that they were part of an African reality as well as of an Ethiopian history. Gamal Abdel Nasser began the process of re-Africanizing Egypt while Haile Sellassie I inaugurated the re-Africanization of Ethiopia.

Yet for a while it was Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana who became the most eloquent voice of both trans-Saharan and transatlantic pan-Africanism. Nkrumah captured important longings and emotions prevalent at a given moment in history across much of the African continent and the Black Diaspora, and he managed to give these emotions and aspirations persuasive articulation.

Before long Accra became the capital of the principle of pan-Africanism, at least until May 1963 when Addis Ababa became the capital of the practice of pan-Africanism.

But now a further distinction has to be made between pan-Africanism as a movement of liberation and pan-Africanism as a movement of integration. Pan-Africanism as a liberating force had greater success than as an integrative quest. The liberation movement has concerned itself with putting pressure in favor of decolonization, and lobbying for the isolation of the white minority regimes of southern Africa. Joint action at the United Nations in pursuit of African independence was remarkably successful from the moment of Ghana's independence in 1957 until the moment of Ian Smith's Unilateral

Declaration of Independence (UDI) for Rhodesia in November 1965. The eight years separating Ghana's independence and Rhodesia's UDI were momentous for African decolonization, and African states, though sometimes divided bitterly on tactics and even strategies, were able nevertheless to maintain a viable spirit of solidarity in pursuit of decolonization. From 1965 onwards the frustrations of the remaining areas under white control began to mount as African states felt relatively helpless in determining the fates of Rhodesia, Namibia, South Africa, and the countries under Portuguese rule.

Nevertheless, even in this period of mounting frustrations, there was also an undercurrent of achievement for pan-Africanism. The solidarity of African states made it difficult for Britain to ease sanctions against Rhodesia, contributed to the emergence of Guinea-Bissau as a partially independent country, strengthened the activities of liberation movements in Rhodesia and the Portuguese territories, and increased the trend towards the diplomatic isolation of South Africa in world politics.

Pan-Africanism as a movement for greater political and economic integration, on the other hand, has had a much less impressive record. Even those countries that started with a substantial level of regional integration later experienced acute tensions, and the level of integration declined.

The East African Community, consisting of Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania, is one case in point. In June 1963 hopes were high that these three countries would soon evolve into a full federation under one government. But that mood of political optimism, even of euphoria, did not last long. Tensions began to be felt, and one after another the services and links among the three countries were either loosened or ended altogether. Movement of goods among them ceased to be free, movement of people among them became more strictly controlled, a shared currency came to an end, a shared system of internal revenue was dismantled, a joint university existing parallel to but not within the East African Community broke up into three separate universities, and moments of actual military confrontation were experienced.

French-speaking Africa also witnessed fluctuating fortunes in its quest for greater integration. Organizational and functional experiments had their ups and downs. Countries would join an economic community only to withdraw two years later; services would be made subject to regional control only to be dismantled into national units not long afterwards.

Nigeria in 1964 began to move with a greater determination toward creating a more viable West African Economic Community, independent of the linguistic barriers inherited from the colonial past. But the struggle to get West Africans to transcend the cultural and linguistic differences inherited from Britain and France was an undertaking too big to be accomplished very rapidly. Nigeria's efforts in this direction were in conflict with attempts within French-speaking Africa. Most of the French-speaking African states seemed for a while to be in favor of creating a community of their own, to which English-speaking states could later accede. Nigeria argued, on the other hand, that there was a fundamental difference between joining a community which had already been formed by others, and participating in defining what the community should be from the outset. Nigeria was pleading for joint participation in the very founding of such a community on a basis that disregarded the anglophone-francophone divide.

On balance the tensions continued within integrative movements of this kind all over the continent, both north and south of the Sahara. That spirit of solidarity which could be mobilized into relative effectiveness in the domain of African liberation often proved inadequate in the domain of African integration. All was not lost by any means, but the struggle for greater cohesiveness promised to be hard and long.

THE MILITARY FACTOR IN
AFRICAN LIBERATION

But problems of integration were even more fundamental at the national than the regional level. If, as we indicated, race consciousness had been a powerful aid to the whole movement

of Pan-Africanism, ethnic consciousness has militated against national integration within individual African countries.

Partly as a result of this problem, there has been an interplay between civilian politics and military rule in Africa's independent experience. Later we shall return more fully to this dialectic between soldiers and politicians, but we might begin first with an examination of the role of the military factor in African liberation before we examine it in relation to African integration.

A phenomenon which now needs to be examined in the wake of the military coup in Portugal and its aftermath is, quite simply, the impact of a military coup in the European metropolitan country on the prospects of African liberation. We have witnessed a pattern concerning the significance of metropolitan coups—a pattern with relevance for the liberation not only of the former Portuguese colonies, but conceivably even of Zimbabwe and South Africa. Will the first signs of a cracking political system within Rhodesia or South Africa be a military challenge by the white military forces themselves against civilian authority in Salisbury or Pretoria? Is it now conceivable that the trend of events in southern Africa will be in the direction, first, of increasing pressure from black liberation forces, second, of frustrations among the so-called security forces fighting on behalf of the regimes, and third, of new strains on civil-military relations within the white regimes themselves?

In recent African history the first major case of a metropolitan coup leading to colonial liberation was in fact the military situation in Algeria and France, which culminated in the assumption of power by General Charles de Gaulle in 1958. The French army had got increasingly frustrated as a result of major setbacks, first in Indochina and later in Algeria. In the earlier insurrection the French army had had to face the humiliation of Dien Bien Phu in Vietnam. The ultimate capitulation of the French attempt to retain Indochina, and French withdrawal from that region, stiffened for a while the French determination to resist all claims for independence in

Algeria. In other words, the very success of the Vietnamese against the French was for a while an obstacle in the way of the National Liberation Front in Algeria. A level of stubbornness and obstinacy in the ranks of French soldiers, and within successive French governments, prolonged the Algerian war of independence.

In 1958 France herself was already weary of the war, and the politicians had not moved much further towards finding an adequate solution. The soldiers in the field of Algeria were growing increasingly frustrated. Finally a revolt on the part of the soldiers, challenging the very existence of the French Fourth Republic, created a national crisis of considerable proportion. There seemed to be only one man high enough in stature in France, and acceptable enough to large numbers on both sides of the confrontation, to be capable of averting a civil war in France. Charles de Gaulle had his second moment in history. He emerged from the self-imposed oblivion which had lasted since his resignation as head of government in 1946, and assumed once again supreme authority in France.

The military challenge within the colonial power which had resulted in the collapse of the Fourth Republic had immense consequences for the French colonies at large, and not merely for Algeria.

At first it looked as if De Gaulle's strategy was really to reaffirm and consolidate the links between the colonies and Paris, rather than to facilitate the severance of those links. De Gaulle's idea of a referendum throughout the French empire later in 1958 created the possibility of colonialism by consent. One after another of the French colonies voted against independence in favor of the continuing colonial association with France. Only Guinea under Sekou Toure voted in favor of breaking the colonial umbilical cord. De Gaulle reacted by severing all links with Guinea, and pulling out of Guinea lock, stock, and barrel. At first it looked as if the cause of African independence in the French-dominated areas of the continent had encountered a severe setback. But in fact, in little more than one year, discussions were under way for the indepen-

dence of all other French colonies, but within the so-called French community. De Gaulle had decided that French hegemony in Africa could be protected by alternative ways. Direct colonial annexation was deemed to be no longer necessary.

In Algeria itself the war continued, but before long it looked as if De Gaulle was out to ensure a gradual disengagement by metropolitan France from the Algerian mess. From the slogan "Algeria is French," De Gaulle gradually moved to the slogan "Algeria is Algerian." Explorations for a viable solution to the crisis continued. De Gaulle began also to talk about "Peace for the Brave," implying a legitimacy for the liberation fighters within Algeria. It took Charles de Gaulle about four years in all to disengage France from the Algerian complications, and permit an independent Algeria to emerge.

There was indeed a direct link between the struggle for the liberation of Algeria and the fulfillment of political liberation in the rest of French Africa.

Yet curiously, for a while much of French-speaking black Africa tended to side with France against the National Liberation Front on all debates concerning the future of Algeria. Vote after vote in the United Nations from 1960 onward revealed a massive French-speaking black African vote against the champions of Algerian independence. Only Mali and Guinea seemed consistently sympathetic with the National Liberation Front. While the issue of Algeria was itself an important mechanism behind the liberation of all French Africa, for a while debate and policy on that issue in French-speaking Africa revealed a continuing colonial dependency. But these were transient manifestations of that dependency, especially since De Gaulle himself was on his way toward finally making peace with the Algerian fighters.

What must always be remembered is precisely the simple proposition that a metropolitan coup in Paris was a major cause behind the acceleration of African liberation. What ought also to be remembered is that the metropolitan coup itself was substantially a response to a major military challenge

from colonial liberation fighters. In this case the initial challenge came from the Algerian insurrection under the National Liberation Front, and the strains that these fighters put on the French army finally snapped into a confrontation between the French army and the French Fourth Republic, leading to a collapse of that Republic, the rise of De Gaulle, and the emergence of new possibilities for French colonies in the African continent.

It took another decade and a half before history began to repeat itself in another section of "Latin Africa" and its own metropolitan power. This was the series of events that finally led to a military coup in Portugal in 1974. Just as the Algerian war of independence had been a fundamental precipitating factor behind the rise of Charles de Gaulle in Paris in 1958, so the Portuguese colonial wars in Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau were fundamental precipitating factors behind the rise of Antonio de Spinola in Lisbon in 1974. France before De Gaulle had insisted with obstinacy that Algeria was not a colony but was part of France; Portugal before Spinola had insisted that Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau were not colonies but were integral provinces of metropolitan Portugal. But just as De Gaulle said after his assumption of power that Algeria was Algerian after all, Antonio de Spinola argued before he assumed power in the following terms:

> It is not national unity that is at stake but imperial unity, and today's conscience does not accept empires. . . . The future of Portugal depends on an adequate solution to the war in which we are involved [Spinola, 1974].[1]

In fact, Spinola—like De Gaulle before him—wrestled with alternative solutions of integration between the overseas provinces and the metropolitan countries in Europe. The idea of a federal relationship did intrigue Charles de Gaulle at some stage. A similar idea of federation between Portugal and her colonies was central to Antonio de Spinola's *Portugal and the Future*. In both cases it was the continuing determination of the freedom fighters in Africa that gradually tilted the balance

of opinion in the imperial capitals. Postimperial Portugal is still in the course of unfolding. The story of the future of Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau after independence is still inconclusive. What does emerge once again in the annals of both Paris in 1958 and Lisbon in 1974 is indeed the impact of metropolitan coups on prospects for African liberation.

In the case of Britain, it was not a coup that precipitated the process of decolonization, but the combination of World War II and a much smaller African colonial war in the 1950s. World War II impoverished Britain and weakened her capacity to maintain the largest empire in human history. In the face of a rising political consciousness in colony after colony, and against the background of a declining imperial will, the momentous decision was taken to give independence to India, Pakistan, Ceylon, and Burma. The most important military factor behind the liberation of British Asia was no less a phenomenon than a world war.

But the most important precipitating factor behind the liberation of British Africa was the shock of the Mau Mau insurrection in Kenya. The insurrection dramatized in a new way the limits of peaceful imperial control in the wake of new ambitions in the colonies. The insurrection also illustrated the capacity of fighters with relatively rudimentary military technology to engage one of the mightiest of imperial powers for several years without a clear convincing victory by the colonial power. The Mau Mau insurrection also revealed the vulnerability of white settlers in colonial situations in which they are heavily outnumbered and yet insist on maintaining overall domination.

With a major colonial war on her hands in East Africa, and growing political militancy in West Africa, Britain undertook an agonizing reappraisal of her presence in Africa. By 1957 the first black colony in Africa emerged from British colonial control. The independence of Ghana was a triumph not only for the oratory of Nkrumah but also for the courage of Kimathi, a victory not only for the organized effort of the Convention People's Party in Ghana but also for the armed

endeavor by the Mau Mau in Kenya, a fulfillment not only for Africans in the streets of Accra but also for Africans in the forests of the Aberdare Mountains. If World War II had helped to break the British imperial will in Asia, the Mau Mau insurrection had helped to break it in Africa. Military factors once again played a part in African liberation, but in the case of the collapse of the British imperial will it was not a military coup in London but a couple of wars that proved decisive.

What remains for the future to reveal is precisely the extent to which harassment by black nationalists in Zimbabwe might gradually cause frustrations between the regime and armed forces, and create tensions between the military establishment in Rhodesia and the civilian political elite. What also remains for the future to uncover is whether a similar scenario might find realization in Pretoria.

CLASS, ETHNICITY AND NATION-BUILDING

But military coups have by no means been a peculiarity of white societies in control of black populations. At least as dramatically, they have also been a feature of postcolonial black Africa under the control of Africans.

The causes of military coups in independent black Africa have been extensively analyzed and speculated upon. These causes might be divided into three broad categories—intramilitary, societal, and extrasocietal.

Intramilitary explanations may be found in the attributes of the military establishments themselves in African countries. These would include a relative lack of discipline, a relatively low level of professionalism, a relatively brief history of combat and national commitment by the armed forces, and the precise regional, ethnic, religious, and class composition of the enlisted men compared to the officers.

Societal explanations of military coups are sought not in issues such as the level of discipline or professionalism within the armed forces, but in broader realities concerning society as

a whole. Problems of general economic underdevelopment, institutional fluidity, fragility of authority and weakness in procedures, newness of statehood and in some cases newness of nationhood—in short, problems of general underdevelopment are much more pertinent factors behind military coups than narrow intramilitary attributes.

The third category of causation is extrasocietal. In this case the major precipitating factors are primarily external, rather than peculiar either to the military establishment or to the domestic arrangements of that society.

We might say that metropolitan coups of the kind that led to the rise of De Gaulle and Spinola were coups whose ultimate precipitating factor was extrasocietal, at least to the extent to which the factor was colonial and thus outside the immediate boundaries of the metropolitan countries in Europe. In reality, if not by legal fiction, the Algerian war was extrasocietal, but it deeply affected French society domestically. Even more clearly, the wars in Mozambique, Angola, and Guinea-Bissau were extrasocietal from Portugal's point of view, in spite of the decision by Portuguese governments to regard them as disturbances within the womb of Portugal itself.

Some military coups in independent black Africa have also included extrasocietal factors among their causes. In at least some cases it could be said that while coups within the imperial powers like France and Portugal were partly caused by the entanglement with their own colonies, the coups in some of the former colonies have been partly caused by the continuing entanglement with former colonial rulers. Just as imperial factors played a part in the events of 1958 in Paris and the events of 1974 in Lisbon, so imperial factors might have played a part in the fall of Kwame Nkrumah in Ghana, Milton Obote in Uganda, Patrice Lumumba in the Congo (now Zaire), and even the fall of Hamani Diori in Niger. An intermingling of factors between the colonies and their former imperial rulers has sometimes served as part of the mechanism that has triggered coups on both sides of the imperial divide.

But at times there has been a temptation among African nationalists to overemphasize the external factor behind

African military coups. Some circles capitulate to the "scape-goat complex," finding others to blame for failures within African societies. There is also a school of African thought that seems to be overwhelmingly based on exogenous determinism, attributing almost all major events within Africa to external forces, and virtually denying African peoples the capacity for independent initiative.

But while some African political analysts have exaggerated exogenous causes, the fact remains that external factors do continue to be powerful in both the politics and the economics of African life. It is such considerations that have created linkages at times between military factors in the metropolitan countries and military factors in the former colonies.

But even it it were conceded that the ultimate causes of military coups in Africa were external in origin, there is no doubt that the most fundamental consequences of those coups are domestic. The ascent of soldiers to the commanding heights of African polities has often resulted in fundamental changes within those societies. Especially important among these changes are relations between ethnic groups, relations between social classes, and relations between African countries and the wider external world. This last reestablishes links between societal and extrasocietal factors.

Ethnicity and stratification are fundamental aspects of the social structure in African conditions. Which of the two forces, kinship or class, is primary in the African situation? What is involved is a distinction between the forces of reproduction and their impact on kinship, and the forces of production and their impact on social classes. The reproductive forces emanate from concepts of family and the obligations that are presumed to exist from both marriage and consanguinity. Filial and parental love, matrimonial loyalties, fraternity, and the wider circles of kinship are all part of the social implications of human reproduction, and among the major forces behind human behavior.

The forces of reproduction lie behind social and political phenomena ranging from ethnic consciousness to race prejudice, from nationalistic assertiveness to ancestor worship.

When a black man was lynched in the United States for taking a sexual interest in a white woman, when General Idi Amin expelled the Asians partly because he thought they were socially and sexually exclusive, when Hitler asserted a doctrine of Aryan purity, when the Jews created the State of Israel, when the British started passing Commonwealth Immigration Acts and later invented a grandfather clause as a basis for entry into Britain, when the French looked up to Charles de Gaulle and thought of him as a father figure symbolizing the nation, primordial forces of reproduction and their consequences were at play in varying degrees in all these instances. Even pride in the history of one's nation is a form of ancestor worship, a modernized version of political lineage.

Certainly the temptation in political behavior to use the symbols of kinship, ranging from concepts of fatherland and mother tongue to phenomena like cultural nationalism, are all partly derived from the universe of familial emotions and loyalties. Certainly patriotism is itself one of the great political consequences of the forces of reproductive symbolism. These are aspects of human culture that have developed from particular aspects of human biology.

Alongside the socialization of reproductive forces is the other familial factor behind human behavior—economic production. Both biology and economics are in part concerned with human survival. As Marx and Engels reminded humanity, man had first to eat before he could build a civilization. The processes by which man was enabled to eat became the genesis of economics.

But man had also to reproduce himself in order to survive beyond a single generation. Marxist analysts, in describing social and political behavior, have correctly pointed to the economic factor as part of the primary background to that behavior. What Marxist analysts have not always adequately recognized is the equally powerful force of reproductive symbolism. Out of the economic domain social classes and class conflict did indeed grow; but equally true is that out of

reproductive symbolism other loyalties and antagonisms emerged, at times much more powerful than economic considerations.

Two factors help to determine which of the two forces, kinship or class, are more politicized in a given society. These factors are the scale of the economy and the extent of ethnic pluralism. In a society that is ethnically homogenous, operating on the basis of a small economy with simple technology, ethnicity tends to swing between being politically neutral and politically reinforcing. It becomes politically reinforcing when the group as a whole senses a need for reaffirming a shared ethnic identity. It becomes politically neutral when members dispute on the basis of other loyalties and interests, including the class dimension and the narrower unit of the family in competition with another family within the same broad ethnic category. Kinship factors are indeed still at play even in situations where the broader ethnic category is politically neutralized, but these kinship factors would tend to focus on subunits.

If the society is not only ethnically homogeneous, but also produces its means of livelihood on the basis of a small economy and rudimentary modes of production, the class factor would again be relatively weak. Even the stratification system is more likely to be based on symbols of reproduction, namely heredity and ascription, rather than rational economic factors. The local notables might indeed be relatively affluent economically, but the chances are that they add economic affluence to a prior quality of being relatively well descended.

In many African societies before independence, stratification was either very rudimentary or elaborately based on ethnicity and lineage. People were high or low in the social structure either directly because they came from a particular clan or family or indirectly because they had been given honorary kinship status by such a clan or family.

All social analysis at a broad interpretative level is bound to distort and oversimplify. This is also true of these generalizations about precolonial African societies.

The main point to be grasped is the primacy of reproductive symbolism in situations of a small-scale economy, rudimentary technology, and relative ethnic homogeneity.

What happened with colonization and later independence was both the enlargement of the economic base of African societies and the pluralization of their ethnic base. Under the impact of Europe's economic technology, new trends got under way in African countries in the direction of greater economic complexity and scale. And under the impact of the imposed colonial boundaries, multiple ethnic communities were forced to share a new national collective identity.

In the face of the enlargement of the economies and the pluralization of the ethnic composition of the new African societies, were the symbols of reproduction to decline and give way to the economic forces of the social classes?

In fact, the forces of reproductive symbolism have not declined in postcolonial Africa, and have quite often become more politicized. Yet at the same time new forces of economic competition and class conflict have also arisen. While pre-colonial African societies were generally characterized by high reproductive symbolism and low class conflict, postcolonial African societies are characterized simultaneously by high reproductive symbolism and a rising class conflict.

The pluralization of the ethnic base of the new African society was certainly bound to lead in the direction of politicizing reproductive symbolism as kinship groups competed with each other for scarce resources. The enlargement and modernization of African economies have in turn resulted in the rise of class antagonism.

On the other hand, that very modernization of African economies and their enlargement should have initiated a partial erosion of kinship and reproductive loyalties in favor of more purely economic rivalry. But this has not happened. The modernization of African economies has not as yet served to neutralize the heightened sense of ethnic affinity that has come with ethnic pluralism in the new African nation-states.

In such a situation even the class factor is often defined in ethnic terms. Members of certain ethnic communities have

easier access to certain opportunities than members of other ethnic communities. While in large-scale developed economies in the northern hemisphere individuals, or at most families, become members of particular social classes, in Africa there are times when entire clans, tribes, or subnationalities enter particular class levels in their societies. The Kikuyu in Kenya in the colonial period were virtually among the "untouchables" of the colonial society. The people who emptied latrine buckets and cleaned lavatories in parts of Kenya were disproportionately Kikuyu. By the time of independence, on the other hand, this whole ethnic category was reclassified by political history and political realities. Instead of being among the untouchables, the Kikuyu moved up to become relative brahmins.

In reality, just as there are different classes within each caste in India, so there are different levels of advantage and prosperity within each ethnic community in Africa. The Kikuyu as a total group have easier access to certain opportunities, especially in the main cities and in government, than most other ethnic communities. But there are of course poor Kikuyu as well as rich ones, indigent Kikuyu as well as powerful ones. The foreign company in Nairobi or Mombasa that employs a Kikuyu clerk as an exercise in public relations is, on the one hand, merely absorbing one more indigent proletarian into an alien economy, but is also, on the other hand, paying tribute to the special status of the whole Kikuyu community.

The Buganda during the colonial period in Uganda were also a privileged group in totality, although within the Buganda kingdom itself there were peasants as well as aristocrats. The Amhara in Ethiopia have even more clearly been an ethnic caste, dominating the country. There were millions of poor and indigent Amhara, as well as immensely powerful and affluent Amhara; but the community as a whole was in a fundamental sense classified as a privileged group within the national hierarchy.

In such a situation one makes comparisons along occupational lines. If an Amhara houseboy has a better chance of improving his status, or obtaining other fringe benefits, than a Gala houseboy, then clearly in this horizontal comparison

reproductive status derived from being descended from an Amhara creates inequalities within the same level of economic status.

In addition, the distribution of the occupations would also be decisively influenced by reproductive symbolism. In relation to population, there would be many more Amhara doctors and lawyers than Gala doctors and lawyers, many more prosperous Amhara landowners and businessmen than Gala landowners and businessmen, many more Amhara bishops than Gala clerics, and by definition many more Amhara aristocrats than Gala pretenders to such a status.

In countries like Nigeria and Zaire such allocations of economic opportunities on the basis of reproductive symbolism were indeed more complicated, but by no means fundamentally different. Ethnicity played a decisive role in the events that led to the Nigerian civil war; and ethnicity has been part of the tumultuous life of Zaire since it exploded into independence in 1960.

The process of national integration in such countries requires a partial decline in the power of kinship symbolism and ethnic confrontation, but this decline in itself might first require the modernization of social conflicts in the direction of new economic classes. For a while class antagonism and ethnic antagonism would simply reinforce each other, but as the economy becomes more complex and its productive capacity becomes enlarged, kinship competition should begin to subside to some extent, especially as the ethnic pluralism itself becomes less distinct in the wake of cultural integration and geographical and biological intermingling among the groups.

In terms of loyalties, for the time being a Kikuyu laborer in Nairobi is probably a Kikuyu first and a laborer second "when the chips are down." In identifying his ultimate interests, a Kikuyu businessman sees his future in the survival of Kikuyu preeminence in Kenya much more than he sees his future in terms of a shared destiny with a Luo businessman. Although both the forces of production and the symbols of reproduction are exerting a powerful joint influence on the political and

economic behavior of most African societies, the kinship factor in its broad meaning continues to have the upper hand. Only an adequate modernization of the economy could one day restore balance, reducing the power of ethnicity without necessarily emasculating it.

Meanwhile, soldiers and civilians have competed for political power, and for a role in determining both the economic and the ethnic future of their countries. By the nature of their profession, soldiers have aspired to introduce the principle of discipline as a mechanism for national integration. Civilian politicians, on the other hand, have aspired to realize the principle of dialogue as a mechanism for national integration. In reality, neither the soldiers nor the civilians have lived up to their professional aspirations. Discipline under military regimes has often been a principle honored more in the breach than in the observance; dialogue under civilian regimes has often been a victim of repressive and intolerant authoritarianism. But those very failures, as well as some of the emerging successes, might well be the resilient manifestations of a continuing struggle between the symbols of kinship and the interests of class.

CONCLUSION

We have attempted to demonstrate in this article both the anguish and the ambitions of an Africa in the process of moving from modern nationalism to modern nationhood. New loyalties and horizons have emerged as a result of the colonial impact. A new consciousness of being black, a new awareness of belonging to a continent, and a rebellion against subjugation by others have all played a part in the rise of pan-Africanism and the consolidation of political consciousness.

Both nationalism and nationhood have strong reproductive origins. The idea of belonging to the same race or sharing a fatherland is part of the heritage of the concept of family in human affairs. The transition from nationalism to nationhood

must therefore be regarded as in part a transition from kinship sentiment to kinship fulfillment, from a desire to see all Nigerians or all Ugandans as one people to the actual realization of such a familial concept.

But reproductive symbolism has also its disruptive consequences, as communities that believe themselves to be descended from the same ancestors compete with communities alleging descent from other ancestors.

While African solidarity was helped by race consciousness among black people as an affirmation of familial solidarity, nation-building in individual African countries has been disrupted by narrower ethnic consciousness and politicized lineage. Political parties have risen and fallen, governments have ascended and collapsed, soldiers have commuted between the barracks and state house—and Africa has struggled each year to narrow the gap between the depth of its longings and the fragility of its achievements.

NOTE

1. The translation is borrowed from the *Time* magazine cover story entitled "A Book, a Song and then a Revolution" *(Time*, May 6, 1974).

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