EFFORTS TOWARD AN AFRICAN DIGNITY:

A STUDY OF NÉGRITUDE, AFRICAN PERSONALITY,

AND AFRICAN SOCIALISM

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To James G. Leyburn

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PREFACE

> Here we stand
> infants overblown,
> poised between two civilizations,
> finding the balance irksome,
> itching for something to happen,
> to tip us one way or the other,
> groping in the dark for a helping hand--
> and finding none.
> I'm tired, O my God, I'm tired,
> I'm tired of hanging in the middle way--
> But where can I go?[1]

This sentiment is typical of the great mass of black Africans who, during the period of colonialism in Africa, found themselves uprooted from their traditional cultures, thrust into new and unfamiliar situations, and left confused and anomic on a middle road somewhere between their past and modern, twentieth-century civilization. Many of the leaders of the new African nations that have emerged with the demise of colonialism have taken upon themselves the challenge of guiding these African masses into the twentieth-century and farther away from their tribal past.

These several élite, educated Africans--for the most part trained and educated abroad in both the Western and Eastern worlds--comprise the vanguard in the search for a uniquely African identity and dignity, for a sense of "one-ness" or "African-ness."

Indeed, as yet, the great masses of African people have little knowledge of--nor real interest in--this search; nor are they familiar with the intellectual, often abstract, concepts of Négritude, African Personality, and African Socialism, which have been created as guiding forces in the quest for an African "one-ness."

Leopold Senghor of Senegal, Kwame Nkrumah (formerly the President of Ghana), and Julius Nyerere of Tanzania are the chief--but by no means the only--advocates of these intellectual constructs. These members of the élitist class of educated Africans, perhaps the only class capable of comprehending such mental abstractions, are struggling to verbalize their ideas through graphic, often forceful, terms and methods, in the hope that they can make some fruitful impressions on the minds of the African masses. It is felt that if the masses can be reached and mobilized-- if some common, Pan-African identity or sense of community can unite the disparate strands of African culture into some whole--then, Africa and its people can surmount the obstacles facing them in the wake of their common traumatic colonial experience and can face the world with a renewed sense of pride and a new African dignity, while at the same time contributing to, and sharing in, the fruits of world progress.

Sékou Touré, President of Guinea, expressed well the essence of this new African "revolution" or "renaissance" and the nature of the revolutionaries themselves who are guiding the assault:

> To take part in the African revolution it is not enough to write a revolutionary song; you must fashion the revolution with the people. And if you fashion it with the people, the songs will come by themselves, and of themselves.
> In order to achieve real action, you must yourself be a living part of Africa and of her thought; you must be an element of that popular energy which is entirely called forth for the freeing, the progress and the happiness of Africa. There is no place outside that fight for the artist or for the intellectual who is not himself concerned with and completely at one with the people in the great battle of Africa and of suffering humanity.[2]

This study is an analysis of several of the most important and influential forces and concepts operating within Africa today and directing the current search for an African dignity and identity. The following pages constitute more than a mere "justification" of indigenous African contributions to the world (for, at once, this signifies that Africans must "prove" their worth as human beings, when, indeed, it is clear that their many achievements in various areas have only been ignored or overlooked by arrogant, ethnocentric "judges" for decades). Personally, this study constitutes a testimonial, an expression of esteem for the unique cultural achievements and contributions of Africans to mankind.

PREFACE

FOOTNOTES

[1]G. McLeod Bryan, _Whither Africa?_ (Richmond, 1961), p. 1.

[2]Frantz Fanon, _The Wretched of the Earth_ (N. Y., 1963), p. 167.

CHAPTER I

EMERGENCE OF THE "BLACK AFRICAN"

Prior to 1900 there was little consciousness anywhere
in the African continent of being Africans or blacks. Most
Africans were unaware that there was such an entity as
"Africa," as an African "continent." There was no predominant
racial consciousness, nor was there any sense of national
or Pan-African identity. The only real source of identifica-
tion for the African was with his particular tribe or ethnic
group. Few Africans, except of course the herders and nomads,
travelled far from their homes. Communication being as
poorly developed as it was, and transportation being practical-
ly non-existent, most Africans were scarcely aware of the
existence of peoples outside the peripheries of their own
territories. Except on the coasts, along which most European
and Asian traders and explorers had been confined for
centuries, interracial contact had been held to a minimum,
most of the Africans inhabiting the forest and bush country
having, before 1900, seen few white Europeans or Asians.

After the turn of this century, a new awareness began
gradually to be instilled in the minds of some Africans--a new

"consciousness of kind" as Franklin H. Giddings would call
it--a sense of being both black and African, and a sense of
the high importance of those two designations. Still more
gradually, literate Africans began to regard themselves as
Kenyans, Nigerians, and Senegalese, rather than merely as
Luo, Kikuyus, Yorubas, or Wolofs. New national and conti-
nental identities began to develop as challenges to tribal
affiliations. These new sources of identification are still
in the process of development today as African governments
attempt to intensify nationalism among all the people.

Since the purpose of this thesis is to explore con-
temporary aspects of what may (with some latitude) be called
"the African mind," it is necessary to understand the
developments which worked to create that mind. If the first
developments are, in themselves, innocuous--for there is
nothing inherently insidious in the two adjectives "black"
and "African"--the succeeding stages all involve assaults
upon the self-assurance of practically every person in contact
with Europeans in the continent. That the undermining of
African personalities was not part of a conscious design of
the European masters is irrelevant; that many of the white
people were motivated by the highest idealism, aimed at bene-
fiting the black man, is likewise irrelevant. What is

important is that during the decades of colonialism few
Africans escaped the constant awareness of the difference
between "we" and "them."

It may be suggested that "the African mind" was
created by "the European mind." That is to say that it
developed because of what white men believed, thought,
assumed--and because of what they did as a result of their
attitudes and convictions. First and most constant, was
the serene assurance of all Europeans that being white was,
in the nature of things, an incontestable blessing.

The myths perpetrated by these white men reflected
the air of superiority they carried about them. All Africans
were categorized as heathens, blacks, primitive savages, and,
in general, were treated as children in a patronizing manner.
These Europeans interfered in the economic, political,
religious, and most other affairs of the Africans they en-
countered. African societies and cultures were denigrated,
while European civilization was held up as a paragon to be
followed for the sake of progress. Missionaries made the
African feel ashamed of his animistic religion and of his
ancestor worship, teaching him that Christianity was the
only way to achieve salvation. The Christianity that the
missionaries preached was rarely practiced by Europeans in

Africa; these whites were unable to separate Christianity from the trappings of Western civilization. Most whites treated Africans as <u>social</u> inferiors, believing that the black man was not a fit partner for social intercourse. Where the white man settled, he subordinated tribal chiefs to his own form of political administration, thus undermining traditional authority in African societies.

In recent years several intensely psychological studies have been carried out with respect to African societies and individuals now caught in the process of transition from traditionalism to modernity. Everett Hagen, in his book <u>On</u> <u>the</u> <u>Theory</u> <u>of</u> <u>Social</u> <u>Change</u>, has studied the reactions of younger Africans to the situations in which they find themselves today.

Probably most living Africans have grown up in the midst of conflict, perhaps not always perceived, between the values of their traditional societies and those of their new environment. These Africans have seen their fathers and their fathers' way of life ridiculed or simply ignored as trivial. Along with their parents they have been led to feel shame, to the point of developing what our age has come to call inferiority complexes. No matter which model one has followed, pain has been the inevitable result. If one

associated himself with traditional values and culture, he experienced the same wounds felt by his father in the hands of superior white groups. If, on the contrary, one followed the examples of the white man, he suffered the pain of losing the respect of those members of the traditional society which he had abandoned. Such bewildered Africans have often been led, according to Hagen, into retreatism. Their only escape has appeared to lie in the denial that the values and the recognition of either group are of importance; in the denial that life itself offers any high expectations for satisfaction or contentment. Believing that full happiness cannot be found in life, they feel that if they do not expect too much, they cannot be wounded by their failure to achieve much. This repression of values and of zeal for life in the quest for security and safety, has, over the generations, bred apathy.

Many Africans came to feel what Hagen calls intense "rage" at the situation into which they were placed. Finding no satisfactory outlets, this rage was often repressed. But sometimes outlets were found, which took the form of shocking violence and colonial uprisings. These Africans had come to realize that they could rise up, take charge of their own destinies, and throw out the masters who had violated their

cultures. Such violence generally startled those arrogant whites who had regarded the African as a docile, apathetic creature, one that should have been grateful for the contacts given him with advanced civilizations.

As noted, Africans gradually became aware of "race" as an identifying mark. Europeans, though, had not immediately assumed an inherent racial inequality between the white and the black man. In the earliest racial contacts there seemed to be little evidence of inferior-superior relationships--the white man treated the strange black man with respect, and the black man in return did not envy the white man whose technology at that time was in some respects similar to his own. But with the advent of the industrial and technological revolutions in Europe, which coincided with a European religious revival, Africans became the targets for missionary and mercantile operations. Colonialism and alien domination were key factors in the development of this new racial consciousness. The devastating slave trade, which cost Africa an estimated fifty million persons (according to Basil Davidson), did more to open the eyes of the Africans to their blackness and to their alleged baseness and inferiority as a race, than any other single factor. It was always the Negro who was the oppressed, and the white man who was the

oppressor.

Those Europeans who chose to make their homes in
Africa made the African aware of his present relative back-
wardness. In the comparison of life-styles, the European
way of life was always regarded as modern, and the African
way as backward. The white and brown men (Europeans and
Asians) dressed well while the Africans went naked or wore
rags. The whites drove big, expensive cars while the Africans
choked in their dust. While the Africans went hungry and
slept in mud huts, the whites grew fat in their fancy houses.
These disparities the Europeans attributed to inherent racial
differences.

Certain colonial policies, especially those of France
and England, helped lead Africans toward a new sense of
identification. Educated Africans were led to a recognition
of European categories, and, therefore, they could think of
themselves for the first time as Africans in contrast to
Europeans.

Through their policy of assimilation, the French at-
tempted to destroy a great deal of traditional African life.
Selected Africans were sent to France to be educated, where
they were seduced into a renunciation of their tribal culture
and into an approbation of French culture. In the French

African territories the évolués were to a large extent,
assimilated into French life; they usually spoke perfect
French and rarely wrote in their native tongues. The English
also provided opportunities for Africans to study abroad or
in mission schools in an effort to implant European ideas in
their minds. The English, furthermore, helped train clerks
and, through indirect rule, left Africans with some small
measure of self-government and political experience. Britain,
however, did not try to assimilate their subjects into
English culture as thoroughly as did the French. Although
the French really ravaged African culture, they accepted
Africans as equals with Frenchmen as long as they renounced
their African identities. Africans were even given a part
in the French National Assembly; this, of course, was de-
signed to take the heart out of the nationalist movements by
creating a new class of uprooted Afro-Europeans. It was
from these Afro-Europeans that the most vigorous anti-
assimilation protests were to come.*

All of these aforementioned factors led to a gradual
dawning awareness on the part of literate Africans (who were

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*Which of these colonial policies--the British or the
French--was more harmful to Africans?

slowly but steadily increasing in number) of the political

divisions of the continent made by the Congress of Berlin

in 1885. Through constant observation and study of maps,

the educated African developed a conception of his own

"country," which was an entirely new idea to his way of

thinking. The administration of his "country" as a whole

by the colonial power further strengthened the literate

African's conception of his nation. In spite of tribal and

regional disparities, the African saw that there was de-

veloping in his "country" as a whole a common language, a

general system of public works, equitable taxation, as well

as an overall system of internal rule--all of which were

factors making for a sense of unity or nationhood.

In all of these factors then--the defamation of

African cultures, the development of an African racial

consciousness, the various colonial policies, and the

African's sense of indignity and rage--are found the seeds

of nationalism and the desire for independence as well as a

new feeling of dignity and pride. As Fred G. Burke observed:

> To be treated with disrespect, to be a pauper on
> one's own land, to serve and not be served, to be
> ruled and never to rule--once an awareness exists that
> these things are not implicit in life but only in the
> lives of black men--is to be without dignity, a con-
> dition that no sane man can long tolerate. This
> awakening to the fact that to be black and an African

is to be without dignity has coincided with the world-wide dissemination of philosophies proclaiming the equality of all men and the political dogma that equal men possess an inherent right to rule themselves.[1]

Nationalism, after the rather vague beginnings mentioned above, rapidly increased its power among the literate Africans. Its development is traced in detail in the following chapter. Since independence, it has been the intent of every government to intensify nationalism among all the people. This has been attempted by means of devices ranging from education, propaganda, anthems and flags, to football matches and other sports. But in addition to this nationalism, so familiar to Europeans and Americans who also have it, there are three other phenomena, all uniquely African in origin and development—all designed fundamentally to give dignity to Africans. These are the concepts of "Négritude," "African Personality," and "African Socialism."*

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*These three attempts to create or strengthen a sense of important differences between Africans and Europeans, with the African qualities worthy in themselves, are by no means the only ones that could be cited. "Ethiopianism" (African re-interpretations of Christianity) has assumed dozens of forms; revolts and insurrections (of which the Mau Mau is merely the most notable); prejudice exhibited against Indian, Lebanese, and Arab traders; insistence upon a significant African "history" and civilization when Europe was benighted—these are other examples of movements to establish African dignity.

"Négritude" is an intellectual concept, identified with French-speaking Africa, which refers to the totality of civilizing values which are supposed to characterize the Negro world. Besides the assertion of African values and pride in the Negro-African heritage, Négritude is a denial, an angry protest against the infantile role in which the West has placed the African in the sweep of world history and culture.

"African Personality" is a political expression formulated by Kwame Nkrumah, formerly President of Ghana. Like national character, it takes into account culturally regular traits of nationals who are integrated into a common social tradition. As a nationalist expression, it is a reaction against European domination and colonialism, as well as a protest against the repudiation by Europeans of the value in African cultures and the consequent imposition of European cultures. African Personality, Nkrumah asserts, is the basis for the unity of African nations, or Pan-Africanism, which is discussed in subsequent chapters.

The attempt by several African nations, notably Tanzania, Mali, Senegal, Ghana, and Guinea to follow their own African road of development, independent of both Eastern and Western economic domination, has led to the development of the concept

of "African Socialism." African Socialism is based upon indigenous, traditional African society, especially the extended family or <u>ujamaa</u> (brotherhood). It is opposed to capitalism which, by the exploitation of man by man, tries to build a happy society. It is also opposed to doctrinaire socialism, which plays on the inevitable conflict between men in order to create its happy society. African Socialism stresses new symbols of common solidarity and is a unifying factor in Pan-Africanism.

These unique African concepts, all designed to give dignity to the African, will be discussed at length in subsequent chapters. In order better to understand these phenomena, it is necessary first to trace in detail the development of African nationalism from its seeds, as implanted in the above discussion, to their fruition in the independence movements of the present decade. For these concepts developed, essentially, along with the nationalist movements, and in the hands of African nationalist leaders.

CHAPTER I

FOOTNOTES

[1]Fred G. Burke, _Africa's Quest For Order_ (New Jersey, 1964), p. 87.

CHAPTER II

THE RISE OF AFRICAN NATIONALISM

AND THE DRIVE FOR INDEPENDENCE

It is assumed by many that African nationalism is only
a recent product. But African political demands are part of
a movement which is over seventy-five years old. The roots
of African nationalism are found in the oppression of the
colonial period, the earliest struggles consisting for the
most part of plaintive requests for better conditions and
more rights. The big African power struggle did come, how-
ever, after World War II with an increase in the number of
charismatic leaders and popular movements, especially
congresses and opposition parties. And only after the war
was it made truly obvious by the colonial powers that
freedom was forthcoming.

The earliest organized efforts of the nationalist
movements were, strangely enough, made not by Africans, but
by American Negroes and British West Indians. In essence,
it was more of a Pan-Africanist movement, first conceived
by Henry Sylvester Williams of Trinidad. Williams, in 1900,
organized a Pan-African conference in London as a protest

forum against the aggression of the white colonizers and as

an appeal for the protection of Africans. Later Pan-African

Congresses, of which there were four by 1927, were promoted

largely by the American Negro, W. E. B. DuBois, as anti-

colonial protests. The movement, however, languished until

the post-World War II period, the Fifth Congress not taking

place until as late as 1945. But by this time the Africans

constituted the majority in the Congress and the movement

was shifting from the hands of Caribbean and American Negroes

to those of the black African. The major objectives of the

revived nationalist movements according to the program of

the Congress of 1945 were self-determination and self-

government:

> We are determined to be free. . . . We demand
> for Black Africa autonomy and independence. . . .
> We are unwilling to starve any longer while doing
> the world's drudgery. . . . We shall complain,
> appeal and arraign. . . . We will fight in every
> way we can for freedom, democracy and social
> betterment.[1]

Until this time the nationalist movements had been

oriented mainly toward British Africa. Since the earlier

initiatives--the Congresses--had been taken by British West

Indians and American Negroes, the original language of

protest was English. Furthermore, the Congresses were

dominated by Africans from British territories; thus, most

protests and cases were oriented toward British colonial issues.

The beginning of the Second World War, however, witnessed the French West Africans in situations akin to those of their brothers in the British colonial territories.

> . . . nationalism had not yet taken root . . . but there existed a simple sense of racialism, chiefly felt by Africans most in contact with foreigners. A small vanguard had come into being that took pride in its African heritage and was not content to remain indefinitely in a static position midway between the French and the rural population.[2]

Having no broad political program like those of the Pan-African Congresses, the French-speaking Africans were content with the attainment of certain specific ends. They wanted, for instance, the abolition of the military draft; the abolition of disciplinary penalties (indigénat); no forced labor; exemption of women and children from poll taxation; wider use of African languages; more responsible positions with higher pay; and greater security of African land tenure.

The tactics of English-speaking African nationalists were oriented toward independence, as seen in the creed of the Pan-African Congresses: "Seek ye first the political kingdom, and all else shall be added unto it."

The indispensable initiative peoples must hold,
on all levels (political operations, economic and
social vitality, scientific, cultural and spiritual
intuition and creativity), is essentially of a
political order. It necessitates independence.
Beyond this stage other problems, in turn, pose
themselves. Because political independence is not
an end, but an indispensable step.[3]

The French-speaking Africans presented more of a flank

attack on the common objective. The French African nationalist

movement was intellectually inclined, being a value-oriented,

humanist movement. These Africans often did not discuss the

question of independence until just before full autonomy was

reached. They attempted, in the first place, to develop an

African élite of "Black Frenchmen." This led to the restudy

of African culture, then to the concept of Négritude, and

finally, to an active independence movement.

In comparison of these two forms of African nationalist

movements an African studies student was led to quip: "The

British African nationalist leader writes constitutions, the

French leader writes poetry."[4]

The French African intellectuals throughout their

movement have been working on an ideology based on values

and concepts of traditional African culture. The French

literary journal, Présence Africaine, sponsored primarily

by André Gide, Aimé Césaire, and Théodore Monod, has given

the fullest expression of these ideas to the nationalist

movement. In this journal Gide expressed its broad humanism:

> However rich and appealing our civilization
> [French], our culture, we have finally come to
> admit that it is not the only one.[5]
> Furthermore, Présence Africaine proposes a
> vast program: to welcome all that which aids
> the cause of the Africans, and any African voice
> that is worth hearing.[6]

The common media of protest, which occurs with greater

and greater frequency in Présence Africaine, is poetry.

Typical is the Senegalese, David Diop's, poem, Souffre

Pauvre Nègre:

> The lash whistles
> Whistles over the sweat and blood
>   on your back
> Suffer poor Black
> The day is long
> So long carrying the white ivory of the
>   White, your master
> Suffer poor Black
> Your children are hungry
> Hungry and your tumble-down hut is
>   empty
> Empty of your wife who sleeps
> Who sleeps in the Master's bed
> Suffer poor Black
> Black black as Misery.[7]

With the passage of time and the development of the

intellectual movement of Négritude, the French nationalist

movement began to discuss more and more political, ideological,

and economic questions.

> Political independence is almost at our door.
> The solidarity of underdeveloped peoples begins to
> be understood, and recognized on various levels as
> a modern necessity. But when will we realize the
> west has never wished and indeed cannot conquer our
> underdevelopment and our weakness? When will we
> realize that it is necessary to pay dear, very dear,
> in building a strong and respected world? That what
> is needed is a creed (mystique) to reach this ob-
> jective and to compensate for the capital we lack?[8]

This mystique mentioned above had taken the form of

Négritude (not to be confused with "Negroid-ness" nor "Negro-

ness"). Négritude is an intellectual concept, used by

French-speaking African élites, which constitutes an assertion

of a unique African identity as well as a protest against,

and a rejection of, white (European) political and cultural

domination. This concept will be discussed at length in a

subsequent chapter.

These French nationalist movements did not become as

emphatic in denouncing any form of association with the

former colonial power as did English-speaking African countries.

The French-speaking intellectuals could place their own

thoroughly examined cultural values, as well as humanistic

and technological achievements, on a philosophical and

ideological base. This enabled them to face their former

masters with convictions of their own inner worth; thus,

they did not have to reject European contributions in order

to "prove" the validity of their own African cultural achievements.

It is significant that a couple of the colonial powers, England and France, helped Africans achieve self-government to the extent that they supported colonial peoples in the metropolitan countries. In West Africa, where contact between the races was at a minimum, independence was directed almost exclusively against the metropolitan powers, whereas, in East and South Africa, where racism was rampant, African nationalism centered as much upon the race issue, as upon the question of independence.

African nationalism in multiracial groups presented a unique situation. In most multiracial territories, the metropolitan power generally acted as a mediator between racial groups. Nationalist efforts were directed against the counternationalist movements of the dominant white minority more than against the colonial officials. These multiracial territories used constitutional methods, like the rest of Africa, but they also used violence and the fear of violence whenever necessary.

West African countries, having experienced less inter-racial contact and prejudice, looked to the future, instead of displaying mere anger over the past. In the future they

saw association with Europeans as useful in increasing their store of necessary skills, advice, and capital. In fact, there was a very orderly transition to independence in most African countries.

The critical period for self-determination in Africa was between 1955 and 1960. It is true that the events dramatizing these years were the result of factors coming into play from the beginning of the partition of Africa in 1885 at the Congress of Berlin to the close of the Second World War and to the ensuing post-war period. These long years witnessed the gradual rise of nationalist movements aimed at overthrowing the colonial systems. However, only within the present decade has colonialism really met its demise.

By 1954 there were only four self-governing African nations--Liberia, Egypt, Ethiopia, and the Union of South Africa, the last of which is nevertheless dominated by an oppressive white minority. The other parts of Africa were divided among the Belgian, British, French, Spanish, and Portuguese colonial powers. In 1955 the former Anglo-Egyptian Sudan received its independence, followed soon thereafter by the Gold Coast (Ghana) in 1957, and Guinea the following year. "The Year of Africa," 1960, brought the

flood, as Cameroun, Togo, Somalia, Congo Republic, and Nigeria joined the ranks of independent nations, virtually knocking France from the ranks of colonial powers.

With independence, however, many new African nations have demonstrated their reluctance to sever all ties with their former colonial masters by joining the British Commonwealth and the French Community, a notable exception to the latter being Guinea which has broken all ties with France. At the present the last of several British protectorates are receiving their independence--Botswana (the former Bechuanaland) on September 30, 1966, Lesotho (the former Basutoland) on October 4, 1966, and Swaziland in the near future. This leaves only white-dominated Rhodesia and South Africa, the Portuguese colonies of Angola and Mozambique, and, to a lesser extent, the small Spanish possessions of Río Muni, Fernando Póo, and Spanish Sahara as focal points and targets for future Pan-African nationalist movements.

Nationalism as a concept has a different meaning in the African context from that given in general political philosophy, which regards nationalism as inseparable from the idea of nationhood. First and foremost, in African usage, nationalism represents a striving for independence

from colonial rule. James S. Coleman defined "modern"
nationalism, saying that it comprehended "sentiments,
activities and organizational developments aimed explicitly
at . . . self-government and independence . . . on a basis
of equality in an international state system."[9]

It seems as if the main wave of nationalism appeared
suddenly around World War II, for it was then that African
nationalists found their way into positions of power. There
were many influential factors enhancing the growth of
nationalism that arose from the colonial era. The arbitrary
territorial boundaries agreed upon at the Congress of Berlin
in 1885 seemingly brought together diverse tribes into some
degree of unity, though tribalism--as we can well observe
today--was only superficially surmounted, more harm than
good, it is generally agreed, arising from such divisions.
A common metropolitan culture and _lingua franca_ were intro-
duced into the colonies which were partially effective in
surmounting tribal cultures and differences and in offering
some measure of linguistic unity among tribes. Moreover,
European economic penetration and exploitation aided the
growth of African nationalism in response to this "rape" of
Africa and its resources.

The development of African nationalism has been

directly related to the opportunities for educational advancement offered by the European powers to the African, as well as to the administrative policies of the colonial powers. Whereas Britain was foremost in developing education in its colonies and in permitting Africans some degree of self-government (largely through their system of "indirect rule"), Portugal was at the other extreme in its stubborn reluctance to allow Africans any measure of self-determination or self-improvement. French and Belgian policies were located at points between these two extremes.

Urbanization brought Africans of diverse backgrounds together in new towns where new associations could develop as forums for the expression of nationalist sentiments. Labor unions grew up in industrial centers and among workers in mines and on agricultural projects, serving the nationalist movements as vehicles of united, guided protest and criticism. Separatist religious sects developed out of the conflict between Islam and Christianity, sects which were soon infiltrated by disgruntled African nationalists.

Moreover, some Africans began to develop a keen pride in the Negro historical past and steadfast convictions of the worth of African cultures (expressed in Négritude); and others (especially Nkrumah) recognized the need for a

political base for the expression of these values (African

Personality). Many black Africans, notably the élite, were

tired of being flouted and regarded as children, capable of

no worthy achievements. Although important in the kindling

of nationalist sentiments, the real search for values and

dignity has only recently commenced.

> In the changed setting of African life, the
> search for values can be said to have gained
> effective momentum only with the attainment of
> self-government. During most of the time Africans
> were under foreign control, aboriginal African
> values, and attempts to balance them against what
> the Europeans had brought to Africa, were rarely
> discussed.[10]

The nationalist movements throughout Africa were

effectively bolstered by the experiences of black African

soldiers fighting in the Second World War. Africans,

through living abroad, returned to Africa with a greater,

more sophisticated, knowledge of the ideologies, histories,

and practices of many Euro-American democratic institutions.

Many of these Africans serving abroad began to experience

true freedom for the first time. Their experiences and ob-

servations also taught them that white people, not just the

blacks, could be stupid, poor, ignorant, and so forth. These

experiences gave them keener insights with respect to their

colonial overlords and the world around them. Equally im-

portant, these Africans were offered an alternative picture

through first-hand contact during or after the war with the
Communist regimes of China, Eastern Europe, and the Soviet
Union. Spurred on by these developments, by new knowledge
and experiences, as well as by the forceful examples of
Asian independence drives (notably India in 1947 and Indonesia
which became a republic in 1950), the African nationalist
movements burst powerfully on the scene in the post-war era
and led to the rapid demise of colonialism throughout the
continent.

African leaders are now engaged in the building of
nationalism throughout the continent. According to Arnold
Rivkin, nationalism comes about when educated élites lead
large inarticulate masses toward the goal of independence
in anti-colonial movements. Nationalism is a foundation
for nation-building, that is, for economic and political
development. It does not start with any hard core of
unifying factors, such as common language, religion, cultural
attainments, history and mythology, or common symbols.
Rather, after legal independence is attained, nationalism
has to be built, like the élite claimed.

In Africa two main roads have been followed in build-
ing nationalism--a country can build itself into a nation,
or it can attempt to build a Pan-African nation by creating

an African Personality and ideology in common with other
African states. A third, though less common, alternative
may be one similar to that taken recently by French Somaliland
in voting against independence and for continued association
with France. Pan-Africanists combine the independence move-
ment and the integration of states into a larger framework
guided by a social revolutionary mission. Pan-Africanism
seeks to restructure society, the relation of the individual
to the state, and that of the state to the party--all in an
effort to bring African societies, or more precisely, nations,
into some form of union. Most African leaders, however, are
committed to building their own countries into nations,
holding open the possibility of a larger union in the future.

The earliest organized expression of "individual
country nationalism" has come within the present decade,
since 1957. Surprisingly, educated African leaders have
generally been able merely to demand independence, and it
was granted. Independence often followed such demands even
before a substantial amount of anti-colonial unity could be
developed. Even less was there any real sense of nation
among the disparate populations of these newly independent
countries.

Ghanaian nationalism, for example, was unlike that of

Libya, Sudan, Tunisia, and Morocco, in that it incorporated the idealistic concepts of Pan-Africanism. Nkrumah spoke of this African political unification in terms of the "African Personality," which is a symbol or expression of "the community of aim and purpose . . . [which] will allow us to speak with concerted voice in the cause of peace and for the liberation of dependent Africa and in defense of our national independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity."[11]

Nigeria, however, differed from Ghana. It was the task of the Nigerian leaders to forge internal unity out of three distinct regions, each with an underdeveloped economic system; therefore, national cohesion was of prime importance.

As there were nineteen other independent African nations in the same position as Nigeria, too weak alone to resist a Pan-African movement, these nations joined with Nigeria at Monrovia, Liberia, to form the Monrovia bloc. This bloc of nations, pragmatic, conservative, and regionally-oriented, asserted the political independence of each member state, concerning themselves primarily with economic and social exchanges. Rejecting Pan-Africanism as a political goal for the near future, yet sharing with the Pan-Africanists "African Socialism" as an ideological framework, the Monrovia group emphasized the right of nations to individual existence

and the development of their own personalities, as well as
the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs
of member nations. For refusing to sacrifice national
sovereignty to continental unity, the Monrovia group was
attacked by its opponents as reactionary and as a status quo
seeker.

Speaking at the Monrovia Conference, President Tubman
of Liberia stated the aim of individual country nationalism:

> Political union is attained by virtue of agree-
> ment. In the absence of free agreement any form of
> political union is but imperial domination. . . .
> History has clearly demonstrated that political
> union as opposed to political domination can be more
> readily achieved where there is a community of eco-
> nomic interest, cultural cross-fertilization, as well
> as free social intercourse and association.[12]

Speaking at the same conference, Léopold Senghor,
President of Senegal, added:

> . . . If we wish to succeed, we must emphasize
> cultural, technical, and economic co-operation rather
> than the co-operation of political parties. We must
> advance step by step, keeping our feet firmly on the
> ground.[13]

The militant Pan-Africanists, led by Kwame Nkrumah
of Ghana, formed the Casablanca group in 1961. Morocco,
Algeria, and Egypt joined the three countries which originally
composed the Union of African States (UAS)--Ghana, Guinea,
and Mali--in stressing the primacy of political unification.

Nkrumah enumerated the four stages of Pan-Africanism as being national independence, national consolidation, the creation of transnational unity and community, and social and economic reconstruction on the basis of African Socialism.

Comparing the two opposing blocs, a Monrovia spokesman said that the two blocs had

> one basic difference of an ideological nature which should attract the serious attention of all who sincerely advocate African unity: . . . the conspicuous absence of a declaration by the Casablanca powers that they recognize the right of African states to legal equality . . . ; to self-determination; to safety from interference in their internal affairs. . . . The African states can be as separate as the fingers in their domestic affairs, but can be as united as the fist in matters of external and general concern. . . . We shall yet succeed in forging unity of purpose and identity of interests among the diverse peoples of Africa.[14]

President Nyerere of Tanzania was somewhat critical of the pragmatic Monrovia group in his comment on regional cooperation:

> No true African Socialist can look at a line drawn on a map and say, 'The people on this side of that line are my brothers.' . . . Every individual on this continent is his brother.[15]

Rupert Emerson, in his discussion of "Nationalism and Political Development," acknowledges the fact that nationalism is the most potent force in the African revolutionary drive. Yet, he cautions, nationalism must, due to its nature and

history, be imprecise and hard to pin down:

> To demand that each nation have a single positive
> content and program for nationalism is to ask that it
> select from a diverse history certain strands which
> alone will constitute its legitimate national heritage.[16]

Emerson cites the fight for an improved standard of
living as being second in importance to self-determination
as the key driving force in the African revolutionary movement.
Evidence indicates that the average poverty-stricken African
expects to pay the price of temporary economic privation in
order to obtain national salvation; material well-being, in
other words, will come naturally as a result of self-determina-
tion. The standard nationalist phrase runs: "We would rather
be governed like hell by ourselves than well by someone else."
And as Nkrumah remarked: "We prefer self-government with
danger to servitude in tranquillity."[17] Adopting the creed
of former Pan-African Congresses, Ghana's Convention People's
Party proclaimed: "Seek ye first the political kingdom and
all things shall be added unto you."

Of utmost concern to nationalist leaders throughout
Africa today is what Emerson calls the "leadership gap," a
problem which has created a false sense of unity and which
may eventually undermine future efforts toward unity. The
leadership of the new African nations has been removed from
the boundaries of traditional society and from the hands of

the masses, only to be assumed by an educated Western-oriented
élite. Nationalism, however, must spring from the background
of the people; it cannot be the property of a minority.
Can, then, a Western-oriented élite effectively bolster and
lead the movements toward nationhood? Can nationalism be
superimposed upon a people from above? Does the national
purpose have the same meaning with respect to both the masses
and the élite? In which direction will these groups move?
Most likely, the élite will not move back into the past, but
the masses will probably become more Westernized.

The presence of such a great gap in society between
the masses and the élite raises the question of whether real
solidarity can exist within a nation in the face of such
great internal divisions. A false sense of unity may arise
due to general negative feelings among the masses aimed at
the foreign powers. But what happens to this unity when the
taint of colonialism has vanished? Perhaps we can see the
answer to this question today as we witness renewed tribalism
raging in many African nations, notably Nigeria and the
Congo.

Such new, dissonant African states, generally created
by imperialism, must be redesigned if they are not built
upon a national foundation. A new identity must be created

if one has not already been bred over centuries of common
history and destiny. This, however, cannot be accomplished
overnight. Where such an identity is lacking, the govern-
ment must assume the role of creating a national conscious-
ness, or at least, of guiding the nation in its quest for
unity and identity. However, as Emerson points out:

> Integration is possible where peoples have an
> original similarity and may be totally or virtually
> excluded where they are divided by large-scale dis-
> parities in such basic elements as race, culture,
> religion, and language.[18]

Such barriers to the creation of a single national community
are East African communalism and South African apartheid.

In Africa, maintains Emerson, nations have yet to
come into the making; at best, they are in the process of
developing. The traditional units of culture and society,
the tribe and the clan, are still dominant. The effects
of war, conquest, and so forth, have not united the masses
into national communities to an extent comparable to other
parts of the world. Some argue that the nations of Africa
really only exist in the persons of the nationalists them-
selves, since it is these few enlightened persons who have
transcended tribal boundaries and who can view the society
in which they live in a broader sense than can the masses.

As James S. Coleman remarked in 1956: ". . . until

the last five years the overwhelming majority of the peoples
of northern Togoland were unaware of the existence of Togo-
land."[19]

Indeed, it seems as if the African people will tend
to follow a national leader no matter what their prior
political sentiments may be. Because the masses are just
not as interested in daily political activity, they may
never close the wide gap between themselves and their leaders.
However, if the masses simply prefer to be told what to do,
if they lack the ability to stand up, defend, and fight for
their rights as they must have done for centuries in their
traditional societies--then how can the nationalist leaders
develop a new consciousness among the people, people who
have such a vital place in this transformation? The leaders
must speak in the name of the people, for what is involved
in the building up of nationalist aspirations is the con-
ception that the mass of ordinary people are of some consequence
or worth. Perhaps it is only the ignorance of the masses
which prevents them from giving expression to their national
soul; in this case, nationalism develops only with difficulty
as the leaders of the various nations face the problem of
giving some specific content to the national will. The élite
must create an emotional cement to hold the people together

when disagreements threaten to pull them apart.

This whole line of argument, it must be remembered, is predicated on the assumption that there are no common, national, unifying bonds within most African nations that can serve to create and bolster a nationalist movement. It is largely in opposition to this assumption that various African leaders throughout the continent have promoted the doctrines of Négritude, African Personality, and African Socialism, in an effort not only to reaffirm their pride in all that is African, but, as well, to foster a sense of unity among all Africans and all African nations. It is with firm convictions of an underlying African unity that nationalist leaders are trying to surmount tribal barriers in order to found nations built on self-respect, esprit de corps, and social solidarity. It is generally thought that once this national identity is established within a nation, the values, decisions, and institutions necessary for advance can come about with greater ease and success.

Tom Mboya of Kenya affirms this latter belief in speaking of the quest of the African peoples for a rediscovery of themselves, for subjective self-promotion. For Mboya, African nationalism echoes the past with its ideals, values, and cosmological ideas; it signifies a search for foundations

upon which tribes can build their own institutions. These
foundations are represented by the concepts of African
Socialism, Négritude, and African Personality which will
be discussed in detail in subsequent chapters. The ardent
nationalist and Pan-Africanist, Kwame Nkrumah, has also
recognized the need in African society and in nation-building
for a unifying ideology which will account for the needs of
all segments and remove competition. Nkrumah thus developed
his philosophy of "consciencism," which, like Négritude,
African Personality, and African Socialism, affirms African
values and reflects African dynamic unity.

PAN-AFRICANISM

The Pan-African movement was built largely upon the
work of W. E. B. DuBois and the socialist George Padmore.
The term "Pan-Africanism" has varied meanings, often serving
as a catchword for African nationalists looking for a common
destiny and some form of political association. That it is
somewhat vague, existing without clearly defined boundaries,
is evident in the somewhat varying emphasis given to African
unity, black nationalism, and socialism in the following Pan-
African visions of the late George Padmore:

In our struggle for national freedom, human
dignity and social redemption, Pan-Africanism offers
an ideological alternative to Communism on the one
side and Tribalism on the other. It rejects both
white racialism and black chauvinism. It stands for
racial co-existence on the basis of absolute equality
and respect for human personality. Pan-Africanism
looks above the narrow confines of class, race, tribe
and religion. In other words, it wants equal oppor-
tunity for all. Talent is to be rewarded on the basis
of merit. Its vision stretches beyond the limited
frontiers of the nation-state. Its perspective em-
braces the federation of regional self-governing
countries and their ultimate amalgamation into a United
States of Africa. In such a Commonwealth, all men,
regardless of tribe, race, colour or creed, shall be
equal and free. And all the national units comprising
the regional federations shall be autonomous in all
matters of common interest to the African Union. This
is our vision of the Africa of Tomorrow--the goal of
Pan-Africanism.[20]

Later, George Padmore stated, with more emphasis on

black nationalism and Socialism:

Pan-Africanism seeks the attainment of the govern-
ment of Africans, by Africans, for Africans. . . .
Economically and socially, Pan-Africanism subscribes
to the fundamental objectives of democratic socialism,
with state control of the basic means of production
and distribution. It stands for the liberty of the
subject within the law and endorses the Fundamental
Declaration of Human Rights, with emphasis upon the
Four Freedoms . . . . Pan-Africanism sets out to
fulfill the socioeconomic mission of communism under
a libertarian political system . . . [for] there is
slowly arising a . . . strong brotherhood of Negro
blood throughout the world.[21]

The Fifth Pan-African Congress of 1945 was the most im-

portant in the development of Pan-Africanism. The ideology

developed by the Congress, according to Kwame Nkrumah, was

"African nationalism--a revolt against colonialism, racialism, and imperialism in Africa."[22] This stress on nationalism was incompatible with doctrinaire Marxism, yet, in one of his more Marxist moments, DuBois said to all Africans: "Your bond is not merely color of skin but the deeper experience of wage slavery and contempt."[23]

It has been charged by some critics that Pan-Africanism is merely a crust, a hollow slogan. Yet, it does have some practical bases which give it substance. It is possible to name at least five areas of similarity in African cultures which form the bases of Pan-Africanism, making it a philosophy and plan of action.

All African countries have had the common experience--and perhaps it has been their most intense reality--of being under the colonial yoke for decades. African unity has been enhanced due to the common glue of colonial oppression. Africans, however, do not want the unity created for them by the colonial regimes. This source of cohesion is rapidly disappearing with independence, and African nations are finding it tough to create their own, new unity.

> How easy it seemed to achieve African unity
> in the old days when the colonial regimes ruled
> almost the whole continent.[24]

It seems as if there has been little after all in the past or recent history of Africa to make Pan- African unity easy or natural. Perhaps the only effective operational unity will be based on similar political ideologies and governmental systems. The tendency, though, has been toward a greater divergence on these matters.

A second area of simularity making for some degree of Pan-African unity is the simple factor of the timing of independence. Most African nations have achieved independence within a few years of each other, and all feel in varying degrees inexperience and insecurity, and see the need for mutual understanding and aid. Strength in unity is envisioned especially in respect to the United Nations and the Cold War.

A third basis of unity is common poverty--economic and social underdevelopment. Poverty is blamed on a common oppressor, the colonial powers, thus Africans feel no disgrace, only a common challenge and a source of unity, cohesion and purpose. Several Africa-wide developmental institutions have been formed in response to the common need for development. Efforts have been expended to establish an African Development Bank and an African Common Market. To promote technical co-operation in Africa south of the Sahara, the Commission for Technical Cooperation in Africa (CTCA) was formed. A great

deal of tolerance has developed between African nations and African leaders because all realize that essentially they are in the same boat. All to an extent play off the East against the West in their economic programs.

Fourth, there has developed a new racial self-consciousness over the years of colonial oppression which has led to a common expression of outraged pride.

Finally, an important basis for unity is African communalism as an indigenous way of life; African Socialism is built on this heritage. As Julius Nyerere of Tanzania said:

> Modern African Socialism can draw from its
> traditional heritage the recognition of society
> as an extension of the basic family unit. But it
> can no longer confine the idea of the socialist
> family within the limits of the tribe, nor indeed,
> of the nation. For no true African socialist can
> look at a line drawn on a map and say 'the people
> on this side of the line are my brothers, but those
> who happen to live on the other side of it can have
> no claim on me.' Every individual on this continent
> is his brother.[25]

Pan-Africanism has followed three forms, all of which are popular among African leaders. First, it expresses a desire for the complete liberation of the whole continent from colonial rule. Second, there must be the development of cultural unity, as expressed in the somewhat mystical concepts of African Personality and Négritude. Concerning the latter, Senghor has said:

Négritude is the whole complex of civilized
values . . . which characterize the Negro-African
world. All these values are essentially formed by
intuitive reason . . . the sense of communion, the
gift of myth-making, the gift of rhythm.[26]

Thirdly, Pan-Africanism serves to promote internal
development and to establish international power positions
through the furthering of unifying activities in the social,
economic, and political spheres. African Socialism is such
a unifying ideology which is directly related to Pan-Africanism;
indeed, almost all Pan-Africanists are socialists (African
Socialists) today. These socialists believe in a single
"traditional culture" for all Africa; in the common suffering
by all regions of Africa due to colonial exploitation; in
the need for an economic basis for unity--that is, the ex-
ploitation of African resources for the benefit of Africans;
and, finally, in progress which can only come through
rational continent-wide planning due to the uniqueness of
the African situation.

The belief in Negro rights and "Africa for the Africans"
includes Negroes from all over the world. The feeling of
Negroes for their homeland and for a communion with their
heritage can be seen in this poem by Claud McKay:

For the dim regions whence my fathers came
My spirit, bondaged by the body, longs.

> Words felt, but never heard, my lips would frame;
> My soul would sing forgotten jungle songs.
> I would go back to darkness and to peace.
> But the great western world holds me in fee,
> And I may never hope for full release
> While to its alien gods I bend my knee . . .[27]

This poem shows the belief that a free Africa could bring renewed hope to Negroes throughout the world and could help liberate those Negroes of African descent living overseas, often in despair upon finding themselves rejected by white cultures.

On May 25, 1963, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) charter was drawn up in the realization of the need for centralized political direction in Africa and some unification of overall policies and objectives. The OAU did away with the Monrovia and Casablanca groups in their present form and symbolized new heights for African unity. It was designed:

> . . . to promote the unity and solidarity of the African states; to coordinate and intensify the cooperation and efforts to achieve a better life for the peoples of Africa; to defend their sovereignty; to eradicate all forms of colonialism in Africa; and to promote international cooperation having due regard to the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.[28]

The formation of the OAU seemed to hail the recognition of a sense of "one-ness," of "African-ness," that all Africans possess a fundamental scale of values and beliefs--a unique

"personality" that could find expression in many ways.

Yet, three years later, at the third summit conference of the OAU in 1966, such illusions seemed to be fading. There is a great deal of discord and misunderstanding among the African leaders which is due primarily to three main factors within the continent.

There has been, first of all, a general loss of confidence among African leaders in the past several years due to rising difficulties within their countries and within Africa as a whole; this can be seen in the recent numbers of army coups.

Secondly, with the steadily increasing number of independent African states--over forty now--there are such causes of tension as frontier disputes, especially the recent clashes between Somalia and its neighbors, Kenya, Ethiopia, and French Somaliland.

Most important, however, is the growing sense of disillusionment taking hold of Africa's leaders; the former atmosphere of optimism and exuberance is swiftly fading among the dry realities of independence. Leaders are beginning to realize that they must either first mend their fences at home or face the probability of domestic discord and personal deposition. The fates of such leaders and countries as

Nkrumah of Ghana, Ahmed Ben Bella of Algeria, and the late
Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa of Nigeria, and many others, have
served as convincing examples to most African leaders.

Indeed, as the conference adjourned, one might well
have questioned the strength of the Pan- Africanist movement
as shown in the results, if any, of the meeting in Addis Ababa.
Besides finding complete agreement in their commitment to
fight against white supremacy in South Africa, Rhodesia, and
the Portuguese territories, there were few positive, concrete
programs or objectives accepted sufficient to hold this Pan-
African organization together in any meaningful sense.
President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania--always a realist--commented
that all this conference had really achieved was additional
time with which the African leaders could seriously rethink
their problems. But, he added, the future of the Pan-African
movement, as embodied in the Organization of African Unity,
depends largely on where the thinking of these leaders leads
them. The OAU will not survive and grow stronger merely
because it is desired and useful to the stability of Africa.

As Thiam, the Prime Minister of Senegal, has said,
in summary:

> Pan-Africanism remains, above everything, a
> conception without sharply defined boundaries which
> rests at one and the same time on realities and on

myths. The realities are those of the same conti-
nent, similar economic and social conditions, the
solidarity created by the colonial experience that
all the peoples of Africa have experienced and are
still experiencing. The myths are a group of
ideas, feelings, beliefs, sometimes legends, which,
put together, make the pan-African ideal and which
cause Africans to believe in a common destiny.

A mixture of realities and myths, pan-Africanism
is also a mixture of contradictory elements. It is
a supernationalism that claims to embrace all of Africa,
or at least all of one part of Africa. . . . but it is
a supernationalism that contains within it the germs
of an imperialism. It is a unifying current opposed
by centrifugal forces that contain factors of discord
and dislocation.[29]

Thiam reflects a common suspicion on the part of many

French-speaking African leaders as to the purity of motives

and ideals of Pan-African advocates. Conflict over the

leadership of the Pan-African movement, coupled with these

suspicions, the preference for national interests, the dis-

sonance wrought by tribalism, as well as the different

colonial situations at independence, have all led to dis-

harmony and doubts as to the future of Pan-African unity

and cooperation.

CHAPTER II

FOOTNOTES

[1]Melville J. Herskovits, The Human Factor in Changing Africa (New York, 1962), p. 311.

[2]Ibid., p. 312.

[3]Ibid., p. 321.

[4]Ibid., p. 315.

[5]Ibid., p. 318.

[6]Ibid., p. 318.

[7]Ibid., p. 320.

[8]Ibid., p. 322.

[9]Ibid., p. 305.

[10]Ibid., p. 451.

[11]Dorothy Nelkin, in William H. Friedland and Carl G. Rosberg, Jr. (eds.), African Socialism (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1964), p. 73.

[12]Arnold Rivkin, The African Presence in World Affairs (London, 1964), p. 163.

[13]Ibid., pp. 163-64.

[14]Nelkin, p. 75.

[15]Ibid., p. 77.

[16]Rupert Emerson, in John H. Hallowell, Development: For What? (Durham: Duke University Press, 1964), p. 7.

[17]Ibid., p. 5.

[18]Ibid., p. 14.

[19]Ibid., p. 21.

[20] Burke, p. 144.

[21]Nelkin, p. 63.

[22]Ibid., p. 70.

[23]Ibid., p. 71.

[24]Burke, p. 143.

[25]Ibid., pp. 142-43.

[26]Nelkin, p. 73.

[27]Basil Davidson, Which Way Africa? (Baltimore, 1964), p. 61.

[28]L. G. Cowan, The Dilemmas of African Independence (New York, 1965), p. 66.

[29]Ibid., p. 69.

CHAPTER III

"AFRICAN SOCIALISM: IDEAL AND PRACTICAL"

President Senghor's definition of _socialism_ as a _sense_ _of_ _community_ appeals to us greatly. He adds that this is a _return_ _to_ _Africanism_; we would rather say this is the _essence_ _of_ _Africanism_ which must be preserved at all costs in our endeavor to modernize.[1]

African nations, due to various environmental and historical conditions, are faced with their own, unique economic problems, which are, in many respects, unlike those of any other country in the world. The educated leaders of these African nations are well aware of the challenges involved in the economic development of their respective countries. And yet, it is not enough for merely the élite to be conscious of these needs and challenges. Genuine economic reform in Africa can come about only through the widespread modification of certain peasant attitudes and traditional methods, as well as the education of the masses with respect to the nature of the forthcoming local and national economic revolutions. For these reasons most educated African leaders are attempting to instill in the minds of their people an awareness not only of special _African_ problems, but also of novel _African_ solutions to these

problems. African Socialism is one particular solution
which has been adopted in various forms by several African
leaders. This doctrine represents a unique, African response
to the challenges facing new African nations, and as such,African
Socialism is an attempt to instill in the African people a
sense of pride or dignity with respect to their own abilities,
achievements, and contributions.

Only through knowledge of indigenous African societies
can one fully comprehend the dilemmas of Africa in the present
and the African hopes for the future. Just as the roots
of contemporary economic problems are found largely in the
past (that is, in indigenous African society as well as in
the colonial era), so African socialists look to their
traditional heritage for inspiration and guidance. With
these thoughts in mind, the forthcoming discussion of
African Socialism will begin with an examination of African
economic traditions; will be followed by various definitions
of the concept; and finally, will close with an analysis of
contemporary African economic problems as well as several
current attempts to implement or operationalize African
Socialism.

There have been those who, out of ignorance or prejudice,
have doubted that economic laws could be applied to Africans,

the line of reasoning generally being that Africans behave in an economically irrational fashion. Is there, however, any country in the world that is completely rational in its economic activities? It is generally a lack of understanding of the African environment that accounts for such fallacious judgments, for the fact is that Africans are greatly concerned with, and motivated by, economic considerations. Indeed, perhaps the most pressing daily concern or reality of most Africans is food--or more precisely, the lack of it.

If one were to give a name to the form of economics common to most of Africa, it would probably have to be the "economics of development," for Africa is a continent in the midst of change and development. Economic development, it will be seen, is inextricably bound to political and social development. Political independence cannot truly be successful--will not lead to stability and a better life--unless it is followed by efforts to secure social and economic reconstruction. This problem of development is a legacy of the colonial era--an era which substantially disrupted traditional African economic systems with the introduction of new ideas, techniques, and products before adequately preparing a path toward gradual transition.

Consequently, after political independence, African

leaders are faced with the additional, but less crucial,

problem of creating viable economic institutions within

their countries. For the educated élite, the problem of

adaptation (reconciling the past to the requirements of the

present) is generally not as difficult as it is for the

great masses of conservative, tradition-directed Africans

who still represent the large majority in Africa today.

Because these élites have opened wide the doors of their

countries to innovation, Herbert J. Spiro in The New Africa

in Politics (1962) was led to pronounce several misleading

generalities:

>   . . . Africans are the most present-minded
> people on earth. . . . Without significant excep-
> tions, all African leaders . . . share the
> passionate desire to acquire all the good things
> which western civilization has produced in the two
> millennia of its history. They want especially to
> get the technological blessings of American civiliza-
> tion, and to do so as quickly as possible. The lack
> of historical consciousness of their peoples gives
> the African leaders a great advantage in moving
> rapidly toward this goal of modernization. They are
> not encumbered by written traditions, or by the
> visible and tangible physical presence of the ruins
> of their own 'civilized' past--as most Asians have
> been. Therefore, they do not have to reconcile
> every innovation with the different practices of
> their past.[2]

Mr. Spiro, however, seems to ignore the binding force

of tradition which, although it may be rapidly enervating in

urban centers, still remains strong in most rural areas and

among the majority of African peasants. If not "encumbered"
by written traditions, these African masses are certainly
linked to their past by their religion, folklore, and by
practically every other cultural trait of their societies.
Thus, although modern innovations may be welcomed at the
top, by the élite, it is at the base of society--among the
masses--that they must be accepted if they are to provide
any appreciable measure of improvement or success.

Furthermore, to say that all African leaders have a
passionate desire for wealth and the material benefits of
Western societies, is, according to one African statesman,
an unqualified overstatement.

> That we want to banish poverty is one thing.
> The setting up, as a social aim, of the creation
> of unlimited wealth may be quite another. If we
> accept that as our whole aim it can quite easily
> lead us to a distortion of human values. For
> isn't it just this worship of wealth, with its
> concomitant distortion of values, which--in some
> societies--has led the masses to esteem the
> wealthy striptease artiste, or the adolescent
> 'rock' singer, above the painter or the musician?
> Once a society makes the creation of wealth a
> matter of prestige, it's difficult to persuade
> individuals not to adopt the same outlook.[3]

Granting, then, the obvious and real need for economic
development in Africa, the next great question which arises
deals with the kind of reconstruction that can and should be
attempted. Yet this problem cannot be successfully debated

without some general knowledge of the social and economic structures of traditional African societies. It is therefore necessary to study in society what Igor Kopytoff has called the "social mythology," which consists of assumptions and myths about one's own society and society in general. Applied to traditional African societies such "myths"-- "communalism," "primitive socialism," and "the submergence of the individual in the group"--often evolve into stereotypes.

In African societies cooperation exists in some respects, but not in others; between some people, but not between all. Does "community" to the African stand for his family, lineage, village, or nation? Does cooperation take place in production or in consumption--or both? In fishing or in agriculture? Merely because cooperation is found in one place does not mean that it can be predicted in another; for example, cooperation within the corporate lineage is different from cooperation based upon strict reciprocity. Julius Nyerere, in pointing to the individual component in African economic relations, remarked: "To him [the African], the wage is _his_ wage; the property is _his_ property." "But his brother's need is his brother's need, and he cannot ignore that need."[4]

A great deal of confusion has arisen among Western

scholars over the relation of institutions found in African
cultures and the "personality" of the people of those cultures.
Kopytoff insists that cooperative institutions do not imply
the existence of cooperative personalities. In support of
his claim, he alludes to a recurrent theme in African
literature--the abandonment of cooperative patterns when
there is no individual utility involved and when sanctions
supporting them are removed.

Nevertheless, without denying the individualistic
components of African cultures, several basic social "trends"
can be distinguished. First is the idea of the social
obligation to work, which, according to Nyerere and others,
is traditional:

> In traditional African society everybody was a
> worker. There was no other way of earning a living
> for the community. Even the Elder, who appeared to
> be enjoying himself without doing any work and for
> whom everybody else appeared to be working, had, in
> fact, worked hard all his younger days.[5]

Since independence, the low level of development of
many African societies has been of the utmost concern to
most leaders. The idea currently in vogue is that all men
have an obligation to work to increase the material well-being
of society. The cardinal social sins are parasitism and
idleness. Kwame Nkrumah maintains that since the state has

solved, or attempted to solve, many basic economic problems
of the African workers, these workers have certain responsi-
bilities to the state in return.

And yet, argues William H. Friedland in <u>African
Socialism</u>, the urgency of work alluded to by most African
leaders is actually opposed to the traditional African view
of work, which is somewhat similar to that of the Greeks.
In other words, work is regarded as an evil necessary for
survival, but by no means is it a social obligation. Most
African societies were, and many still are, subsistence,
and they didn't conceive of work in ethical terms. As yet there
are no legal obligations regarding work, though there are
often informal sanctions against those refusing to contribute
their labor to community projects. One of the greatest
problems facing the new African nations today is the fact
that their populations have not fully developed systematic
work habits necessary for rapid economic growth.

Traditional African societies have, moreover, been
generally regarded as classless or minimally stratified
societies. Social class is regarded as a European import,
introduced to Africa through conquest. Indigenous African
society, it is claimed by many educated Africans today, was
essentially economically homogeneous and unstratified, though,

in truth, there has been some stratification which is ex-
plained away in socialistic terms. For instance, with
regard to the position of the Elder in society:

> The wealth he now appeared to possess was not
> his, personally; it was only "his" as the Elder
> of the group which had produced it. He was its
> guardian. The wealth itself gave him neither
> power nor prestige. The respect paid to him by
> the young was his because he was older than they,
> and had served his community longer.[6]

Despite the fact that some stratifications are extant
within African societies, many Africans hold the view that
no classes should in reality exist. If any, the number of
strata should be small and the differentials between the
strata should be minimal. As one socialistic-minded African
explained:

> The true socialist may not exploit his fellows.
> So that if the members of any group within our
> society are going to argue that, because they happen
> to be contributing more to the national income than
> some other groups, they must therefore take for
> themselves a greater share of the profits of their
> own industry than they actually need; and if they
> insist on this in spite of the fact that it would
> mean reducing their group's contribution to the
> general income and thus slowing down the rate at
> which the whole community can benefit, then that
> group is exploiting (or trying to exploit) its
> fellow human beings. It is displaying a capitalist
> attitude of mind.
>   There are bound to be certain groups which, by
> virtue of the "market value" of their particular
> industry, will contribute more to the nation's income
> than others. But the others may actually be producing

goods and services which are of equal, or greater,
intrinsic value although they do not happen to
command such a high artificial value.[7]

Dr. Nyerere has warned against the dangers of class

formation:

> As nationalism becomes successful, the chances
> of the Europeans and the Asians of maintaining a
> permanently privileged position in our countries
> will tend to diminish. But the chances of the
> educated Africans to become a new privileged class
> will multiply. Yet this will not be so obvious while
> the Europeans and Asians are so strikingly wealthier
> than the Africans. The would-be African exploiter
> can masquerade as a great social reformer by con-
> centrating the attack on European and Asian privilege.
> Before we know where we are, what is now an essen-
> tially dying-out privileged class will have been
> replaced by a permanently privileged class of educated
> Africans.[8]

This prophecy has been borne out, it seems, in Kenya

as recently as December, 1966. Kenya has decided to expel

all non-African traders from the central market, to be

replaced by Africans. This action, in response to intensified

appeals for more rapid Africanization in the country, imperils

the fortunes of more than 180,000 Asians who have held a

virtual monopoly on small business life in Kenya, and as

such, with their substantially higher incomes ($1500 annually

compared to $220 for East Africans) constitute a somewhat

privileged class. It is hoped that black Africans will be

able to fill these jobs, even though they now occupy only

seven per cent of all jobs in the nation's private sector. Whether or not these new African entrepreneurs will constitute a new, prestigious class remains to be seen.

The Tanzanian government, TANU, envisions cooperatives as replacements for Asian middlemen. Thus, there would be little opportunity for the personnel within the cooperatives to become established as a middle class. Essentially, this is not an anti-Asian movement, but rather the government is trying not to create a new class system while building institutions amenable to capital accumulation.

As is obvious, a major problem deals with the relative economic positions of different groups, a problem which is a cause of the frequent recriminations of unionists and political leaders against each other. Several political repercussions are due to income differentials. First of all, if workers get higher wages and benefits, it will result in adverse effects on capital accumulation as well as on the standard of living of the rest of the population. Thus, there is a need for leaders to keep wages in hand. Secondly, increasing differences in the standard of living between the rural and the urban populations result in the movement of more people to the towns. Therefore, a large unemployment problem is mounting. These unemployed masses, in turn, are

susceptible to demagogic influences and are potential dis-
ruptive forces of public order.

Furthermore, it is naive to expect those with political
power to be satisfied with an access to material wealth
equal to those with no power. People do not seem to recog-
nize the obvious facts that stratification of some form will
inevitably exist in society and such invidious distinctions
between strata will probably continue in the future. It has
been stated that African society will be classless when the
state eventually owns the means of production; nevertheless,
the indications are that the exploitation of man by man will
continue. In order for underdeveloped African states to
grow, their societies must, in the economic sphere, become
greatly stratified. Since skilled manpower is in short
supply, African nations must pay premium prices for skills
needed in all fields. As skilled nationals replace ex-
patriates, they will naturally increase their demands for
greater payments for services rendered. Or else they will
go where their demands will be met in the world market; thus,
talent will leave the country.

Often these arguments for a classless society are,
according to Friedland, merely ideological justifications
for the effective monopoly of material wealth by powerful

groups. Such arguments also seemingly justify the exercise of power by a political élite. In such a state of ferment as persists today, where new institutions are forming, it is necessary to have careful treatment with respect to the function of ideology in a classless society.

Land, in Africa, has traditionally been a corporate possession. Land was owned in common by the tribe, but an individual could obtain rights to a piece of property provided he made use of it. Besides serving as a source of livelihood, land has traditionally been bound to a variety of social and religious beliefs and practices. This indigenous pattern of land tenure has been, according to several authorities, a chief obstacle to economic growth:

> . . . it is clear that the root cause of the economic backwardness of various African territories, as well as of the native areas in the Union, lies in the failure to modify customary control of land occupation and tenure, which has prevented the emergence of land use and ownership compatible with modern forms of commercialized production in a money economy. The failure to make of the land a viable economic factor of production has condemned the peoples on it to eke out a precarious subsistence.[9]

Since independence, subsistence agriculture has been increasingly giving way to the production of cash crops and to further efforts at modernization. Some individual freehold tenure has been introduced in an attempt to provide

incentives for land use and conservation.

Accepting the urgent need for development, and recog-
nizing certain alleged socialistic elements in indigenous
African societies, the problem now facing African leaders
deals with the kind of reconstruction that can and should
be attempted.

Many African leaders are skeptical of following the
capitalistic path of development. These Africans have pointed
to the disastrous affects of private enterprise in Latin
America as consequences not desirable of repetition in
African countries. Most of the Latin American nations that
have adopted capitalism are poverty-stricken, chaotic in
social structure, as well as corrupt and dictatorial. None
are really free, say these Africans, of colonial bondage.

Indeed, Africa's own past experience with capitalism
has not been a happy one. The colonial capitalists exploited
the extractive industries practically to the exclusion of
industry and agriculture. Capital has been foreign-owned,
with profits usually exported to the home country. Some
African leaders argue that capitalists sell European products
at exploitative prices, while buying African produce at low
prices. Perhaps the greatest indictment against capitalism,
as practiced by the colonial powers, is that it destroyed

African culture. Africans were generally subject to only the worst aspects of capitalism, those of social alienation, economic rootlessness, and national exploitation.

Africa, furthermore, being largely excluded from the profits of European capitalism, has not developed much of a capitalist middle-class; and a country cannot have capitalism without capitalists. There have been some Africans who have made a lot of money, but they have not invested it in the kind of capital investment needed to make capitalism work.

Nkrumah has said that there is only one way that Ghana can really advance--". . . it can only be through co-operative and similar bodies, since experience has shown that private Ghanaian businessmen cannot or will not work on a sufficient scale to compete with overseas firms."[10]

If capitalism is chosen, maintain some educated élites, one of two things happens to an African country. Either there is a very long period of very slow development, or there is an equally long period of tutelage (economic) to wealthy Western nations. And it was these countries, Africans cannot forget, that brought chaos to African life. Neither of these alternatives has seemed very promising to Africans as far as promoting economic and social expansion and reorganization.

It seemed rather that both alternatives would lead to discontent and the formation of opposition groups, which would then require suppression in an authoritarian fashion.

There are few signs, then, that African nations are going to depend upon the historic process of capital accumulation. Yet the fact remains that the new African nations desperately need to accumulate capital; and if not by capitalism, how can this be done? African nations would be forced to decrease consumption and withhold income from the masses. This, however, raises the inevitable conflict between withholding income and the "revolution of rising expectations." Even with loans from foreign sources, most capital will have to come from domestic sources. The apparent danger is that foreign aid will be used for consumer income, which will inhibit domestic saving and investment.

Some African leaders have thought that the fragmentation and expropriation of holdings belonging to foreign elements (such as Kenya whites) would aid the cause of capital accumulation. But this would probably lead not only to a decrease in the production on these lands, but also to a decrease in the tax revenues secured from whites for their high rates of production.

Incentives for saving must be increased or else

consumption will increase, with less being available for re-
investment. Where a free market doesn't exist, the state
must act as a restraint upon income; and it is hard for a
democratic-oriented state to make such unpopular decisions.
In some West African countries such restrictions have taken
the form of denying to the growers of a particular crop
(cocoa, rubber, cotton) the full value of the foreign exchange
received from crop exports. Also, in the past, laborers in
mines (notably those in Ghana) have been denied the right
to collective bargaining to get the full value of their
output from the mines. But the state must restrict wages,
incomes, and consumption when there is no market apparatus
available to do so.

According to some Western economists, there should
also be some form of political or economic organization which
will invest these funds. If the funds are to survive,
though, there can be no political corruption, high standards
of living for bureaucrats and leaders, or ineptitude on the
part of those entrusted with the funds. If there is no
private or corporate enterprise to carry out the investment
of the funds that are withheld from the consumers, then a
state enterprise would probably have to be created to do so.

Underdeveloped African nations, these same Western

experts maintain, should become internationally competitive in order to pay for capital equipment imports and essential consumer goods; this often means that wage rates must be kept down. Most African nations have ample resources of cheap labor, but when labor costs per unit increase faster than labor productivity, then this resource too is dissipated.

All in all, a totalitarian state and dictatorship is likely to result, according to some experts, if a state must provide for what the market could do in a capitalistic system. The case of Nkrumah in Ghana is an excellent illustration, where even personal liberty was suppressed under his cult of personality, the result being that Ghana's economic problems were intensified, rather than solved. Thus, many experts, African as well as non-African, stress the importance of incorporating certain aspects of capitalism in African economic development.

No African country wants to use capitalism as its ideal model for economic development, though there are some leaders--namely Houphouet-Boigny (Ivory Coast), Tubman (Liberia), and M'ba (Gabon)--who prefer to adapt some forms of capitalism to the specific needs of their countries. Just as no African country has adopted American-style capitalism, per se, so none of the African nations has followed the

examples of the Soviets or any other country in their particu-
lar brands of socialism or communism. African socialists
may value Marx for his humanism and revolutionary fervor,
but there is little obedience shown to Marxist dogma or to
Communist bloc dictates. In a comparison of European socialism
and African socialism, one student has stated: "Socialism in
Europe is to take the wealth and spread it out, but African
Socialism is the common effort to create wealth."[11]

The Soviets have strongly objected to African attempts
to counterpose African Socialism to scientific socialism.
These Soviet socialists maintain that all socialists are
united by a common desire to abolish the exploitation of man
by man. Conditions throughout Africa are ripe, so it seems
to the Soviet economist, I. I. Potekhin, for all nations
to make the transition to socialism (of course, he means
"scientific" socialism). The bulk of the African masses
are poverty-stricken and exploited; the number of wage
laborers in Africa is small compared with capitalistic
countries; mass migrant labor is common; and a skilled
proletariat is growing and forming trade unions. It is
possible, claim even the Marxists, for African countries to
bypass capitalistic development and get directly to socialism;
it is not essential for every nation to pass through all the

successive stages of historical development.

And yet, African leaders have rejected so-called "tested and proved" scientific socialism for several reasons. One main motive for the rejection of scientific socialism is that African leaders generally constitute the top, privileged, exploiting echelons of society, and they do not want to lose their positions. These African élites, asserting that Africa has an indigenous form of socialism, argue that Africa is in no need of adoption of any new "scientific" version. More-over, several educated Africans have argued that African societies have been traditionally classless, therefore, there has been no need for any Soviet concept of the class struggle. Soviet experts have been quick to retort that Africa has had--and still does have--classes, notably the high-salaried civil servants. Nevertheless, Soviet attempts to persuade African leaders to adopt a Marxist brand of socialism have fallen on deaf ears. This rejection of Marxist Communism can also be attributed to the effects of anti-Communist propaganda, particularly that of some mis-sionaries who have exploited African religious feelings and set many of them against socialism. Finally, the propagation of false socialist theories, for example, "democratic socialism," has created confusion and suspicion about true

socialism, leading some Africans to avoid this road of development.

AFRICAN SOCIALISM--IDEAL (CONCEPTUAL) INTERPRETATIONS

Several African leaders--namely Senghor (Senegal), Touré (Guinea), Nkrumah (Ghana), and Nyerere (Tanzania)--have looked to an African brand of socialism--or, as they call it, African Socialism--as the most promising path of development. These Africans, in pointing out the indigenous roots of socialism in their countries, stress equality, cooperation, collective welfare, and internationalism, as opposed to hierarchy, competition, individualism, and chauvinism. What these Africans want is a non-aligned socialism, pragmatically related to the needs of local, African situations. And so the path of development they have chosen is one of the middle road--between the extremes of capitalistic and of communistic organization--incorporating the best from both systems.

Because the concept is still quite young, educated Africans have, as yet, failed to present a precise definition of African Socialism. African Socialism is not the product of a single thinker, but rather of diverse leaders in many different situations. Rather than a specific guide to action,

the concept represents a set of dimensions which will only be given content as Africans work out their daily problems; in other words, African Socialism looks to long-range goals. At the present, it is mainly a potpourri of ideas. As African nations struggle to satisfy their divergent needs, these ideas will be shaped to meet new demands. Unsuccessful tendencies will gradually disappear, it is hoped, as time matures the concept of African Socialism into a clearer ideology.

At the present what all African socialists are agreed upon is the belief in the freedom of each leader to develop and shape his own brand of socialism in response to the particular needs and prerequisites of his own country. These educated Africans strongly object to attempts by other nations to project their particular economic systems on new, African countries, as if these new nations could not satisfactorily work out their own problems in their own ways. As the socialist Chisiza argued:

> It is both unnecessary and objectionable to narrow the range of choice to two systems: capitalism and communism. As a matter of fact the chances of either . . . being adopted in its unadulterated form are very slim. In Africa, the tendency is toward a pragmatic approach which discards the irrelevant and incorporates the best from both systems.[12]

Mamadou Dia, the former Prime Minister of Senegal, stresses the importance of basing African Socialism on uniquely African values and realities:

> A synthesis will be possible between individualistic
> and socialistic values, harmony between them being
> achieved in the complete human personality. This
> synthesis of a true socialism and a true humanism,
> which will rest on African reality and African values
> while not rejecting the enriching contributions of other
> cultures, will be genuinely African, but will at the
> same time have universal importance.[13]

Facing new African nations are several problems with which, according to William H. Friedland and Carl G. Rosberg, African Socialism is identified, and which, in effect, constitute the "themes" of African Socialism. These, as discussed in African Socialism, are the problem of continental identity, the crisis of economic development, and the dilemmas of control and class formation.

In attempting to differentiate African Socialism from other types of socialism, African socialists show that they are searching for a common continental identity--an African identity. With the old unifying aspect of anti-colonialism gone now, there is the need for a new unifying principle. This search for a continental identity consists of a rejection of all things originating from the metropolitan powers; as a reaction against Europe, African Socialism is similar to the concepts of Négritude and African

Personality. These African socialist leaders are attempting to instill in the masses a sense of "African-ness," an awareness of being Africans above all else. Moreover, these leaders look to traditional African society to discover the roots of African Socialism. As evidence of indigenous socialism they point to the communal ownership of land (or the small extent of individual, private land ownership), the egalitarian character of society (or the low degree of stratification), and the extensive network of social obligations which lead to cooperation. Thus, they conclude that capitalism is not an appropriate economic system for Africa because it is "unnatural."

African Socialism is also identified with the crisis of economic development. Though there is a great deal of fluidity in the policies of African socialists, it is generally agreed that development must be concentrated largely in the public sector. For this reason the role of the government is emphasized in planning, providing capital, and in guiding the economy. The development of an African entrepreneurial class has been discouraged, for such a class is regarded as "self-interested" rather than as contributors to the general welfare.

Even though the development of native capitalism is

discouraged, generally African socialists encourage private
foreign investment.   These socialists do not want to create
a local group which can entrench itself and act with a
degree of economic independence that might have social and
political ramifications in the future.   But they encourage
foreign investment because there is a need for capital
importation which is regarded as a government responsibility.
The governments of these socialist countries sometimes seek
to accumulate needed capital by encouraging the growth of
institutions that accumulate capital, but which are manipu-
lated by a central authority--for example, banks and marketing
cooperatives.   There is some scattered talk of partnerships
between governments and foreign investors, though the spheres
open to foreign investment will probably be considerably
controlled.   The need for technical skills, as well as capital,
from abroad, means, however, that governments cannot be too
rigid in controlling external assistance.

African Socialism faces several dilemmas in the realm
of economic development.   Many African economies rely on the
export of primary products for needed capital.   African
Socialism, however, is committed to industrialization and to
a reduction of the dependence on exports.   As long as
developmental budgets depend upon export earnings though,

countries will want to increase their exports. Many govern-
ments, therefore, support international commodity agreements
and trade arrangements which will bring higher and more
stable prices for primary products or provide new outlets
for increased production of these exports.

Other conflicts arise over the scale of interterritorial
markets for industrial products, as well as over the question
of how to lessen a country's reliance on exports to Europe
and elsewhere. Some see, in response to the latter conflict,
an answer in the creation of African common markets which
could lay the basis for widespread industrialization. Critics
of this proposed solution maintain that this would only in-
crease the degree of support that lesser developed countries
would have to receive from more advanced nations. There-
fore, many African economists envision growth and change
only within their own territorial economies. To some edu-
cated Africans, African Socialism appears to be merely a
rationalization, a convenient doctrine used to justify
government involvement in the processes of economic growth.

African Socialism is closely identified with the
dilemmas of control and class formation. As stated before,
African socialists hold a fundamental view of human nature
based upon traditional society which is classless, communal,

and egalitarian. They believe that only within society can
the individual fulfill himself; it is within society that
he is given shape, form, and cohesion. The African socialist
must create an atmosphere of hard work and self-sacrifice
on the part of all for the larger collectivity, the nation.
They must get the enthusiastic cooperation of all people for
sustained economic activities that will aid in the accumula-
tion of capital without disrupting the distribution of the
national income. In the past this task has been completed
through the extended kinship family; now, African socialists
are trying to carry over this collectivity to the nation
from the parochial kinship unit.

For most Africans, independence has not been a
revolutionary experience; elements and attitudes of
colonialism still largely remain. Little change has come
about in rural areas, thus, conditions of life have not been
much improved. The promises of nationalist leaders have yet
to be fulfilled. It is in these areas that African Socialism
can be a source of identity for large amounts of Africans.
There are present, however, interest groups and social
classes which have been in the process of forming since
independence and which are dangerous to the cause of African
nationalism. This idea of separate economic classes and

competing groups and classes has been attacked repeatedly
by African socialists as detrimental to the advancement of
economic development. It is charged that these capitalistic
trends heighten individual ambition and produce the desire
for personal gain, thus destroying the valuable character of
African society.

As previously mentioned, there are as many different
interpretations of African Socialism as there are African
leaders and nations. For the cardinal principle behind all
concepts of African Socialism is that every leader should be
free to develop the economy of his country according to the
particular needs of his nation and according to the dictates
of his mind. Thus, as we shall see later in this chapter,
there have been many conceptual and operational differences
with respect to African Socialism. Several attempts have,
however, been made to reach some sort of agreement on African
Socialism, notably the Dakar Colloquium held in Senegal with
eighteen African nations represented.

The African leaders represented at this conference
were basically agreed on the common task of African develop-
ment:

> Development requires a complete and conscious
> association of the entire people, . . . a policy of
> denationalization of the great industrial centers
> and of the essential sectors of production for the

benefit of common development, . . . the unifica-
tion of markets, and the abolition of customs barriers,
whose harmful and artificial nature nobody can
deny. . . . The first step toward the African way of
development is the revolutionary rejection of the old
[colonial] structures. . . . Our way to development
leads also to a community-centered socialism; . . . to
a socialism which, after having been the instrument
of national liberation, will be that of the liberation
of man.[14]

The first common concept, and one that has already been

discussed in detail, is the urgency of development in all

African nations. Secondly, the Dakar Colloquium examined

socialism with respect to rationality and planning. Léopold

Senghor observed:

For us, socialism is merely the rational organiza-
tion of human society, considered as a whole, according
to the most scientific, modern, and effective means.[15]

The Dahomean leader, Chabi Mama, made the following

comment on socialism:

Socialism has been chosen because its scientific
method for the analysis of reality will enable us to
understand the realities of our nation and hence to
transform them rationally.[16]

Finally, Mamadou Dia, of Senegal, added:

Socialism is a method for the understanding of
social realities and more particularly economic
realities. As such it is scientific. Far from
being the exclusive property of a single determined
ideology, it is the common source of all those who
are in search of objectivity. As such it is also,
fundamentally, a method for adjustment to realities.[17]

All African leaders present at the Dakar Colloquium

agreed upon the uniqueness of African Socialism, for the

fact that it has taken particular African conditions into

account. Rejecting classical Marxism, Senghor spoke for

most African socialists:

> It is evident that African Socialism can no longer
> be that of Marx and Engels, which was designed in the
> nineteenth century according to European scientific
> methods and realities. Now, it must take into con-
> sideration African realities. This is particularly
> necessary because Marx and Engels were not anticolonial.
> Engels defended classical slavery and Marx supported
> British colonization of India.[18]

African socialists are striving, furthermore, for

economic modernization without alienation. They realize

that development can, and often does, increase inequality

and alienation. The socialist, Chaker, pointed out the

effects of this alienation and inequality on society:

> The social structure is in a state of efferves-
> cence because of increased proletarianization due
> to the exodus from rural areas and the decline of
> the artisan class, and an increased awareness among
> the masses of their misery and the wide gap existing
> between themselves and the privileged groups.[19]

The greatest threat, according to these African

socialists, comes from the political élite. As A. Kithima of

Congo-Leopoldville noted:

> Our socialist convictions are in revolt against
> the growing gap which separates the class of the
> privileged of the new regime: government employees,
> military men, politicians, from the mass of the urban
> and rural proletarians, the unemployed and the jobless

youth.

   We demand of our rulers a policy of austerity
and of political purge which constitute the pre-
requisites for economic development.[20]

   The dilemma of traditionalism and modernism was the

fifth concept adopted at the Dakar conference. Believing

that alienation stems from the colonial situation as well

as from economic stratification, African Socialism has

chosen a middle ground which is both "man-oriented" and

"community-oriented."

   African Socialism is a humanistic socialism
   because it is an attempt to bring out the qualities
   of man . . . African Socialism is thus the complete
   flowering of man through the flowering of the com-
   munity in the midst of which he has chosen to live
   and work.[21]

   Dr. Biobaku spoke for all delegates to the conference

when he praised President Senghor's concept of socialism.

   President Senghor's definition of socialism as a
   sense of community appeals to us greatly. He adds
   that this is a return to Africanism; we would rather
   say this is the essence of Africanism which must be
   preserved at all costs in our endeavor to modernize.
   In a society which has never really been stratified
   into classes a redistribution of wealth is a normal
   process; the provision of equality for all is merely
   translating into modern terms what goes on all the
   time and perhaps extending it more consciously beyond
   the confines of the extended family.[22]

   With regard to the pressing problem of traditionalism

versus modernism, which lies at the heart of economic develop-

ment, M. Chaker has this to say:

The way to socialism in Africa involves the
break-up of economic, social, and psychological
structures in order to change our present society
into a balanced and harmonious one . . . It is an
established historical fact that traditional political,
economic, and social structures have plunged our re-
spective countries into decadence, regression,
fetishism, and finally colonization. . . . Economic
and social structures at the present stage of the
evolution of our countries constitute the main ob-
stacle to our advancement and if we seriously intend
to blaze our path toward socialism we must attack
these structures. It is here that our first efforts
must be applied.[23]

Mamadou Dia agrees with Chaker on this problem regard-

ing traditionalism.

The first step on the African path to development
is the revolutionary rejection of old structures . . . .
This condemnation and this rejection bear first of all
upon the structures which the colonizer himself has
created and established. But they must also bear with
the same force and the same determination on the archaic
structures, on the feudalism which the colonizer pre-
served and artificially consolidated, while at the same
time he subverted them to make out of them the instru-
ments of his own domination.[24]

The solution to the problem, adds Chaker in a qualify-

ing statement, is not the outright rejection of all tradition,

but rather "selective conservation."

I do not advocate a crusade against traditions:
those which represent our past civilization, our
attachment to moral values and individual genius,
will be jealously guarded; those which are the by-
products of declining centuries will be denounced
and combated with our last breath.[25]

Tradition, point out African socialists, provides

integration and social cohesion, while new innovations

establish modern productive apparatuses leading to higher standards of living.

The mobilization of the masses is a fundamental concept among African socialists; it is generally agreed that human resources are of the utmost importance in development, especially with regard to agriculture. Senghor recognized this fact:

There is need for a plan. But it is evident that agriculture conditions everything else even in developed countries. Marx did not understand this, Lenin had begun to, and Mao Tse-tung understands it fully.[26]

Mobilization to African socialists implies the need for genuine change in attitudes, a re-education.

It is . . . essential to associate the citizens with the design and the realization of the plan. It is not a matter of gaining their formal support or of mobilizing them by a simple recourse to commands. On the contrary, it is necessary to make the population conscious of the policy of development, to make them experience the problems, to make them will the means, first at the level of village realities, and then, step by step, at the level of regional and national realities.[27]

For agricultural modernization, African socialists realize that one must account not merely for the soils and plants, but also for the nature of man, in particular the peasant. There is a great need for discipline and authority-- though not of the totalitarian nature--as well as for devotion,

sacrifice, and organization.

The need for world solidarity--a world crusade against poverty--implies a deeper meaning for African Socialism. It echoes the natural demands of the poor in the midst of plenty; it joins the clamor for justice voiced by the under-privileged nations throughout the world.

> It is in the best interests of the highly de-veloped countries in the world to help all under-developed countries to develop and modernize. In a world becoming more and more closely knit--distance being annihilated for airplanes which could shortly be traveling at three times the speed of sound--prosperity, like peace, has become indivisible and the world cannot long endure half developed and half underdeveloped, half fabulously rich and half abjectly poor. Not to mention the fact that to increase the purchasing power of the people of the underdeveloped countries is indirectly to increase the markets for the goods of the developed countries. So we do not regard external aid as charity--it is merely essential assistance to enable us to help ourselves and there-fore benefit our helpers and the world at large.[28]

One of the chief reasons for the increasing popularity of African Socialism is the variability in interpretation it offers the leaders of new African nations, who are searching for economic doctrines applicable to the particular needs of their countries. One would expect, therefore, to find different conceptions of African Socialism among African leaders as well as different practical uses for the concepts within their respective nations. This expectation will be

borne out in the following discussion of the various
interpretations of African Socialism as presented by Tom
Mboya of Kenya, George Padmore of Ghana, Julius Nyerere
of Tanzania, Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Leopold Senghor of
Senegal, and Sekou Touré of Guinea.

Tom Mboya believes that African Socialism must be
placed in a temporal context in order to understand its
significance. He gets upset with those "peddlers of slogans"
(socialists) and emotions who speak in vague generalities
and don't understand the "noble aspirations" of the African
people. The cause he champions is the fight against so-
called "intellectual imperialism." Mboya agrees with others
who maintain that Africans need a new political philosophy
to explain, validate, and cement their experiences. African
Socialism can provide such a philosophy when it is under-
stood in relation to the political situation of a country.
His concept of African Socialism includes proven codes of
conduct which have given dignity and security to African
societies throughout the ages. Calling this "universal
charity," he refers to African thought processes and the
cosmological ideas of Africans which regard man as an end
and entity in society, not merely as a means to some social
end.

African Socialism, argues this Western-educated Kenyan, does not stand in a class by itself; it is no different, in principle, than any other form of socialism. Mboya claims that socialism is a mental conditioning, an attitude of mind, established so as to bring about rational relationships and harmony in society. He stresses the interrelationship of the individual and society, and the interdependence of the members of society, claiming that no man can exist apart from society. In a somewhat Marxist tone, Mboya says:

> . . . the best and most rational way of running a society is to do so in such a way that there is equality of sacrifice in all walks of life, and in such a way as to give to each according to his needs and take from each according to his ability.[29]

The concept of socialism, according to Tom Mboya, in general "stands for equality of opportunity, security of income and employment, equality before the law, the rule of law, individual freedom, universal franchise, state regulation of economic life, state control of vital means of production and distribution, etc."[30]

In Africa, Mboya says, the acquisitive instincts of people are tempered by their sense of togetherness and their rejection of graft and meanness; the objective is the "social weal." He cites the widespread African belief that

"we are all sons (and daughters) of the soil"; this belief
has a powerful influence on African social, economic, and
political relationships. Businessmen, therefore, are faced
with the task of evolving suitable business ethics while
retaining certain standards of efficiency, thrift, and
initiative. But are these standards possible in a socialist
society? Mboya believes such standards are possible in
Africa, due to the superiority of traditional African Socialism.
This indigenous socialism gave both livelihood and a sense
of security to the members of African society; it provided
them with the opportunity to take part in procuring their
own happiness.

Neither the East nor the West can really understand
the background of African Socialism due to differences in
values. Many are suspicious of the African values of
community interest, honesty, and sacrifice--the Christian
ethics that Africans cherish (though, perhaps Africans are
unaware that Westerners regard them as being "Christian"
imports). Because only Africans can truly understand the
concept of African Socialism, Mboya cautions against seeking
ideological support from either the West or the East.

> Let us go abroad to ask for loans and technical
> skills, not for ideals and ideologies. We must come
> forward ready to build from our own resources, energy

and sweat the Africa of our own vision and dreams,
and not the blueprints of the West or the East.[31]

George Padmore developed a program for African

Socialism, applicable in particular to Ghana, though it

could probably serve any African nation. Padmore saw that

there would have to be a complete reorganization of society,

of ideas, of the mental outlooks, and of the social habits

of people; it would be necessary to rid people of their

prejudices and social attitudes. The education of the new

citizen must teach him of his history and his socialist

future; his need to live in cooperation with others and to

serve his state; and the need for his country to live in

unity with other nations.

Any program of African Socialism, Padmore explained,

must begin with the land. In an effort to move from a sub-

sistence economy to one of surplus and capital accumulation,

a country must diversify its agricultural program and get

away from reliance on a single-crop economy. An increase

in the production of food would substantially relieve the

financial burden of food importation. Markets ought to be

created, believes Padmore, in order to maintain higher price

levels and thus increase initiative. Padmore's socialist

program for African nations calls for the creation of

producers' cooperatives to provide the necessary links with

individual farm production. The government should help in
major industrial projects in order to help move the
country away from a trading economy and into an industrial
economy. The preoccupation with merchandise must decrease
in favor of the production of consumer goods. The important
role of the government in technical planning and capital
formation is stressed by Padmore. Above all, the village
must be retained as the focal point of the community in an
effort to keep the people away from the disruptive influences
of the cities and to ensure the effective operation of
socialism in the country.

Perhaps the most lucid and persuasive spokesman for
African Socialism is Julius K. Nyerere, the President of
Tanzania. The basis for Nyerere's African Socialism lies
in the Swahili word, Ujamaa, meaning "familyhood." Ujamaa is
opposed to both capitalism and doctrinaire socialism--to the
former because it is based upon the exploitation of man by
man, and to the latter because it plays upon the inevitable
conflict between men in order to build a happy society.
Africans, Nyerere contends, do not need to be "taught"
democracy, nor "converted" to socialism, for both are rooted
in the African past. Nyerere does not accept the European
supposition that capitalism with its class conflict is the

father of socialism. Unlike European socialism, African
Socialism did not have the benefit of the agrarian or
industrial revolutions; it did not originate because of
conflicting classes. Nyerere points out that the basis and
the objective of African Socialism is the extended family.
The African socialist regards all men as his brethren, as of
his extended family. TANU, the government of Tanzania,
reflects this belief in its creed: "Binadamu wote ni ndugu
zangu, na Afrika ni moja." ("I believe in human brotherhood
and the unity of Africa.")[32]

Nyerere believes that socialism is an "attitude of
mind," which is essential to instill in the minds of men
if their welfare is to be cared for. It is unsocialistic
to be acquisitive in order to gain power and prestige; thus
the spiral of personal competition is anti-socialistic.
Power and wealth, however, are not bad per se, unless they
are used to dominate someone. If a society really cares
about its individuals and if the individual is willing to
work, then, if he does not hoard his wealth, he has no reason
to worry about what will happen to him tomorrow. A person
can depend on the wealth of the community in times of ad-
versity, because socialism is distributive. Members of
African societies have security, being able to rely on

universal hospitality. In this type of society, according to Nyerere, capitalism is impossible.

The production of wealth requires land, tools, and above all, human labor. In traditional African society, everyone is a worker. Nyerere reminds us that there is no such thing as socialism without work. The idea, moreover, of "worker" as either "employee" or "employer" is foreign to the African way of thinking, a product of colonialism. Even the Elders in traditional society are workers, though they may appear to do nothing. In fact, these Elders had worked hard all their younger days, and now they were "guardians" of the wealth they possessed.

In African society there is no exploitation, and, moreover, no loitering, for loitering is a disgrace. Rather than existing as parasites, taking advantage of the hospitality of their hosts, guests are expected to take part in the daily work of the household they are visiting. An old Swahili saying goes: "Mgeni siku mbili; siku ya tatu mpe jembe." ("Treat your guest as a guest for two days; on the third day give him a hoe.")[33] The importance of cooperative development is illustrated in the story of one skeptic who asked a Tanganyikan to point out an example of Ujamaa, of African Socialism in practice. The African simply pointed to

several men who were rebuilding the house of a neighbor
who was paralyzed.

Nyerere says the first step Africans must take is
toward regaining their former socialistic frame of mind,
toward re-educating themselves. There must be a return to
the traditional African custom of land-holding. This
tradition gave Africans the right to use a piece of land,
even though the land was owned communally. Several foreign
concepts entered with colonialism which subverted tradi-
tional customs by teaching that an individual could claim
land whether he intended to use it or not. Nyerere also
warned Africans to beware of those claiming a greater share
of the national income because of the fact that the market
value of their products increase the national income more
than other products. Others may produce goods and services
of equal, or greater, intrinsic value, even though they do
not command such a high artificial value.

Nyerere speaks of the possibility of development of
a United States of Africa in the future. He says there is
a sentiment of "African-ness," a feeling of mutual involve-
ment which pervades all life. This sentiment, a highly
emotional term, is similar to the concept of African Personality
developed by Nkrumah. Nyerere says that African unity is not

concrete at the moment, but is only an emotion, born of colonialism and oppression. Unity will come not by conquest, but through negotiation. African nations, the Tanzanian President argues, want unity, but with it must come a great degree of self-expression for individual nations. What is needed at first is a loose association of states which can consult on matters of mutual interest and can exchange visits. All countries have their own internal policies which others must refrain from judging, concerning themselves only with problems that have inter-African repercussions. Nyerere hopes that through African Socialism, unity, possibly in the form of a common market and joint action on certain economic questions, can be attained throughout the continent.

Kwame Nkrumah, former President of Ghana and one of the most renowned of African nationalists, believes that the concept African Socialism arose in response to the need for a unifying ideology to encompass all of the diversity in African cultures. Today, at independence, there are three segments in African society--one comprises the traditional way of life; one the Islamic tradition; and the last is the Christian tradition and the culture of Western Europe (brought in by colonialism and perpetuated by neo-colonialism).

Each of these segments has a different and competing ideology. In African society, then, at independence, there is a need for a _unifying_ ideology which will account for the needs of all segments and, at the same time, will remove, or lessen, competition. Such an ideology—African Socialism, or his version of it, _philosophical consciencism_*—must reflect the dynamic unity of Africa and lead to continued progress.

Nkrumah, like most other African socialists, maintains that Africans are socialists by nature. This is because man is regarded as a spiritual being, a person with dignity, integrity, and value. Nkrumah points out the opposition of this socialistic conception of man, to whom original value is attributed, to the Christian idea of original sin and the degradation of man. This socialistic conception of the nature of man is the theoretical basis for African communalism, which stresses the equality of all and the responsibility of the many for all other persons.

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*Bretton, in _The Rise and Fall of Kwame Nkrumah_ (1966), points out that there is a good possibility that Nkrumah's book, _Consciencism_, was written in close collaboration with—or even entirely by—several disinterested British stooges. If this book was written by European friends, it might be _their_ attempt, with Nkrumah's approval of course, to give a high philosophical aura (i.e. ethics, political theory, etc.) to pure pragmatic policies. See Bretton, page 81, for greater detail on this matter.

Nkrumah speaks of Marxian classes which he says
cannot arise in African societies because of the communal
nature of society. Marxian classes bring out disproportions
in political and economic wealth, and thus, this type of
class has a place in horizontal social stratification systems.
In traditional society there is no dominant sectional
interest, the welfare of the people being regarded as
supreme.

The coming of the European changed and distorted
this basis, making colonial administration necessary. To
implement this new administration a new cadre of educated
Africans was needed--a cadre infected with European ideals
which were assumed to be valid for African society. New
systems of prestige and rank arose which were antithetical
to traditional systems.

Also arising were merchants, traders, professional
classes, politicians, trade unionists, and so forth, all
of which demonstrated new affluence. Two of the most im-
portant of the new ideas put before African societies by
the European have been new thoughts about the scale and
type of economic activity, and the idea of the accountability
of the individual conscience as introduced by the Christian
religion.

African society today, says Nkrumah, is not the old
one, but a new one enlarged by Islamic and Christian in-
fluences. There is, accordingly, the need for a new
ideology which will incorporate the best of the new while
preserving the original humanist principles of African
society. This ideology, or philosophical statement, Nkrumah
says, will be born out of the crisis of the African conscience.
He calls it "philosophical consciencism."

Communalism is the ancestor of socialism; its
principles are merely presented in modern terms. There are
no profiteering motives behind socialism; socialism provides
the greatest satisfactions for the greatest numbers of
people in the shortest possible time. Socialism is, however,
concerned with transformation and development. Nkrumah
maintains that materialism, not idealism, will provide the
conceptual basis for the restitution of Africa's egalitarian
and humanist principles. For this materialism will obstruct
the growth of arbitrariness, inequality, and injustice. The
tasks facing African nations call for materialistic solutions:

> . . . that the real income of all types of
> workers, farmers, and peasants must rise;
> that prices of goods must not overleap wages;
> that house rentals must be within the means of
> all groups; that educational and cultural amenities
> must be available to all the people.[34]

Nkrumah believes that capitalism might be too complicated

a system for newly independent countries. If the pillars

of capitalism established in the colonial era are to be

destroyed, thus making way for the continued development

of indigenous socialism, then a true revolution, not merely

reform, is needed. More than mere socialistic talk is

needed:

> All talk of socialism, of economic and social
> reconstruction, is just empty words if we do not
> seriously address ourselves to the question of
> basic industrialization and agricultural revolution,
> just as much as we must concentrate on socialist
> education.[35]

The development of basic industries is of the utmost

importance, though secondary industries cannot be neglected

in the process of this development. In order to have any

industrialization, energy must first be created and harnessed

(Nkrumah cites as an example the Volta River Project).

Indeed, planning itself must become much more organized

and coordinated, so as not to fall prey to an ineffectual

bureaucracy.

> If this new economic and industrial policy is
> to succeed, there must be a change of outlook in
> those who are responsible for running our affairs.
> They must acquire a socialist perspective and a
> socialist drive keyed to the socialist need and
> demands. They must not remain the servants of a
> limping bureaucracy.[36]

In African Socialism, Colin Legum, an accomplished

Africanist, presents a somewhat political interpretation of

African Socialism in Ghana, which reflects the style of

Kwame Nkrumah.*

Nkrumah said that Ghana would not become a socialist

state until complete industrialization, as well as an agri-

cultural revolution, comes to the country. These revolutions

must, he argues, be accompanied by the State take-over of

the ownership of the means of production. At this time Ghana

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*Henry L. Bretton in The Rise and Fall of Kwame Nkrumah
(New York, 1966), pp. 11-12, speaks of the heritage of
colonialism in Ghana which left the country faced with cul-
tural, psychological, and political voids, all of which paved
the way for the introduction of the personality of Nkrumah
as a central unifying force, and then, for the development
of his personality cult. Ghana's cultural, social, and
political heritage was of little functional value in solving
Ghana's pressing social and economic-development problems,
nor could it help in the construction of a modern political
machine.

"The colonial regime, in accordance with its central
purpose, had blocked the development of a spirit of citizen-
ship, a sense of modern social community development, and an
aesthetic orientation meaningful to a people seeking contact
with the mid-twentieth century.

Colonialism had no appreciable interest in the intel-
lect or the soul. (I am ignoring the concerns of the
religious missions.) Crass materialism, cultural vacuity,
and social vulgarity, cynicism and unbridled pragmatism, all
seasoned with racialism--the black races being treated as
genetically unfit for self-rule--could only evoke a crassly
materialistic, politically crude, and cynical African
response."

cannot develop a Marxist society, realizes Nkrumah, because
it lacks the required resources and personnel. At the
present, socialism is resisted in Ghana, and throughout
Africa, by those who envision a loss of privileges (generally
the élite). Socialism then, says Nkrumah, must be built not
only in one country, but throughout the whole continent.
Since independence also means economic independence, Nkrumah
calls for a single, mass, continent wide political party
to arise and fight for independence (here we can see Nkrumah's
efforts to create some sort of Pan-African unity).*

Socialism, according to Legum, has no real roots in
Ghana, in spite of all the claims of African socialists to
possess an indigenous socialist heritage. The people of
Ghana are very individualistic and operate within ethnocentric
communal patterns. Therefore, strong tribal and regional
interests mitigate against socialist ideals, since individual

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*In Ghana: The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah (London
and New York: Thomas Nelson, 1957), Appendix A, Nkrumah
maintains that capitalism, due to its complexity, cannot
survive in a newly independent nation; rather there is the
need for a socialistic society backed up, when necessary,
by discipline of a totalitarian nature in order to ensure
true freedom. Nkrumah believed that an all-inclusive
political machine could be successfully constructed in a
socialist state, wherein public and private domains are
merged.

enterprise is favored. The struggle against collectivization

of any sort is led by the middle class, traders, fishermen,

peasants, and the like. There is private ownership of land,

though much is communally owned. Private producers produce

the vital cocoa crop. Even the cooperative marketing

system has been resisted, especially by the "market mammies"

who favor individual trading. When independence came to

Ghana, private enterprise got a boost. It was a strong

group of traders who developed the businesses and manu-

facturing enterprises in the new nation.

In Ghana, the Convention People's Party (CPP)

adopted the program of the socialists; but this program was

not popularly received. Kwame Nkrumah and his colleagues

thought this would be the best method for development and

for liquidating the vestiges of colonialism, so after they

thought it was safe, they began to push this socialist

ideology. The program of the CPP was gradually changed over

to a socialist one. Unfortunately for Nkrumah, it was not

generally recognized that this socialist program was a

response to the needs of Ghanaian society. Perhaps, says

Legum, this capitalistic or non-socialistic background of

the Ghanaian people led to the downfall of Nkrumah.

While in power, Nkrumah seemed to fluctuate between

realism and idealism; thus, his economic policies often appear experimental and fluctuating. Still, he focused on two points--a vanguardist conception of the party organization as the way to move the masses toward socialism, and the need to organize society economically through the state ownership of the means of production.

To insure a socialist transformation of society, Nkrumah needed the full support of his civil servants and his party; to the extent that he did not get continued, full support, it reflects the nature of Ghanaian society. The CPP never gave full support to revolutionary change in Ghana, only lip service to Nkrumah. The government, more-over, lacked capable servants who could implement Nkrumah's ideas. For Nkrumah did not have the time to train the members of his growing mass party (CPP) in socialist ideals.

African Socialism in Ghana has been given the name "Nkrumaism" in honor of its chief spokesman.* As Nkrumah's

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*According to an experienced student of Ghanaian affairs, David Apter, Nkrumaism is an ideology only in the sense that, as is true of most writings on African Socialism, it appears to be a suitable framework for the rapid, if not forced, solution of developmental problems in Ghana. "If the philosophy of Nkrumaism is by no means organized and programmatic, it is clearly a language of socialism, progress, and development [italics added]." (Bretton, The Rise and Fall of Kwame Nkrumah, pp. 86-87.) This language, as does

spokesman, Mr. Baako, said, in citing the affinity of

Nkrumaism and traditional African society:

> I would define Nkrumaism as a nonatheistic
> socialist philosophy which seeks to apply current
> socialist ideas to the solution of our problems . . .
> by adapting these ideas to the realities of everyday
> life.
> For this reason Nkrumaism is a social idea and a
> way of life that is completely at home in Africa. I
> think it is important that I stress that Nkrumaism
> does not aim at the abolition of personal ownership
> of your own personal property . . . provided that you
> do not use what you have to foster an exploitation of
> man by man.[37]

Nkrumah put it pragmatically:

> We want to see full employment, good housing,
> and equal opportunity for education and cultural
> advancement for all the people up to the highest
> level possible.[38]

Actually, Nkrumaism emphasizes Pan-Africanism more

than socialism according to the 1964 definition by the Kwame

Nkrumah Ideological Institute:

> Nkrumaism is the ideology for the New Africa,
> independent and absolutely free from imperialism,
> organized on a continental scale, founded upon
> the conception of One and United Africa, drawing its
> strength from modern science and technology and from

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most language, conceals as much as it reveals to the people,
and is subject to "symbol manipulation." In other words,
Nkrumaism to Nkrumah meant that he could be as vague as
possible in applying his "ideology" in the operation of his
political machine, so as to obtain the support of substantial
segments of the population.

the traditional African belief that the free
development of each is conditioned by the free
development of all.[39]

Nkrumah initiated several socialistic programs which
engendered quite a bit of opposition. The "Work and Happiness"
program of 1962 was an attempt to use a one-party state (all
power in one man) to create a socialist state. The "First
Seven Year Plan," a somewhat unorthodox Marxian plan, followed
the 1962 program, calling for a mixed economy for a twenty
year transitional period. Under this plan, nationalization
was rejected as a necessity. Supposedly, the state would
take over the greater role in financing productive invest-
ments in Ghana so that by the end of the twenty year period,
the state would control the dominant share of the economy.
This plan envisioned the need for private initiative, so
the people could help themselves. Increased private
indigenous investment would decrease the country's dependence
on foreign aid.

Some middle-class opposition to socialism and to
Marxism arose, due to the fear of this class of losing what
power and interests they had. Fishermen did not want to
sell just to a single, state purchasing organization; the
"market mammies" were angry because they were eliminated as
middlemen; and traders did not want to be limited to

small-scale enterprises.

The CPP and the government were, consequently, ex-coriated in Nkrumah's "Dawn Broadcast" for not adhering to "socialist principles." The Party had been given the key role in economic planning, therefore, it was the duty of the Party to educate the people and bring them into the picture, making them feel a part of this reconstruction. Nkrumah even had to send his government personnel to the Ideological Institute to learn to be socialists. The crisis in 1961 hastened the rise of the socialists in power, with Nkrumah becoming the undisputed leader of the CPP. Ghana was, by then, a one-party state, and the socialists became a feared party. But still the non- and anti-socialists were not eliminated.

The Spark, the CPP press, has spoken of Nkrumah's alleged opposition to African Socialism and of his espousal of Marxist scientific socialism. The Spark rejects any notions of "African Socialism" as "neocolonialist" and "spurious." Supposedly, according to the CPP press, African Socialism, as defined by the Dakar Colloquium, has the "historic mission . . . to combat and if possible defeat scientific socialism, firstly by introducing elements alien to socialist thought, and secondly by denying some of the

foundations of socialist ideology."[40]

Rejected also by The Spark is the "communalistic" view
of traditional African Socialism.

The traditional collectivist way of African life
is a mere illusion. African society must evolve; it
cannot go back to two or three centuries ago. What
is the old collectivist way of life in Africa? It
wasn't a classless society. Nor were relations in
it harmonious. It was a feudal system based on the
hegemony of a few big families lording it over less
privileged ones and even serfs. Human rights were
nonexistent and industrialization was absent.[41]

The Marxist editors of The Spark believe that socialist

parties in Africa today have to emphasize the class struggle.

The socialist intellectual has a key role in deemphasizing

African Socialism and in playing up the class struggle.

They must quickly spotlight and destroy any
attempt to revise or even deny some fundamentals of
socialism under the guise of creating an "African
Socialism." In particular, they must wage unrelenting
war against the view that there are no classes in
Africa. For classes do exist in Africa both in the
sense of economic groups occupying different positions
in the productive system and in the sense of different
income groups. An added reason is that the denial of
the existence of the classes in African society is
ultimately a denial of the need for socialism in
Africa.[42]

The Ghanaian Times spoke of two revolutions which must

come to Ghana. The first, the fight for political independence

from colonial rule, is waged by a national liberation front.

The second, the socialist revolution, is waged by a people's

liberation front.

With respect to relations with the Communist world,
Ghanaian socialists have remarked:

> However, we do not believe that the CPP should
> become a Communist Party, or that it should be
> affiliated with the international Communist movement.
> To do so would involve entanglement in the cold war,
> and it would destroy our policy of nonalignment. For
> us, nonalignment and Pan-Africanism remain touchstones
> of our own ideology. It is this that separates us
> from other Marxist Communists. Thus, although we are
> aligned to all those who uphold scientific socialism,
> we are strictly nonaligned with any of the powers in
> the Socialist world. That goes for China as well as
> for Russia.[43]

Nkrumah (assuming that his opinions have not been
altered with his downfall) is not an orthodox Marxist,
though he is a Marxist. He rejects the class struggle
idea of the Spark Marxists and of the Communists, believing
that there is a communal basis to African society which
comprises the ancestorship to socialism. Nkrumah maintains
that revolution is not necessary to achieve socialism;
traditional African society is genetically evolutionary,
but historically revolutionary.

Nkrumah constantly emphasizes the need for a unifying
ideology to link the different segments of African society,
as well as the old and the new. While some would call such
an ideology "African Socialism," Nkrumah calls his idea

"philosophical consciencism." He believes that thought and
practice must go hand in hand.

The first step must be to create a body of connected
thought to use in guiding actions toward societal unification.
In other words, an intellectual revolution must underlie a
social revolution. Consciencism describes the principles,
methods, and strategies by which "liberated territories"
can make the transition to socialism. This philosophy must
make use of the environment and the living conditions of
the African people as its weapons; these will provide the
intellectual content. "The emancipation of the African
continent is the emancipation of man."[44]

For emancipation to succeed, Nkrumah says two things
must come about--the egalitarianism of human society must
be restored; and all resources must be mobilized toward this
goal of restitution. The present African conscience is
inflicted with conflict; philosophical consciencism provides
a way to progress out of that conflict.

Materialism is the basis for consciencism. Nkrumah
asserts his belief in the absolute and independent existence
of matter which is endowed with self-motion. These two
principles are the basis of the materialistic aspect of
consciencism. Consciencism does not imply the sole existence

of matter, but rather the primary reality of matter. Thus
it is not an atheistic philosophy. Materialism, Nkrumah says,
will not wither away after the socialist victory.

In discussing the ethical basis of egalitarianism,
Nkrumah observes that these ethical principles are not
permanent but are modified in the course of evolution.
Socialism seeks a connection with the egalitarian and
humanist past of the African people prior to colonialism.
It wants to take what it can from the colonial era that
would be helpful to society, and it seeks to prevent the
spread of anomalies and domineering interests brought in
by capitalism and colonialism. Socialism also strives to
erase the "colonial mentality" of the people, in order to
lead them back to their former psychological state of mind.
Socialism constitutes a defense of the security and inde-
pendence of the people of Africa.

The cardinal ethical principle of philosophical
consciencism is to treat man as an end in himself, not as
a means to an end. This, according to Nkrumah, constitutes
a materialist viewpoint, therefore, egalitarianism is the
social reflection of materialism.

Philosophical consciencism is a political theory as
well as a social-political practice. It is here that Nkrumah

shows the interrelationship of ethics and politics in his philosophical system.

Philosophical consciencism seeks to enhance personal (individual) development in a way such that the conditions for the development of all become the conditions for the development of each individual. The purpose of this is to insure that individual development does not bring in diversities which could threaten egalitarianism. Therefore, planned development is essential.

Philosophical consciencism is faced with colonialism, imperialism, disunity, and the lack of development. Speaking of the dangers of colonialism, Nkrumah notes that the first task of consciencism must be the eradication of colonialism; for this task, the mass party has an important role. A government cannot compromise on the true welfare of a people, yet this is what neo-colonialism attempts to do. Philosophical consciencism must be a regenerative concept, leading to positive action, a link between the past and the future. This ideology must, moreover, be socialist in form. Nkrumah recognizes that much socialism is mere talk, therefore, there must be less talk and more socialist development.

Nkrumah, it seems, in publishing his philosophy Consciencism, is trying to be the "Lenin of Africa." In

Ghana, while he was in power, Nkrumah struggled to build a
new society, as well as to survive politically and physically.
In this transitional period, Nkrumah tried to obtain for
Ghana the best of both worlds--the East and the West--while
remaining non-aligned. He did not want to frighten away
Western capital and create opposition with his ideas, so he
followed an evolutionary, rather than a revolutionary and
fully authoritarian, economic policy. Yet it appears that
for all his philosophizing and attempts to dissuade Ghana
from its capitalistic path, Nkrumah's ideas and methods were
too revolutionary for the majority of the Ghanaian people.
The cult of personality Nkrumah had built up about himself,
in which he was cast in the mold of the hero, was eventually
crushed; ousted along with the man, Nkrumah, were many of
his ideas and economic plans for Ghana.

In African Socialism, Charles F. Andrian presents a
comparison of two contrasting types of African Socialism,
that of Guinea--as reflected in the ideology of Sékou Touré--
and that of Senegal--the chief spokesmen of which are Mamadou
Dia and Léopold Senghor.

African Socialism stresses new symbols of common
solidarity in order to reconcile the traditional-rural with
the modern-urban sectors. Senghor speaks of new mutual benefit

organizations and cooperatives as integrative forces motivated
by similar ideals. Mamadou Dia remarks that

> . . . our way to development leads also to a
> community-centered socialism; to a socialism
> not of coercion, but of solidarity, of free
> adhesion and free cooperation; to a socialism
> which, after having been the instrument of
> national liberation, will be that of the
> liberation of man.[45]

Touré envisions solidarity as coming primarily from
the natural state and the party, not so much from traditional
culture. Solidarity, according to President Touré, is
essential to Guinean society. Touré as well as Senghor and
Dia combine Marxist concepts with traditional African values.
The difference between African Socialism and scientific
socialism is expressed by Touré:

> Instead of applying society to science, we must
> apply science to society. Thus, Marxism, which has
> served to mobilize the African peoples and particularly
> the working class and to lead that working class toward
> success, has been shorn of those characteristics which
> do not correspond to African reality.[46]

Senghor would retain the methods, not the institutions,
of European socialism. Touré regards Africa as a third force,
and envisions a middle road for Africa:

> . . . what we consider first and above all is
> the Africa we intend to liberate from foreign domina-
> tion, sickness, misery, and ignorance.[47]

All three spokesmen reject capitalism as the basis for

economic development. Touré believes that capitalism dis-
rupts normal productive forces, and, as well, initiates
Africans to the ideas of individualism and egotism. Africa,
besides, has only a small bourgeoisie and not much capital
accumulation; rather than a bourgeoisie, a "subproletariat"
seems to have been created. Capitalism, according to Touré,
has neglected the African peasantry by being too preoccupied
with industrialization; it has neglected the artistic,
religious, literary, and philosophical values of Negro-Africa.

The Senegalese President, Léopold Senghor, condemns
capitalism as useless and outmoded for Africans because it
is too specialized and is the cause of alienation. He
stresses economic democracy and spiritual freedom as im-
portant to the Negro-African mode of socialism. The first
four-year plan of Senegal has included research institutions,
state banks, state enterprises, produce marketing boards,
and cooperatives. But private capitalism has not been
legally suppressed, nor has anything been nationalized.
Senghor believes in preserving the good points of colonialism,
among which are the economic and technical infrastructure,
and the French educational system.

Communism, as practiced in the Soviet Union is also
rejected by Touré, Senghor, and Dia. All see striking

similarities between capitalism and communism. Touré says
that communism is the equivalent of collective or state
capitalism. The Soviet Union, like the West, is too modern
and too developed for Africans to accept their ideology.
Both the East and the West sacrifice freedom of thought and
art for materialistic values.

The class struggle theory is rejected by Touré on
the grounds of its irrelevance to the African situation.
The only conflicts arising in Africa are those between dif-
ferent social strata or categories, which arise mainly from
conflicting interests or the lack of political maturity.

Senghor maintains that African society has no classes
based upon wealth, though there may be castes, and so forth,
due to religion. The chief source of conflict arises from
the racial domination to which the mass of Africans have
been subject. There has been a great deal of concern for
the peasantry and for agricultural development.

> Industrialists must never forget that they are
> dealing with Negro-African peasants. In the Negro
> society, the work of the land is the most noble
> activity, and the Negro soul remains oriented to
> peasant ways.[48]

Dia says that African nations must beware of making
industrialization an end in itself. In most countries
agriculture is given an economic priority. Because Africa is

an agricultural region, industrialization should merely act
as a complement to agriculture. Since China is an agri-
cultural country, Dia states that African states are generally
more favorable to it than to Russia. Ninety per cent of the
Guinean population is engaged in agriculture. In Africa, it
is generally the case that the peasants and the women are
the most exploited groups, not the workers.

Dia and Senghor attack the Communists on account of
their authoritarian nature; autocratic methods are rejected
as unacceptable for Africa which traditionally values the
individual. Some aspects of Marxism are heartily embraced
however, especially by Touré. Touré likes the idea of a
dominant party organization which will ensure discipline,
organization, and control. Believing that philosophy should
be sacrificed in order to obtain basic needs, Touré establishes
the priority of political interests. Touré believes, then,
in using economic activities for political ends. The most
important aspect of Marxism according to Dia and Senghor
is its humanistic philosophy. Senghor says that capitalism,
on the contrary, has brought economic, political, and
cultural alienation to Africa; it has alienated man from
the fruits of his labors and has given birth to racism. Dia
rejects Marx's labor theory of value, for the worship of work,

he believes, will lead to an inhuman civilization.

The Senegalese leaders differ somewhat from the Guinean leader with respect to their views on the traditional African economy. Senghor and Dia stress the "communitarian" values of traditional culture, while Touré deemphasizes these values. Senghor says that this community-based solidarity is a spiritual quality of African life which will make it easy for socialism to come to Africa. Dia, agreeing with Durkheim and French sociology in general, calls this solidarity the "collective mentality" which is responsible for motivating individuals.

Senghor points out that due to the collective ownership of land and the nature of work, the individual felt that what he labored for was of value to himself. It gave him responsibility, dignity, and a sense of joy; it was a means of fraternal communion with his fellows. There was, of course, both private and community property depending on the nature of work—collective work brought necessities, while individual work created luxuries. Dia maintains that the character of precolonial African economies was not luxury, but rather simplicity. There was an equilibrium between supply and demand. The supply was based upon the enthusiasm of the members of the collectivity; the demand was based upon

simple customs. Life required simple tastes and equal

sharing, not surplus and extravagance.

Touré is less concerned with the communitarian idea,

but he praises it nevertheless. "It is also because of those

human qualities that an African cannot imagine organizing his

life outside that of his social group--family, village, or

clan."[49]

Touré prefers the word "communicratie" to "African

Socialism"; this is because the term "socialism" might imply

adherence to an alien ideology.* Touré seems to value

entrepreneurial skills less than political control by the

party. Guinea now appears to be learning from its mistakes

and it is cutting down on the nationalization of industries

in an effort to enter into partnerships with private enter-

prise; lessening taxes; and strengthening economic ties with

the United States and with France. Touré recognizes the

need for a temporary increase in the dependence on foreign

aid and investment, especially for use in education and

technical assistance.

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*Touré's ideology, however, as well as the withdrawal of
all French assistance (Guinea lost the support of France at
independence when it declined an invitation to join the
French Community), has hindered the economic growth of
Guinea.

The development of Senegal has also been sluggish,
even with close economic ties with France. The production
of basic crops, as well as industrial production, has de-
creased. Senghor's ideology partially accounts for this
decline in production. Senghor stresses aesthetic values
to the relative neglect of entrepreneurial skills. He has
stated repeatedly that the African renaissance will be the
work of Negro writers and artists more than of politicians.
In general the ideology of educated Senegalese is that of
Négritude as defined by Senghor (this concept will be dis-
cussed in detail in the following chapter), more so than that
of African Socialism, though there are similar ideas in
both concepts. The Senegalese have shown little interest
in purely economic activities; this is evident in the fact
that there is no sizable African entrepreneurial class in
the process of development. In Senegal it is the Europeans
who reign in the large-scale commercial enterprises. The
Senegalese remain partial to government service and artistic
work, rather than to business. Senghor has recognized this
dilemma recently in his statement: "Senegal must train more
engineers than philosophers and more economists than poets."[50]

AFRICAN SOCIALISM--PRACTICAL (OPERATIONAL) INTERPRETATIONS

Several African leaders are in the process of putting
their ideas of African Socialism into practice in their
nations. These practical efforts--for example, rural
animation in Senegal and the cooperative work group in
Gambia*--are designed to implement the doctrine of African
Socialism at the "grass-roots" level, among the masses
themselves, and to instill in these Africans a sense of
dignity in their own labor and accomplishments. These
African leaders are confident of the ability of their
people and nations to solve their problems in their own
African ways, with the minimum of advice or technical
assistance from either the capitalistic West or the com-
munistic East.**

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*There are undoubtably other practical activities
elsewhere in Africa, however, these two will be the only
efforts discussed in these pages.

**These educated leaders possess this pride and sense
of dignity in all that is African; it is their attempt,
through putting African Socialism to practical use in their
countries, to carry the "struggle for dignity" to the great
masses, who as yet have little awareness of this struggle
going on in intellectual circles. And yet, as Leonard W.
Doob points out in Communication in Africa: A Search for
Boundaries (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1961)
there are basic difficulties in political communication between
the élite and the masses. The problem was graphically

The African Socialism of Senghor and Dia emphasizes the individual more than the masses. Dia prefers the program of animation rurale which is now operating in Senegal in an attempt to renovate institutions by breathing new life into them, by changing the social environment, and by changing peasant attitudes.

> The operation occurs at the level of the personal consciousness of each citizen. Each man who does his job with the maximum of conscience, of love for his country . . . creates a real, human investment which is indispensable to the nation.[51]

This program will enable peasants to satisfy more of their personal desires. Rural animation attempts to foster development while avoiding the human costs of laissez-faire capitalism and Stalinism; the goal is economic progress without sacrificing human values. It is more of a community

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illustrated in the attempt of an MP to discuss the essence of a complicated budget with the people. The following incident was related: "A certain young man attended an interview and he was asked to explain what was meant by this: 'The Government of Nigeria has placed a ban on all South African goods because of their apartheid policy.' This was a simple sentence. When the man was asked to translate it into Fanti or Twi, he said: 'Nigeria Aban ato nsa afre South Africa Aban de wombobo baan wo Nigeria na yebobo pata ama woatsena ase.' Meaning, literally, that the Government of Nigeria has invited the South African Government to come and play band in Nigeria and they will raise a shed for them to sit under." (Henry L. Bretton, The Rise and Fall of Kwame Nkrumah, New York, 1966, p. 188).

development program which emphasizes cooperatives and provides technical skills and civil experience to villagers. Rural animation provides Senegalese with an ideology that generates enthusiasm because it offers something more than concrete objectives. It is a doctrine that gives Senegalese faith, enthusiasm, dynamism, as well as a consciousness of their liberation.

Animation, according to its director, Ben Mady Cissé, and its innovations are not in contradiction with the traditional values of African society.

> We must make it clear that change is true fidelity to our ancestors. Their way of life was in tune with their own environment, but today the environment is different. To be faithful to our ancestors means to adjust to our environment as they did to theirs, not simply to cling to old ways for no reason.[52]

Animation is cheap and it mobilizes labor and animals that are in abundance, without relying extensively on foreign aid. It organizes "human investment" (voluntary free labor for public interest projects) as well as cooperatives.

This self-criticism has come from a member of the Senegalese élite, Ibrahima Sow, an assistant to Cissé:

> We who call ourselves an elite may have professional qualifications but we do not have the spirit and drive that our country needs. . . . We must rid ourselves of the city intellectual's mentality that looks at the peasant with contempt. Our first

battle is with ourselves. If we do not change
ourselves, we shall fail, and we shall have to
lower our eyes when our children insult us. . . .
But once we have a group ethic we cannot be de-
feated. . . .[53]

Animation shows that progress can come to a community;
that its culture does not have to be destroyed in order to
introduce new ways. It shows that the main block to progress
is the lack of faith in the ruling élite, the members of
which have lost the old faith of traditional Africa, and
can find nothing around to replace it.

Another manifestation of African Socialism at work
in Senegal and Gambia takes the form of the cooperative
work groups of the Wolofs, a tribe that overlaps the terri-
torial boundaries of both countries. The Wolofs solve many
of their problems by communal effort; certain activities
provide mutual aid in labor, offer entertainment, as well
as provide a form of economic "insurance" for tribal members,
especially members of the work groups.

David W. Ames has undertaken a study of the Wolof
cooperative work groups as they operate in Gambia. These
work groups are organized by sex and, roughly, by age.
They differ in number and size and generally cut across
class lines and lineage. The Wolofs believe that group
labor is easier and more efficient than individual labor,

especially with respect to agricultural activities. Man-power is mobilized to make up for the low level of technology in Gambia.

Much of the farm work is done, not in formal work groups, but in informal groups, and it is generally on a reciprocal basis. Some of these groups are made up of the family, some of distant kin, and others of "best friends." Males often have certain obligations to fathers-in-law due to the marriage contract, but others may help him in ful-filling these obligations, especially when he is ill or otherwise unable to work. Often community work is used to complete public works projects, for these projects are the responsibility of the community. Communal work is sometimes done for the government, as in road building.

Male and female work groups have separate functions, however, these functions generally complement each other. Social functions, notably feasts and dances, are a popular source of interaction between the male and female groups. With respect to economic interaction between these groups, women generally bring water and food to the men, while the men clear the land for the women, build fences, help with the harvest, and aid in the transportation of grain, and so forth, to the village.

The person who owns the field that is being worked, the person who is the "host," has certain obligations to the work group. The host must supply food, kola nuts, cigarettes, and so forth to the group, or else the group would quit work on his field. Often food and money is simply given to the group leader (the botal) who distributes them to the group. The frequent feasts that are held are either financed through group earnings or by the group leader.

The work done by the work groups is hard, rapid, and unrelenting, and, as such, is better than individual labor. Several reasons demonstrate why such group labor is productive. One can forget the tedium of work to a great degree through working together, singing, and joking. Quite often, drumming accompanies the singing, providing a rhythm by which to work and helping to minimize the effects of the heat, dust, and boredom.

Competition frequently exists between workers in order to stimulate production. Often field work is considered a sporting contest, with ceremonies preceding and accompanying work. Groups from several villages also take part in this competition. The best worker is given a prize or a reward and is regarded as a champion. A good deal of prestige is

attached to hard work, pride being a great concern among these African workers. No less important is the fact that this pride sustains the group itself.

Cooperative work groups also aid individual members at their first marriage, since expenses are usually fantastically high. These groups will contribute money, livestock, kola nuts, grain, and so forth to the bride price. The group will also aid those members who have legal or emergency expenses; these are important functions, for few individuals can, alone, cope with such burdens.

Work groups were present in Senegal and Gambia before European contact, and many survive today as viable economic institutions. There is a need, though, to adjust these work groups to enable them to cope with and help solve the problems besetting their nations today. They need to manufacture more foodstuffs, so as not to rely on traders and farmers, and to relieve the problem of periodic hunger. Work groups can be used to immediately increase agricultural production and to expand and diversify subsistence crops. Improved techniques in the production and marketing of cash crops is likewise a necessity for economic development in Gambia and Senegal which work groups can help to implement. These groups can expand their "insurance" activities to

provide modern credit facilities similar to European

cooperatives. Besides the establishment of cooperatives

and markets, the group purchase of cattle herds to enrich

the diet and provide manure would be a substantial advance-

ment toward modernization. Eventually, even mechanized

farm equipment could be introduced to lessen the physical

labor burdens of these groups. The most important factor

that these African nations must bear in mind is that their

economic problems must be solved within the framework of

indigenous social institutions. They must relate psycho-

logically meaningful innovations to traditional patterns

and established institutions.

As Kenneth L. Little observed:

It is generally agreed that social development of
the British West African territories depends very
largely upon the adoption and use of up-to-date
methods of economic production and distribution. The
great problem, however, is how to increase the earning
power of the peasant without divorcing him too rapidly
and too completely from his traditional way of life.
The only sure way is to base the new ideas and the new
technical practices as far as possible on existing
institutions. Progress in the economic field, as much
as the social one, will be made not by disrupting the
established tradition but by modifying it to suit the
modern requirements of commerce and industry.[54]

THE PROBLEMS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, POWER,

AND THE COLD WAR

The following problems of economic development, as
discussed by several Western experts, are all problems which
have arisen in new African nations and which will undoubtably
have repercussions in the future developmental plans of most
African leaders, socialists and non-socialists. The criti-
cisms and proposals presented by these qualified experts
are offered to educated Africans as sources of guidance
and enlightenment, though they encourage Africans to solve
their problems in their own particular ways.

The problem of economic development occupies a com-
manding priority in the programs of all independent African
governments. Most African leaders realize that the cause
of political independence must be linked to that of social
and economic reconstruction. Development must deal with
the traditional system, and as such, must be actively ac-
cepted by the masses--inroads must be made on traditional
modes of thought. The prospect of a synthesis of the old
and the new, with active African participation, so that a
new civilization can come about in Africa, will add, as one
African poet has forecast, "a fresh colour to the rainbow."[55]

Most African economic plans seem to go awry in the same general directions--too much spending on administration, social overhead, and showpieces; not enough on production, and very little on agriculture. Indeed, the productivity of African farmers is among the lowest in the world.

The production of cash crops is increasing but land is being harmed in the process. The old system of shifting cultivation is breaking down. Land does not lie fallow long enough before it is used again so it produces less, being less fertile. This decrease in fertility is increasing at a greater pace; and since there are getting to be more Africans to feed, but less fertile land, rural Africans are facing decreasing living standards. Most Africans do not learn and accept ideas and inventions merely by watching others work; to most Africans farming is an integral part of the culture and cannot be separated from African culture as an independent aspect.

The most desirable form of development in Africa would probably be that which utilizes Africa's plentiful labor, yet costs little money; the next best form would be that using local currency and goods. Progress must come first in the rural areas, according to the Africa Survey of 1962 by the Food and Agricultural Organization: ". . . under

present African conditions, industrial development depends
more on rural progress than rural progress depends on the
development of industry."[56]

As David Hapgood observed in his extended field trip
through West Africa:

> . . . the true revolution will take place, if it
> does, in rural Africa. It is here, in thousands of
> obscure villages in the distant bush, that Africa
> must seek its new identity. That search, to which
> the key is the relationship between traditional
> society and the elite, goes beyond technology to
> politics, and beyond politics to the fundamental
> values of African society.[57]

The least desirable form of development, according to
Hapgood, are those things which require foreign exchange,
such as the tractor mania, which is Africa's scarcest
resource. In the future shifting cultivation will have to
be discarded in agricultural production, for, as Hapgood
argues, there is not enough land available to permit five
acres to remain idle while one acre is worked. The future
will demand more production per acre per man.

Sayre P. Schatz, in analyzing the implications of
economic development in Africa, maintains that development
programs in the future must make correct use of the under-
utilized productive capacities in which Africa abounds.
There is an abundance of labor seeking jobs, for rural labor,

which does mainly seasonal work, is often not employed. Also
there are many areas of idle arable land--it is estimated
that one-half of Nigeria's cultivable land, not including
bush fallow, is lying idle. Thirdly, there is a great deal
of partially utilized capital--some indigenous enterprises
could double or triple their output by utilizing their pro-
ductive capacities to the fullest. Idle productive capacities,
if put to use, could create an unlimited demand which would
force such capacities to be utilized. These productive
factors would be very economically useful but not necessarily
monetarily profitable.

Schatz suggests a "directed demand," that is, the
creation of a demand for individual commodities. According
to this plan, the government would spend its own funds for
particular commodities that have a net economic utility
but which are unproduced due to a lack of natural demand
that makes production unprofitable. These commodities
could be sold at home or abroad, and as such, they would
save precious foreign exchange. The government might lose
money on such a program, but national production would
surely increase, and government outlays of capital would
augment the monetary national income.

René Dumont has offered several suggestions to African

governments for improving their economic development programs.
Donkey power should be introduced in order to turn the water
wheels for drawing water. Hand tools should be made in
Africa and repaired in the villages--this would create new
crafts and increase the income on the village level. Storage
bins should be made and sprayed with insecticide, so that
food could be produced in quantity without spoilage. New
sources of protein should be introduced, especially in the
form of protein flour, for the average African suffers from
a protein shortage. Sugar mills could be constructed on a
small scale using local labor and providing a local market.
Animal transportation would save time and money if intro-
duced on a large scale. And finally, Dumont suggests the
creation of a new power source, windmill power, in order to
grind millet, and so forth, and lessen women's work.

The problems of power, the cold war, and inter-
African relations are all inextricably bound to the concept
of African Socialism and the problem of economic development.
The problem of inter-African relations has already been
discussed with respect to Pan-Africanism and regional
unities. The problem of power in African Socialism will be
examined next with respect to the one-party state; the cold
war dilemma with respect to neutralism and neo-colonialism.

Those Africans who advocate the one-party state see
in it a means of creating a new egalitarian society. Ac-
cording to Margery Penham, the problem of power is the
central and most difficult problem facing Africans at
independence. "The first need for Africans [has been] to
recreate for themselves the unity and order imposed by
external authority and now suddenly removed."[58]

Julius Nyerere speaks of the origin of African
political parties:

> Our own parties had a very different origin.
> They were not formed to challenge any ruling
> group of our own people; they were formed to
> challenge the foreigners who ruled over us. They
> were not, therefore, political 'parties'--i.e.
> factions--but nationalist movements. And from
> the outset they represented the interests and
> aspirations of the whole nation.[59]

When the colonial powers pulled out of Africa, they
left the Africans with no pattern of opposing interests
that could form the basis of a multi-party system. Nyerere
says that the only opposition today consists of irresponsible
individuals who try to create problems for the government
by exploiting the very principles of democracy. He stresses
that the only reason any African would want to form an
opposition party in an African nation would be to imitate
the political structure of a different society. In con-
ditions where imitation is not favorable, trouble ensues.

Nyerere points out that opposition parties are regarded as traitors by most people. The people feel that their governments do not have the time to waste with such political maneuverings. Europeans, on the contrary, generally cry "dictatorship" at these African denunciations of opposition, but in the African experience this accusation has little foundation.

African one-party states have adopted a "revolutionary" approach to democracy, which stems from African nationalism and Africa's economic backwardness. "Revolutionary" is used, however, in a technological sense to mean a breakthrough--or rapid evolution--into the twentieth century. The governing party is used for exhorting and mobilizing the people, as well as for discipline, unity, and for the purpose of establishing an identity between the hierarchies of the state and the party.

Sékou Touré spoke of the role of the party in Guinea:

The Party constitutes the thought of the people of Guinea at its highest level and in its most complete form; the thought of the Party indicates the orientation of our actions; the thought of the Party specifies the principles which ought to direct our behavior, our collective and individual attitude.[60]

There is widespread acceptance of the revolutionary, hortatory, one-party approach, which to many Africans seems to be the only system which in all likelihood will be able

to meet the exigencies of the present situation. Historically,
there has been a need for mass discipline in the development
of capitalist Europe and of the communist East, so why not
in Africa?

Traditional African government has been an important
theme in the years since independence; it has cast doubt
upon the relevancy of European models of parliamentary
government. It has been pointed out by some African leaders
that Africa has had democratic systems of government in the
past, often in the tribal context. According to the tradi-
tional African way, the Elders would gather and discuss a
problem until all were agreed upon a common solution. Anyone
who disagreed and could not live according to an accepted
resolution was free to either leave the tribe and go to a
new land, or to try to unseat the chief of the tribe and
elect a new one.

There have been few instances (except the Zulu) in
which rule has been autocratic. The Ashanti (Ghana) consti-
tution was even democratic to a degree. The idea that
Britain brought democracy to West Africa is, according to
Dr. Margaret Field, "quite erroneous. On the contrary,
Britain did much to destroy the indigenous democracy. Neither
is the idea of an opposition a new one. Alongside every
chief [in Ashanti] was a mankrado or krontinheue of whom it

was said, 'every mankrado is opposed to the chief.'"

African democracy was often as good as the best democracies of modern Europe. The African past had often joined traditional democracy to one-man rule; so why should present African societies fail to do so? Africans have been urged by many of their leaders to accept a "democratically representative one-party state," to use in the building of their new societies. The model these leaders offer the people is African Socialism.

One Ghanaian socialist, a critic of the one-party system, remarked:

> Any system of government which does not put the government firmly under the control of the general mass of the people is incompatible with socialism. . . . To argue that the one-party system is compatible with this responsibility [by the government to the people] . . . is to ignore what sociological study has taught. . . . Election within the party, far from preventing the formation of an oligarchy, seems rather to favor it. . . . The only check . . . is criticism from outside the party, and a properly organized group to act as a check against the party.[61]

It is difficult to believe that this view will prevail in the future though. In some countries, notably Guinea and Tanzania (according to Dr. Roberts), a single party does express popular opinion as well as enforce the will of the leaders. The one-party system is a part of the process of democratic education, and perhaps it is the best of the few

choices available to Africans today.

Most African socialist nations have confronted the problem of the cold war by adopting the concept of neutralism. Neutralism, far from meaning pacifism, implies the freedom to choose. It means avoiding commitments and entangling alliances that will hinder progress more than help it. Indeed, at this stage of the African revolution, genuine political independence could probably be obtained only through such a policy.

Neutralism has been called a diplomatic device for gaining time; indeed, it does help to ease the impact in the Cold War between the East and the West. Some African nations use neutralism merely as a device for squeezing money out of the East and the West at the same time, by playing each one off against the other.

Many new nations, however, have chosen to join the British Commonwealth and the French Community because these international organizations given the African nations a loose framework within which they can enter into world affairs. Those African countries that have joined such organizations have been motivated, generally, by good will.

Other African nations have used neutralism as a barrier to the new danger of neo-colonialism. Nkrumah calls neo-

colonialism "the process of handing independence over to the African people with one hand, only to take it away with the other hand."[62] Neo-colonialism is a fake independence, a way that the metropolitan power still manages to control a country, even after independence, by other than political means.

One so-called weapon of neo-colonialism has been balkanization, the fragmenting of Africa into small, weak states so as to render them susceptible to political troubles (thus making them more dependent upon the colonial powers), tribalism, and so forth. Balkanization was designed to decrease the chances of African nations of maintaining any regional or continental unity.

The need to place less emphasis on foreign enterprise has been stressed by several African nations that are aware of the encouragement this can give to neo-colonialist ventures; for ". . . at the end of a decade, a very high proportion of the country's industry would be under the ultimate control of foreign firms . . ."[63]

One question which faces African nations today is whether private investment would remain in a country unless it was guaranteed a high proportion of its earnings. A natural sequel to this question is the question of whether an African

nation would <u>guarantee</u> that its interests would remain com-
patible with continued high earnings by foreign capital.

African leaders are well aware of the fact that
colonial governments did not do a good job of developing
their territories for the benefit of the Africans, but
rather all benefits accrued to the Europeans and North
Americans. From experience, then, educated Africans realize
that once foreign interests in a country are entrenched,
they can be expected to react defensively against any eco-
nomic changes which might be inimical to their interests.

Very little private foreign investment, these African
critics point out, has ever gone into genuine manufacturing,
and industrial and agricultural development as needed; most
foreign efforts have been expended in the extractive indus-
tries. Almost no private foreign investment has been put
toward the modernization of social and public services. Do
these facts, ask the African leaders, reflect foreign
interest in a country's economy? The answer they give is
a resounding negative. And it is generally true that
private foreign investors envision little profit, if any,
and therefore show little interest, in building schools,
hospitals, and so forth. For these reasons there is a
greater preference among educated African élite for government-

to-government lending and investment, so that African nations can use aid money to their best advantage.

Basil Davidson in <u>Which Way Africa?</u> offers the reader his conception of a model African nation, which combines many of the ideas discussed above. The government of his model nation would be by a single party representing most sections of the population; the unity of such a government would surpass most regional and tribal loyalties. The government would, furthermore, move toward a national economic system with cooperative effort, public ownership, and an emphasis upon the social services. Finally, these model African states, operating upon humanist principles, would, ideally, subordinate their own separate identities to a greater all-African identity--thus adhering to Pan-African ideals.

CHAPTER III

FOOTNOTES

[1]Aristide R. Zolberg, in Friedland and Rosberg (eds.),
p. 122.

[2]Robert A. Lystad, ed., African Worlds (New York, 1965),
p. 222.

[3]Davidson, p. 103.

[4]William H. Friedland and Carl G. Rosberg, African
Socialism (Stanford, 1964), p. 58.

[5]Ibid., p. 22.

[6]Ibid., p. 22.

[7]Ibid., p. 23.

[8]Ibid., p. 24.

[9]Lystad, p. 230.

[10]Davidson, p. 115.

[11]Friedland and Rosberg, p. 89.

[12]Ibid., p. 95.

[13]Ibid., p. 96.

[14]Nelkin, p. 78.

[15]Zolberg, p. 118.

[16]Ibid., p. 118.

[17]Ibid., p. 118.

[18]Ibid., p. 119.

[19]Ibid., p. 121.

[20]Ibid., p. 121.

[21]Ibid., p. 122.

[22]Ibid., p. 122.

[23]Ibid., p. 123.

[24]Ibid., p. 123.

[25]Ibid., p. 123.

[26]Ibid., p. 124.

[27]Ibid., pp. 124-25.

[28]Ibid., p. 126.

[29]Tom Mboya, in Africa's Freedom (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1964), p. 81.

[30]Ibid., p. 81.

[31]Ibid., p. 87.

[32]Julius K. Nyerere, in Africa's Freedom, p. 76.

[33]Davidson, pp. 117-18.

[34]Friedland and Rosberg, p. 259.

[35]Ibid., p. 260.

[36]Ibid., p. 263.

[37]Colin Legum, in Friedland and Rosberg (eds.), p. 141.

[38]Ibid., p. 141.

[39]Ibid., p. 141.

[40]Ibid., p. 151.

[41]Ibid., p. 151.

[42]Ibid., p. 152.

[43]Ibid., p. 153.

[44]Kwame Nkrumah, Consciencism (London, 1964), p. 78.

[45]Charles F. Andrian, in Friedland and Rosberg (eds.), p. 161.

[46]Ibid., p. 161.

[47]Ibid., p. 162.

[48]Ibid., p. 164.

[49]Ibid., p. 170.

[50]Ibid., p. 172.

[51]Ibid., p. 172.

[52]David Hapgood, Africa: From Independence To Tomorrow (New York, 1965), p. 120.

[53]Ibid., p. 128.

[54] David W. Ames, in William R. Bascom and Melville J. Herskovits, _Continuity and Change in African Cultures_ (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), p. 237.

[55] Davidson, p. 182.

[56] Hapgood, pp. 88-89.

[57] Ibid., p. 87.

[58] Davidson, p. 109.

[59] Ibid., p. 110.

[60] Margaret Roberts, in Friedland and Rosberg (eds.), p. 92.

[61] Ibid., p. 93.

[62] Davidson, p. 122.

[63] Ibid., p. 123.

CHAPTER IV

NEGRITUDE AND AFRICAN PERSONALITY

Négritude is the whole complex of civilized values--
cultural, economic, social, and political, which
characterizes the black peoples, or more precisely,
the Negro African world. All these values are
essentially informed by intuitive reason.[1]

. . . négritude was liberation: it freed African
authors from European patterns of writing. Négritude
became a confession: a confession of Africa, of
African thinking, African way of life, African writing.
Africa, often despised as inferior, got its value back
and its honor, adopting and praising the ways of
traditional African thinking. By négritude Africa was
intellectually freed.[2]

Thoughtful and sensitive Africans have made it abundant-
ly evident in recent years that they suffered humiliation
during the decades when white men ruled them and had the
power to order them about. The reactions to that humiliation
have taken various forms. The struggle for political
independence was the first and by far the most notable and
successful of the reactions. Now that the new states have
come into being, and their representatives at the United
Nations cast an equal vote with their former masters, some
of the soreness is alleviated.

Independence, however, is not enough. Intelligent

Africans know that white men in general, when they frankly reveal their inner convictions, still calmly assume the superiority of whites in literature, the arts, and all other forms of creativity. Africans, therefore, find themselves still humiliated and must still struggle for dignity in the artistic and intellectual spheres. Two notable evidences of this non-political search for dignity are Négritude and the African Personality.

The African search for values and dignity began to gain momentum during the drive for independence, though self-government was the main goal in most African countries. The early struggle in the realm of values was generally, according to the Nigerian, Ayo Ogunsheye, ". . . a denial, an angry protest against the inferior and infantile role in which the West had cast the African on the stage of world history and culture. . . . Before the African could come into his own, he had to break out of the shell in which others had sought to contain him; he had to destroy the stereotyped idea of himself as an inferior being."[3]

It is important to realize, however, that the large majority of Africans have not supported such protests for the simple reason that they have been, in general, ignorant of the fact (so evident to the educated élites) that they

were objects of gross injustices on the part of the white

men. To be sure, Africans did suffer from poverty, ignorance,

and disease, but certainly these were all facts of life

present even before the white man set foot upon the African

continent. In other words, the lives of most Africans were

not greatly disturbed by the European presence in Africa

(South Africa being one possible exception). These un-

educated Africans were, in general, ignorant of the indignities

of the mind and "soul" that had been wrought upon them over

several decades of colonial rule. Indeed, it is doubtful

that these Africans were even aware that they possessed

such a thing as "dignity" with respect to their color,

values, or achievements vis-à-vis the white man. It has

been the educated African leaders, who have been indoctri-

nated with Western egalitarian and democratic values and

thinking, and who have been taught to recognize and

experience honor, justice, and pride. It has been the task

of these men, in the molding and direction of their highly

philosophical quests for values and dignity, to transmit

their personal feelings of indignity and anger to the masses.

Mr. Ogunsheye recognized these facts in his statement

that "Protest has been most articulate not among the ordinary

people whose lives have been relatively less disturbed by

western contacts," but has been carried on mostly by "the
intellectuals who had been made into second class
citizens. . . ."4

"Négritude" and "African Personality"--two highly
intellectual, and somewhat mystical, concepts which have
arisen within educated African circles over the past thirty
years--were formulated originally as protests against
European domination. Recently, these intellectual constructs
have assumed, for the élite, a crucial importance, one which
they call restoring to the individual African (though a
skeptical observer might call it creating in him) his sense
of dignity and value as a human being. A great deal of
confusion and ambiguity lingers about these concepts with
regard to their respective meanings and applications, and,
as such, ample criticism has been generated.

Both of them assume a series of almost mystical virtues
that result from being black and African. Négritude assumes
that these virtues inhere in those fortunate enough to be
born with a black skin, in whatever part of the world; the
African Personality presupposes inherent virtues resulting
from the happy circumstance of living in the African environ-
ment. That the former concept rests upon a faulty understanding
of genetics, and the latter upon a mistaken idea of how culture

is acquired, does not daunt the proponents of the concepts.
Senghor frankly calls Négritude a myth and thinks it
acquires power by being a myth--for to him a myth carries
a truth too deep for rational understanding.

NÉGRITUDE

Négritude* originated in the Caribbean approximately
thirty years ago both as a protest movement and as a
concept designed to promote the identity of the Negro and
his contribution to world culture. The West Indian, Aimé
Césaire, gave this movement its French name while in Paris
in 1939, where he came into association with Léopold Senghor
of Senegal and Léon Damas of French Guinea. Together these
"exiles" in Paris endowed Négritude with a new meaning for
Africa in particular; it was designed to give meaning and
dignity to Africa's way of thinking and living with respect

---

*The word "Negro" had entirely different "resonances"
for the people who use it. One might suppose that, merely as
a derivitave of a Latin word meaning "black," it would be a
harmless descriptive adjective. So it is, apparently, for
most Frenchmen, and so it has become in recent years for
Negro Americans. But in at least some of the French-speaking
islands of the Caribbean it has derogatory connotations, at
least to upper-class blacks. In Haiti, for example, no member
of the élite could endure the thought of being called "un nègre."
The word is rarely used by the English. By and large,
for them, the opposite of "white" is "black," not "Negro." The

to religion, the arts, social systems, and other creative aspects of life. Moreover, Négritude posed a challenge to a world obsessed with the idea of material development, by which standards it judged all men and nations.

It is important to recognize that Négritude developed as a literary movement, the principal medium of expression being poetry and the French language. Because most protest was carried out in writing and in a foreign language, it was virtually impossible for Négritude to penetrate to the largely illiterate masses so as to form any widespread basis of popular support for the movement. Thus, Négritude was aimed directly at the metropolitan power and the world; it was, as Césaire noted, an effort to regain for the Negro people of the world their birthright. Africa was out to "repersonalize" herself, in Césaire's words, to show her dignity to herself and the world, to draw attention to its achievements which place Africa in the ranks of humanity. As Césaire so eloquently expressed the idea:

latter term has, moreover, too close a connection to the derogatory epithet, "nigger." One may comb the work of English social scientists and writers on colonial Africa, and find only a few cases in which the word is employed. Certainly one never meets the word among either blacks or whites in the English-speaking part of Africa, not even in those havens of discrimination, South Africa and Rhodesia. This is one reason why the idea of Négritude finds no welcome in Africa outside of the former French colonies.

For it is not true at all that the work of man is finished
that we have nothing more to do in the world
that it is enough that we should set ourselves in the steps
                              of the world
but the work of man is only beginning . . .
and no race possesses the monopoly of beauty intelligence
                                              force
and there is room for all of us at the rendezvous of
                                        victory.[5]

Négritude, as expressed in the distinct styles and

themes of various African poets, has taken on as many different

meanings and interpretations as there are advocates of the

concept. Unfortunately, attempts to analyze Négritude merely

serve to emasculate it; therefore, the best approach toward

an understanding of such a philosophical and emotional con-

cept is through the presentation of a variety of the original

literature expressing Négritude with a minimum of distracting

discussion. It can be observed that this poetry is a re-

flection of all that Africans have known, accomplished,

cherished, dreamed, suffered, or rejected--it reveals the

African, his life, and his continent.

Négritude, to French-speaking African élites, is a

way of fighting cultural assimilation. It arose largely as

a revolt against French policy toward African culture which,

at best, was one of ignorance. French culture had been

imposed upon the French colonies in Africa as the "best" thing

for them, since France "obviously" had a higher form of

civilization. Négritude also developed racialist overtones which stemmed, in large, from this rejection by the dominant white society. The South African journalist, Lewis Nkosi, wrote that "Black consciousness really begins with the shock of discovery that one is not only black but is also non-white."[6] The assimilation of Africans into white (French) society meant that one's blackness would be forgiven if he adopted the dress, culture, and the like, of white society. It led many educated black Africans to wonder if they were really only non-whites who, upon sufferance, were entering another world--or if they were really black men living in their own rich, though ruined, world? It is this dilemma that the educated African had to examine and appraise in a new light--and it is in response to this dilemma that Négritude arose, both as a rejection and as an assertion.

As Négritude matured and "naturalized itself", it became less racialist in tone. It became a statement about the African people, signaling the African renaissance wherein Africans (again, the élite) were undergoing self-questioning and a self-realization. These Africans resented the fact that their past had made them easy pawns of the colonialists. Should they dare return to this past for expression or should

their expression be in the forms they now knew, which

because they were tainted by European tradition, were also

feared and hated? This problem of how to reconcile the

past and the present has been treated by Négritude in

several different ways, the main ones of which are the out-

right condemnation and rejection of colonialism; a spirit

of compromise, praising the best of both worlds (modern

Western civilization and traditional African culture); or

one which primarily asserted Negro-African superiority and

values, with less emphasis on the rejection of white

civilization.

Léopold Senghor takes the last point of view in

cautioning against what he calls "Africanizing at a discount."

> Let us stop denouncing colonialism and Europe
> and attributing all our ills to them. Besides not
> being entirely fair, this is a negative approach,
> revealing our inferiority complex, the very complex
> the colonizer inoculated in us. . . . It is too easy
> an alibi for our own laziness, for our selfishness
> as intellectuals, for our failures. It would be more
> positive for us and our people to analyze the
> colonial fact objectively, while psychoanalyzing our
> resentment."[7]

Rather than waste time denouncing the colonial past,

African leaders, Senghor believes, should emphasize the

values of the traditional African past in an effort to

create a sense of dignity among Africans of the present and

future.   To Senghor:

> Négritude is the whole complex of civilized
> values--cultural, economic, social, and political--
> which characterize the black peoples, or, more
> precisely the Negro-African world. . . . The sense
> of communion, the gift of myth-making, the gift of
> rhythm, such are the essential elements of Négritude
> which you will find indelibly stamped on all the
> works and activities of the black man.[8]

Senghor says the Negro- African has certain common

psychic traits that set him apart. These, which are highly

debatable, are ". . . his heightened sensibility and his

strong emotional quality." Moreover, "Emotion is Negro."[9]

These qualities, it is argued by critics of Négritude,

cannot be exclusively claimed by Negro Africans, nor are

they possessed by every Negro African. There is no neces-

sary correlation between race and culture, though both

whites and blacks have made such assertions. People of

different races have belonged to the same culture; and

people of the same race have belonged to different cultures.

Senghor's poetry illustrates all of the themes of

Négritude, one by one. In "Paris in the Snow," he shows

how the culture of ancient Africa has been destroyed by

white Europe. Senghor writes of the "warm triumphant" beauty

of African women in "You Held the Black Face." He shows

the omnipresent influence of the dead upon the living

through the protection and guidance of the dead in "In

Memoriam, Night of Sine." In "New York," Senghor reflects

upon the harshness and the rigidity of the modern West

and the need to temper it with the soothing qualities of

Africa. Senghor is not one-sided though, for he appreciates

what is good in both of the cultures to which he was exposed,

saying that he needs to live in both, like a "cultural

mulatto." In "Luxembourg 1939," he praises those things

that are great and enduring in Western achievements.

Aimé Césaire, the chief poet and guiding force of

Négritude, speaks of the movement as a dynamic, though

patient, force, an area that the poet has to himself in

which to live and affirm his own absolute being and worth.

His poetry is often vague, often romantic, though it reflects

the dynamism of Négritude:

> My négritude is not a rock, its deafness
>   hurled against the clamor of the day
> My négritude is not a film of dead water
>   on the dead eye of the earth
> My négritude is neither a tower nor
>   a cathedral
> It plunges into the red flesh of the earth
> It plunges into the burning flesh of the sky
> It pierces the opaque prostration by its
>   upright patience.[10]

In his great poem, "Cahier d'un retour au pays natal,"

Césaire speaks of the imprisoned Negro hero, Toussaint

L'Ouverture, who is dying in the Jura mountains in the snows

of the Northern winter:

>What I am
>is a man alone imprisoned in
>white
>is a man alone who defies
>the white cries of white death
>(TOUSSAINT, TOUSSAINT
> L'OUVERTURE)
>is a man who fascin-
>ates the white hawk of white death
>is a man alone in the ster-
>ile sea of white sand
>is an old darky braced against
>the waters of the sky.[11]

Césaire says Negroes will come into their own, and

attain dignity and freedom only when colonialism has been

wiped out.

>My people!
>When will you cast aside the stranger days,
>And grow a head that's yours on new knit shoulders,
>Use words that are your own?
>When once the traitors and the masters
>Have been despatched,
>When bread's restored, the earth made clean
>And land is given back.
>When will you cease to be the dismal sport
>In other people's carnivals,
>Or the outmoded scarecrow
>In other people's fields?
>Tomorrow.
>When will tomorrow come, my people?
>With the rout of the mercenary army;
>That will be the end of the festival.[12]

David Diop, a Senegalese poet killed in an airplane

crash at the age of 33, wrote with angry, penetrating lines,

having in his heart no room for forgiveness or nostalgia.

His poetry represents not merely <u>hope</u> for things in the
future, but more of a <u>command</u> for them. In his "Celui Qui a
Tout Perdu," David Diop voices an outburst of hatred against
the violations of Africa by the white man; traditional life
is romanticized, a life which the brutal strangers have
destroyed.

> The sun shone on my hut
> And my wives were beautiful and supple
> Like palm trees swaying in the wind.
> My children swam through the turbulent rapids
> Of the great wide river
> And my canoes fought the crocodiles.
> The maternal moon accompanies our dances
>
> The frenzied rhythm of the tom-tom,
> Tom-tom of joy, tom-tom of happy abandon,
> Amongst the fires of liberty.
>
> Then one day silence . . .
> The rays of the sun seemed extinct
> In my hut void of sense.
> My wives crushed their painted mouths
>
> On the hard thin lips of the steel-eyed conquerors,
> And my children abandoned their peaceful nudity
> For the uniform of iron and blood.
> Your voice too is dead.
> The chains of slavery have torn my heart,
> Tom-toms of night, tom-toms of my fathers.[13]

Again, David Diop's bitterness is evident in "Le Temps
du Martyr":

> The white man killed my father
> My father was proud
> The white man seduced my mother
> My mother was beautiful

The white man burnt my brother
        beneath the noon day sun
My brother was strong.
His hands red with black blood
The white man turned to me
And in the Conqueror's voice said
'Hey, boy! a chair, a napkin, a drink!'14

"Africa" is one of David Diop's most beautiful works

of poetry, expressing not only the indignities suffered at

the hands of the white man, but the promise of a rejuvenation,

a hope, for the future of Africa.

Africa my Africa
Africa of proud warriors in ancestral savannas
Africa of my grandmother's singing
Along the banks of her far-off river
I have never known you
But my gaze is charged with your blood
Your beautiful black blood spread abroad over the fields
The blood of your sweat
The sweat of your labor
The labor of your slavery
Slavery of your children.
Africa tell me Africa
Is it you, then, this back that bends
And sinks under the weight of humility
This trembling red-striped back
That says yes to the whip of the noonday roads?

Then gravely a voice answered me:
Impetuous son, that young and robust tree
That tree over there
Splendidly alone midst white faded flowers
It is Africa your Africa that springs up again
Springs up patiently obstinately
And whose fruits ripen with
The bitter flavor of freedom.15

Léon Damas was an early spokesman of Négritude as seen

in his "bitter, staccato volume," Pigments (1937), which

French police eventually destroyed. Damas revealed that
". . . my hatred thrived on the margin of culture the
margin of theories the margin of idle talk with which they
stuffed me since birth even though all in me aspired to be
Negro while they ransack my Africa."[16]

The Negro African often sees others (whites) living
nearly the same as he and worshipping the same God, and so
he feels an even greater injustice and indignation. Why
should he be hunted down and regarded as a tool merely
because of his color or his ideas? Bernard Regnor writes:

> Negro, lift high your soul,
> Your dreams and thoughts
> Above the world;
> Search out your heart,
> Take your hunger and fatigue,
> Your rancour and disgust,
> Turn them all into a gorgeous, shining torch
> And plant it in the night's dark flanks.[17]

Georges Desportes shows how the Negro is no longer
ashamed of the color of his skin, a great victory and
revolution with him, since the Negro can look in the mirror
and smile:

> We hurl in the face of the world,
> Our primal and prognathous challenge.
> Stark naked under the burning sky of America,
> Stark naked round the great bonfire,
> Stark naked 'neath the palm trees,
> Stark naked 'neath the bamboo trees,
> We shout beneath the tropic sky,

To the sound of the powerful jazz tunes of the
                    Carib isles,
The pride of being black,
The glory of being Negroes.[18]

In 1912, Langston Hughes remarked on this same sense

of pride and dignity in being black:

From now on we young, black, creative artists
are imbued with a desire to express without fear or
shame, what we have experienced in the flesh. If the
whites like what we say, well and good. If they do
not, well, who cares? We know we are handsome and
ugly too. If coloured persons are pleased, so much
the better. If they are not, it does not matter
either. We are building our temples for tomorrow,
as strong as we can make them, and standing on the
mountain tops with hearts free and untrammelled.[19]

Négritude has not been merely a reaction to slavery,

colonialism, and assimilation, but it has been, moreover,

an expression of a desire to assist in the creation of a

world in which all men could live in harmony together.

African poets, the spokesmen of Négritude, really want

to produce, to be creative, and to make contributions toward

mutual understanding. They are defending their right to

live, to enjoy the beauty of life; they want to show their

joy in living and their own unique qualities, thereby

placing the word "Negro" in its proper perspective.

Lamming said, "I am black and proud of it."[20] Aimé

Césaire wrote:

> Oh, pity me not!
> I am no object of pity,
> I need no alms;
> That song which was so hateful once,
> How sweet it has become!
> How sweet indeed and comely
> To be black.[21]

Bernard B. Dadié expressed gratitude for his color:

> I thank you God
> For having made me black,
> Since from the first day of my birth
> I've borne the world.[22]

Paul Niger writes of the coming awakening of Africa to take

its rightful place in the world:

> Africa standing foursquare to all the winds that blow,
> Without hatred or reproach,
> Stating no further claims, merely asserting
> That there are empty benches in God's church,
> Blank pages in the prophetic books.
> A continent is a-thrill, a race awakes to life,
> A quite unwonted rhythm is about to stir the world;
> The rainbow will be clothed with unaccustomed hues,
> A head reared high shall invoke the bolt of flame.
> Africa is about to speak.[23]

Africans will not, as Claude McKay pointed out, stoop

to imitate the whites in their poetry. "To dig down to the

roots of our people, and build upon our own foundations, is

not to return to a state of wild savagery. It is the very

essence of culture."[24]

The theme of Négritude has recently been reaffirmed

at the First World Festival of Negro Arts held in Dakar,

Senegal in April, 1966. Senghor has called this Festival the

culmination of Négritude, the beginning of a new epoch.
Africa "must now take its rightful place as creator of
culture . . . and the Festival will mark the formal opening
of the new era."[25]

There were several aims that the Dakar Festival hoped
to accomplish. Negroes throughout the world were enabled to
return to the "sources" of their art, meaning Africa. There
is considerable doubt, however, whether Africa is the source
of art for Negroes throughout the world. The Festival also
hoped to show the world Négritude's contributions, and to
instill in Negroes pride in their race, a sense of dignity.
The creative ability of the Negro was reputed to be a result
of his African heritage. But is the Negro's creative
ability due to any heritage derived from Africa? This is
an enormous assumption when accounting for all the Negroes
in the world.

American Negroes and literary authorities deny to a
great extent the allegation that Africa provides the basis
for Negro creative ability; nevertheless, as Samuel W. Allen
said, Africa "may well serve for many as a leaven, enriching
in large measure the cultural loaf."[26] But it is saying a
little too much to assert that the culture of Negro Americans
has its origins in Africa. Samuel Allen points out that the

American cultural situation is different from that of those Negroes in Jamaica, Ghana, or Senegal. "Our contact with Africa has been remote for centuries, and both the natural and the consciously directed impacts of the enslavement were to shatter the African cultural heritage."[27]

In a sense, this presumptuous claim of Africa to be the background of all Negroes is, according to some critics, robbing American and other Negroes of their own identities. For instance, Senghor has pointed out African cultural influences in American Negro writings, yet most of these American writers have never been in contact with his so-called "African heritage"; the origin of these works had nothing, generally, to do with Africa.

American Negro writers, Ellison and Baldwin for example, do not stress their blackness, but rather they emphasize the fact that they are men and individuals first, and then writers. Senghor makes blackness one of the supreme issues in Négritude. Race to other Negro writers (American) is generally just a fact of birth, like sex, which is treated accordingly. They stress Negro involvement in the American cultural milieu for it is from this complex that he derives his identity.

The basic meaning of Négritude, in its newest sense and

in that expressed at the Dakar Festival, is that Africa is the contemporary renaissance. Négritude in this respect assumes that the "soulless" West can be redeemed by Africa. Tchicaya U Tam'si, in the following poem, says that the whole world will benefit from Négritude as the renaissance.

> The fruits of négritude should not be
>   picked
> by black hands alone but also by the
>   hands
> of men of goodwill throughout the
>   world.[28]

André Malraux, speaking of Négritude, maintains that its influence on the world through its art (meaning jazz and dance) is "the basis for the Africanization of Europe."[29]

Senghor criticizes those who oppose Négritude as denying the Negroes their civilizing values, denying the originality and truth of Négritude. He even gives Négritude Christian attributes: "Negro Art has this significance: it makes us participate in the being of God by making us participate in His creation."[30] Thus, to Senghor, Négritude has a universal value; it is an all-embracing world cultural synthesis. Senghor insists that it is "more revolutionary than the exploration of the cosmos"; it is the "elaboration of a new humanism which will embrace the totality of men on the totality of our planet earth."[31]

Aimé Césaire also spoke in terms similar to those used by Senghor when he referred to Négritude as the "civilization of the universal,"[32] a unifying force for Africa and the world. Ten years ago at the Congress of Negro Writers and Artists in Paris, Césaire had proclaimed the task which still occupied the efforts of the Negroes at the Dakar Festival last year:

> We find ourselves today in a cultural chaos. And this is our role: to liberate the forces which, alone, can organize from this chaos a new synthesis, a synthesis which will deserve the name of a culture, a synthesis which will be the reconciliation of the old and the new. We are here to proclaim the right of our people to speak, to let our people, black people, make their entrance on the great stage of history.[33]

It is highly significant that the Dakar Festival of Arts reaffirmed the concept of Négritude, for in recent years, the efforts of such formerly prolific literary men as Senghor, the Diops (Alioune, Birago, and David), Césaire, and Damas have become meager to say the least--this had led to allegations on the part of critics that Négritude was dead or dying, "for independent Africa, a walking zombie."[34]

Jean-Paul Sartre adopts this viewpoint insisting that Négritude is the voice of a particular historical movement, that of the black man revolting against white rule; thus, according to his definition, Négritude could not be permanent. Sartre believes that in Négritude lies a

rediscovery of the African self, though this rediscovery

takes the form of an "anti-racist racism." "The true

revolutionary poetry of our time," according to Sartre, is

Negro poetry.

Janheinz Jahn refutes the allegation of Sartre that

neo-African poetry is revolutionary, rather insisting that

it signifies a return to authentic tradition. Jahn argues

that African poetry is unique in that it is collective and

speaks for all mankind*:

> In African poetry . . . the expression is
> always in the service of the content; it is never
> a question of expressing oneself, but of expressing
> something . . . Nor is the African poet ever con-
> cerned with his inner nature, with his individuality.[35]

For Jahn, Négritude is more than the mere voice of a par-

ticular historical movement--it is a style in which all

African poetry must be written in the future.

> Once for all it took the stain from Africa; it
> demonstrated that poetry and literature were not
> only possible in the African manner and out of an
> African attitude of mind, but that only such poetry
> was legitimate.[36]

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*Opponents of Jahn's contention would merely point
out that it is characteristic of all good poets and poetry
to speak for all of mankind.

With independence there seem to be conflicts within the very core of Négritude. It must be remembered that the concept has a West Indian, not an African, derivation, and it has been Césaire (Martinique) who has given Négritude its best expression. The African situation has, in large, been different from that of the Negroes from the Americas, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Haiti, Jamaica, Martinique, and so forth. Whereas African Negroes are achieving their independence and regaining control of their own Africa again, other Negroes, in general, at least until recently, have had no distinct culture of their own, having been assimilated into mixed societies and retaining little power or influence. Thus Négritude arose among these Negroes who really had little idea of their ancestry, except that it came from Africa. Their pleas of protest therefore hearkened back to an idealized view of the Africa from whence they came and had long been separated. These non-African Negroes, in founding the Négritude movement, were trying to forge an identity by glorifying some aspects of culture (sensuality, drums, rhythm) which would link them once again to Africa.

The Senegalese became the chief advocates of Négritude in Africa, adopting the movement chiefly because their intellectuals had been exposed to the same kind of assimilation

as in the Caribbean. Senghor, who found Césaire to his liking, in 1948 published a great anthology loaded with the theme of Négritude (significantly this volume contained the works of only three poets, all Senegalese, from continental Africa). In establishing Senegal-Paris (or, in general, Gallic or French-speaking Africa) as the center of the Négritude movement, and in attempting to apply its themes to all of Africa, Négritude and its sponsors have encountered a great deal of opposition.

For more than a decade, English-speaking (Anglo-Saxon) Africans have repudiated the themes of Négritude; not only have young English-expressive poets been indifferent to Négritude, but, in large, they have shown outright hostility towards it. This fact can be attributed to different intellectual traditions in the French- and English-speaking areas, as well as to different cultural developments.

The South African, Ezekiel Mphahlele, explains that "To us in the multi-racial communities . . . Négritude is just so much intellectual talk, a cult."[37]   This attitude is due in part to a "distaste" for literary movements (or at least less enthusiasm than in French-speaking areas) on the part of Anglo-Saxon Africans. In English-speaking areas of Africa there was really no _assimilation_ policy, no cultural

policy per se. So there was less to react against in British

territories than in French areas, at least on the intellectual

level and possibly on the emotional level. There was probably

more of a policy of indifference in British Africa, often

merely a denigration of the African past with nothing in

particular offered as a substitute.

Many members of the English-speaking school of

literature, as well as certain non-African Negroes believe

that Négritude smacks of racism since it affirms a particular

quality or characteristic as distinctly "Negro." (These

critics do recognize the importance, though, of affirming

the rights and dignity of the Negro as a man among men.)

It often seems as if these critics ignore the historical

factors making for the genesis of Négritude--can these

Gallic-oriented Africans be calmly objective when referring

to centuries of degradation and contempt? Dr. Davidson

Nicol of Sierra Leone recognizes this fact that English-

speaking Africans have had no reason for commitment to a

cause as great as those which justify the practice of Négritude

in French Africa.

> In British West African writing there is a lack
> of the motive power of burning racial injustice which
> carries through in the writing of other peoples of
> African descent. . . . The distressing but stimulating
> convenience of a setting of Afro-European conflict is

fortunately or unfortunately denied them. They
have to seek other verities and tensions.[38]

The literary tradition is relatively new in English-
speaking Africa; few writers maintained any proficiency in

literature at the time Senghor and other French-speaking

Africans were publishing their literary reviews, and the

like. This new generation of poets has grown up only

recently, perhaps only within the present decade, and is

represented mainly by Nigerians and Ghanaians. Their

literary culture has developed without that sense of

alienation or exile that faced those creators of Négritude

over thirty years ago in Paris. These new English-speaking

poets are growing up in a different intellectual atmosphere,

relatively free from past stereotypes and slogans.

With English-speaking African poets, there does not

seem to be the intensity found in the Gallic poetry for

expressing the collective soul of the African, nor the

emphasis on blackness and pride. There is, rather, a great

deal more individuality expressed in most of the Anglo-Saxon

poetry. English-speaking poets have generally failed to

capture the richness of style of the English language, their

poetry commonly being flat or plain. Even though it does not

represent any fresh exploration with language, it is important

for its practical nature, for its political (nationalistic) and

sociological implications. Joe Mutiga, a recent Kikuyu poet,
speaks of the desecration of holy ground on the part of the
whites by the planting of new crops:

> Our crops are dug up,
> And put aside, like the grass
> On which the dancer trod,
> And foreign crops implanted;
> And we pass by, eyes on the ground,
> Submitting to the foreign as ours.[39]

There are no particular distinguishing traits that
characterize the style of English-speaking African writers
as uniquely "African." Most of their writings are de-
scriptive and devoid of controversy, with no peculiar
emotional content nor use of English to show that such
writings are uniquely African in origin. One noticeable
exception to this generalization is the literary works of
Amos Tutuola of Nigeria, who has recreated traditional
Yoruba myths and folktales in an Africanized form of English.
Tutuola's "Palmwine Drinkard" and "My Life in the Bush of
the Ghosts" have been violently rejected by many literary
Africans, though they have been popularly received in England.
They have been rejected by Nigerians chiefly because of
their close portrayal of tradition. Tutuola is rebuked for
writing "wrong" English and creating a "bad" impression
abroad of superstition-ridden Nigerians; abroad, however, he
is regarded as "quaint" by patronizing readers.

It is evident that for most English-speaking African
writers African tradition has little meaning. This re-
jection of tradition seems to be a manifestation of a
search for identity and dignity, yet not on a traditional
basis, but rather on a level with white, Western cultures;
in other words, the "tribal" outlook has been forsaken, in
large, for the "modern" one. The Nigerian poet and politician,
Dennis Osadebay, wrote:

> Don't preserve my customs,
> As some fine curios
> To suit some white historians taste.[40]

Osadebay, a Nigerian nationalist leader, even went so far
as to criticize the white man for not introducing enough
European culture, and not so much for destroying African
culture.

> I'm not ungrateful though I ask
> For more and more good things.
> I cannot rest
> Satisfied with half a loaf or less
> When I know you can give the whole bread.[41]

Although the dignity of English-speaking African élites
is oriented, in general, toward the future, some such writers
are reluctant to sever all emotional ties with the past.
Peter Abrahams expresses hope that "If the men inaugurating
the new ways have the sense and the patience to preserve the
finer qualities of the old ways and fuse these with the new,

then we can expect something magnificently new out of
Africa."[42]

Abioseh Nicol of Sierra Leone speaks of his joy upon
returning to his native Africa via the Guinea coast:

Go up-country, they said,
To see the real Africa.
For whomsoever you may be,
That is where you come from.
Go for bush--inside the bush
You will find your hidden heart,
Your mute ancestral spirit.

And so I went,
Dancing on my way.[43]

The Ghanaian, Dei-Anang, expresses the cultural con-
flicts, the dilemmas facing modern Africans in their
transitional stage.

Here we stand
Poised between two civilizations
Backward? To days of drum
And festal dances in the shade
Of sun-kist palms.
Or forward!
Toward?
The slums, where man is dumped upon man?[44]

South African writers react negatively against Négritude
for the same reasons that they reject "separate development,"
or "apartheid." These writers proclaim the individuality of
culture and criticize Négritude (African-ness) for playing
right into white hands with its brand of racialism. Mphahlele
argues that no cult of separateness, no racial differences or

peculiarities will give rise to any new African art; rather,

African art and literature must come from the very stuff

of life itself. He points out the fact that South Africans

have fought against the superficialities of white culture

(which is all they have been allowed), yet they have still

produced valid works of art. Mphahlele writes of his feelings

of both admiration for the achievements of the white man

as well as his indignation suffered in the hands of his white

overlords.

> I admire the white man's achievements, his mind
> that plans tall buildings, powerful machinery. I used
> to want to justify myself and my own kind to the white
> man. I later discovered that it wasn't worth it. It
> was to myself and to my kind I needed to justify myself.
> . . . He [white man] has driven me against the wall
> so that I never forget I am black.
> . . . I must scream, leave me alone. Downright
> anarchy, downright individualism, you may say. I
> enjoy a fair amount of both, at any rate in my
> thought-life.[45]

Many well-disposed Europeans today still harbor doubts

with respect to the African and his relative worth as a human

being. Most intelligent men will acknowledge the fact that

color does not reflect upon a man's intelligence, that Africans

are not children, and that Africans can and have produced

capable men in most fields of work. But these same men will

cite the lack of Aristotles, Shakespeares, and Dantes in

Africa, the absence of a Chartres or a Parthenon. Thus, it

is obvious that Africans are still in a probationary period until achievements, comparable to those of white civilizations, are produced. Assumptions of Western cultural superiority have not yet vanished and the demand is still in evidence that Africans prove themselves according to established Western criteria.

African élites from both French- and British-speaking territories believe that Negroes have made important and distinct contributions to humanity and can make more if they are free to do so. Senghor answers to the allegation that Africans have not produced a Shakespeare by raising the question, "Why should they?" He points out that the Negro-African genius is different than that of the European, and thus the fruits of this genius are expected to be different. Who is to judge, for example, between the works of Shakespeare and the bronzes of Benin, giving Shakespeare a higher grade than the latter?

African culture is a reflection of what Africans are--they are different from Europeans, but not less rational, because of this. Africans may not make use of discursive thought to a high degree, but they do use with good effects insight and sympathy. Césaire sums up this latter insight in the following renunciation of materialism

and Western life which he feels is divorced from nature

and, therefore, God.

> Hurrah for those who have invented nothing
> for those who have never discovered
> for those who have never conquered
> but abandon themselves to the essence of all things
> ignorant of surfaces, but seized by the very movement of
>   things
> not caring to conquer, but playing the game of the world
> truly the elder sons of the world
> porous to all the breaths of the world.[46]

Some Europeans will argue that a Milton or a Descartes

symbolize British and French superiority. Africans and other

liberal thinkers will retort by observing that these men

are not the property of any country or generation, but

rather they are available to all men in all times (possibly

even more so to Africans in their struggle for civil

liberties). This same argument applies as well to so-called

"western" values which are ceasing to be "western" and are

becoming human values (and are being incorporated into usage

by many of the African élites).

The time is coming, African leaders envision, when

Africans will no longer be regarded as curiosities, in-

habitants of an ethnological museum, but rather as free men,

living and working in dignity in the same world as all other

men. But such a time will only come about, it is generally

felt by the advocates of Négritude, when Africa is free from

the colonial taint; when the African masses have developed

an identity and a sense of dignity in being both black and

African; and when the world recognizes the African renais-

sance (its achievements and values), disregarding all

deeply-ingrained prejudices and inviting Africa to occupy

its proper place in the modern world.

AFRICAN PERSONALITY

If I went to heaven, and God said, 'Aggrey, I
am going to send you back, would you like to go as
a white man?' I should reply, 'No, send me back as
a black man, yes, completely black.' And if God
should ask, 'Why?' I would reply, 'Because I have
work to do as a black man that no white man can do.
Please send me back as black as you can make me.'
. . . I am proud of my colour: whoever is not proud
of his colour is not fit to live.[47]

This passage captures the essence of the African

Personality, and, in its emphasis on the uniqueness of the

black man and upon his dignity and pride, it shows a great

deal of affinity with the concept of Négritude. Both African

Personality and Négritude reflect a basic unity, stressing

similar personality traits and characteristics that dis-

tinguish the black African from other men. Both concepts

have been invoked to meet similar situations imposed upon

Africans, and they bring to mind the detached idea of a

"black brotherhood." It is obvious that black Africans are

uncertain of their identities and are, therefore, through
the invocation of these concepts, making their push for
recognition.

Yet there are significant differences between Négritude
and African Personality, owing chiefly to their different
origins and advocates. Whereas Négritude was born outside
of continental Africa more than three decades ago as the
creation of a non-African Negro, African Personality has
only been in existence for less than a decade and has a
more geographically confined content than Négritude. Kwame
Nkrumah of Ghana coined the term "African Personality" in
reference to those characteristics and personality traits
which are uniquely African or which imply an African way of
social, economic, or political organization that is unique
in the world. The psychological basis of African unity is
derived from these common African personality traits.

Unfortunately, African Personality has never been
defined by Nkrumah to the same degree that Négritude has
been defined by its proponents. African Personality has
only been applied to African states since Ghana received its
independence in 1957--it did not play as large a role in
the development of nationalism in Africa as did Négritude.
Négritude, unlike African Personality, has accounted for

everyone of African descent no matter where they are located in the world.

African Personality is similar to national character in that it takes into account culturally regular traits of nationals who are integrated into a common social tradition. Of course, the problem arises of finding these shared traits and traditions--are these characteristics found throughout the whole continent or only in parts of Africa?

Besides an attempt to define a national character common to the entire continent, African Personality has been regarded as a defense of syncretism as well as a refusal to be ashamed of indigenous culture and behavior. It is a slogan of confidence in the creative forces of the nation and of the colored races of Africa. African Personality is a reaction against the repudiation of value in African cultures on the part of the white man, and the concomitant imposition of European culture on African nations. Moreover, it represents an attempt to demonstrate the distinctiveness of modern African life, as opposed to those who allege that African life and values are mere imitations of the Western world.

The Ghanaian, C. G. Baeta, referred to African Personality as "a symbol of the new and highly significant

fact that the Africans have come into their own at home and
have emerged as a factor to be reckoned with on the world
stage."48

The concept of African Personality is also a <u>political</u>
expression, negative in tone in that it constitutes a re-
action against European colonialism and imperialism. For
this reason, critics (like Sartre on Négritude) point out
that African Personality can only be a temporary expression,
losing force as Africa becomes increasingly independent.

Yet, more than a mere negative reaction against white
domination, African Personality is a positive assertion of
the need for immediate political unification throughout
Africa, as well as inroads into increased economic coopera-
tion. African Personality forms the basis for Pan-Africanism
which has been discussed in detail in the second chapter of
this thesis. African Personality refers to the pre-European
unity of the African continent on a regional basis, a unity
which can be revived today to serve as the basis for a
larger Pan-African union. This concept represents an attempt
to explore matters of common interest between African nations;
to find ways to consolidate and maintain independence; to
contribute to world peace; and to strengthen economic and
cultural ties between African countries.

> . . . we must also examine ways and means to
> broaden and strengthen our association with one
> another through such means as the exchange of
> students and the visits of cultural, scientific
> and technical missions, both governmental and non-
> governmental, and the establishment of libraries
> specialising in various aspects of African history
> and culture which may become centres of research.
> There are no limits to ways in which we on this
> African continent can enrich our knowledge of our
> past civilisations and cultural heritage through
> our cooperative efforts and the pooling of our
> scientific and technical resources.[49]

The unity of Africa is again reiterated by Nkrumah in I
Speak of Freedom. "Today we are one. If in the past the
Sahara divided us, now it unites us. And an injury to one
is an injury to all of us. From this Conference must go
out a new message: 'Hands off Africa! Africa must be free.'"[50]

African Personality shows the readiness and ability
of all African nations to manage their own domestic and
international affairs. Nkrumah speaks of African states
playing an independent role in world affairs, a free African
non-nuclear bloc--or third force--a war preventing force
that would constitute a great African contribution to inter-
national peace and goodwill.

And finally, African Personality signifies a desire
to liberate those areas of Africa that are not yet free, as
well as to preserve their freedom once liberation is en-
hanced.

The Party seeks to establish fraternal relations
with, and offer guidance and support to, all
nationalist, democratic and socialist movements in
Africa and elsewhere which are fighting for national
independence and self-determination on the one hand
and whose programmes are opposed to imperialism,
colonialism, racialism, tribalism and religious
sectarianism and all other forms of national, racial,
tribal and religious chauvinism and oppression, on
the other.[51]

African Personality has been adjudged a political
myth by some critics, yet one cannot deny its emotional
appeal. Often the concept, as is true of Négritude, is
abused, being used to justify aggression, one-party rule
(which many African leaders justify anyway), and certain
undemocratic practices, such as the denial of habeas corpus,
and the like. Indeed, in the realm of culture, African
Personality is often carried to extremes. In Ghana's CPP
central office, there hang paintings depicting Africans
as the inventors of many branches of modern science. An
historical pamphlet even insists that practically all of
the great men of history--in Africa and the rest of the
world--were Negroes.

Many critics of Nkrumah's African Personality are
sick of hearing about "African this and African that"; they
merely want to discuss culture in general, without nationalist
overtones. These men feel that there is often too much undue

emphasis on the African side. These exaggerations on the part of the advocates of African Personality are generally natural defense mechanisms against European claims and fabrications about African life. While it must be admitted that there are certainly some romantic and even neurotic exaggerations taking place with respect to this concept, in general there is still a quite serious examination in progress in scholarly circles with respect to European and African values, and so forth.

Both Négritude and African Personality have, in the past few years, grown closer together in their common challenge to show the validity of African culture and to integrate the old and the new. Alioune Diop has demonstrated the relation or complement between these concepts in pointing out that African Personality emphasizes the validity of the African position on the international scene, while Négritude reestablishes the dignity of Africans and their culture. Both, in the last analysis, remain established as partners in the African élites' search for recognition of the universal values in African cultures and in the accent on African uniqueness and dignity.

CHAPTER IV

FOOTNOTES

[1]Fred G. Burke, <u>Africa's Quest For Order</u> (Englewood Cliffs, 1964), p. 139.

[2]Michael Furay, "Négritude--A Romantic Myth," <u>The New Republic</u> (July 2, 1966), p. 32.

[3]Melville J. Herskovits, <u>The Human Factor In Changing Africa</u> (New York, 1962), p. 452.

[4]<u>Ibid.</u>, pp. 452-53.

[5]Basil Davidson, <u>Which Way Africa?</u> (Baltimore, 1964), p. 72.

[6]Gerald Moore and Ulli Beier, <u>Modern Poetry From Africa</u> (Baltimore, 1966), p. 13.

[7]Léopold Senghor, <u>On African Socialism</u> (N. Y., 1964), p. x.

[8]Burke, p. 139.

[9]K. A. Busia, <u>The Challenge of Africa</u> (N. Y., 1962), p. 45.

[10]Jacob Drachler, ed., <u>African Heritage</u> (N. Y., 1964), p. 198.

[11]Gerald Moore and Ulli Beier, pp. 16-17.

[12]Bown, Lalage and Michael Crowder, eds., <u>The Proceedings of the First International Congress of Africanists</u> (Evanston, 1964), p. 211.

[13]Ulli Beier, "In Search of an African Personality," <u>Twentieth Century</u>, 165 (April, 1959), p. 346.

[14]Drachler, p. 195.

[15]Ibid., p. 106.

[16]Moore and Beier, p. 16.

[17]Bown, Lalage, and Michael Crowder, p. 211.

[18]Ibid., p. 213.

[19]Ibid., p. 215.

[20]Ibid., p. 216.

[21]Ibid., p. 216.

[22]Ibid., p. 216.

[23]Ibid., p. 217.

[24]Ibid., p. 217.

[25]Furay, p. 32.

[26]Ibid., p. 32.

[27]Ibid., p. 33.

[28]Ibid., p. 33.

[29]Ibid., p. 34.

[30]Ibid., p. 34

[31]Ibid., p. 34.

[32]Ibid., p. 34.

[33]Ibid., p. 35.

[34]Ibid., p. 32.

[35]Janheinz Jahn,

[36]Ibid., p. 207.

[37]Davidson, p. 75.

[38]Drachler, p. 277.

[39]Moore and Beier, p. 20.

[40]Beier, p. 344.

[41]Ibid., p. 344.

[42]Drachler, p. 18.

[43]Davidson, p. 73.

[44]Ibid., p. 73.

[45]Drachler, pp. 124-26.

[46]Ibid., p. 278.

[47]Davidson, p. 71.

[48]Herskovits, p. 470.

[49]Kwame Nkrumah, I Speak of Freedom (New York, 1961), p. 129.

[50]Ibid., p. 131.

[51]Ibid., p. 167.

CHAPTER V

THE RE-WRITING OF AFRICAN HISTORY

O Africa!
Like some great century plant shall bloom
In ages hence, we watch thee; in our dream
See in thy swamps the Prospero of our stream;
Thy doors unlocked, where knowledge in her tomb
Hath lain innumerable years in gloom.
Then shalt thou, waking with that morning gleam,
Shine as thy sister lands with equal beam.[1]

The ideas of African Personality and Négritude are

conceptions which have been devised by intellectuals, and

as such, they are appealing only to certain élitist elements

of African society (and among these, mostly to those who are

somewhat mystical in nature). With all their poetry,

mythology, and abstractions, it seems dubious whether these

two efforts to promote a sense of dignity among Africans

will extend beyond the intellectual circles in which they

are now embraced. In short, Négritude and African Personality

are of doubtful extent and permanence.

The re-writing of African history, however, is a much

more significant, practical, and realistic attempt to

strengthen African dignity--and surely one that will prove

to be far-reaching, lasting on for many years to come.

Indeed, the men concerned with this enormous enterprise are
determined to see to it that, for the very first time,
African history shall be written, by Africans, for Africans,
and about Africans. In this history European events, ideas,
and persons will appear as incidental and subordinate, the
emphasis being placed on the African experience. African
scholarship will be devoted to what is now an almost virgin
field, and will continue to be pursued until African history
is traced in detail from its beginnings to the present day.

All literate Africans of the present have had the
experience of reading history books that were composed by
Europeans, and were from the European point of view. In
these history books, Africa is rarely mentioned, except with
respect to some European achievement or experience on that
Dark Continent. Few Africans are mentioned by name unless
they happen to be those chiefs who unsuccessfully fought
the white man. To have had only such textbooks has, as
much as any other single factor, made the intelligent and
sensitive African rebel. Now that independence has been
achieved, these educated Africans are, increasingly, refusing
to allow their children to read such books. Yet the simple
fact remains that, until independence, no African histories
(as new leaders interpret the phrase) existed: they had not

been written, and consequently they were not in print.

One of the first tasks of the new Africa, therefore, is to write African history books for Africans. The result is sure to be a growth of African dignity. African leaders have done a great deal of verbalizing with respect to the new "African renaissance"; it is essential in such a "renaissance" that African history be decolonized, or re-written. The need for a more objective, and a less subjective, investigation of their history has been recognized by African cognoscenti. African history must reflect the African experience, not a European or Asiatic adventure story. A completely new reinterpretation of the past is required; where there is no written word, scholars and historians must make use of oral recordings, folklore, and legends (this necessitates going on location, to first-hand sources, seeking out the traditionalists).

In the re-writing of African history, it is vital that African--indeed, all--historians seek to strengthen the spiritual and cultural foundations for national and continental unity. The new history must bring out the integrity of African societies. The European experience must be placed in its proper context; it was an African experience and, to be sure, a crucial one. What is important

is that the point of view of the African throughout the
colonial period be the crucial testimony, showing how the
European presence related to African harmony and progress
(or the lack of it). Kwame Nkrumah does not believe that
the new history should reflect merely the degree of the
Europeanization of Africa; rather, it should show the
tragedy and final triumph of "our society."

> The history of a nation is, unfortunately, too
> easily written as the history of its dominant class.
> If the history of a nation, of a people, cannot be
> found in the history of a class, how much less can
> the history of a continent be found in what is not
> even a part of it--Europe. And yet, this is precisely
> what many a European historian has done in the past.
> The history of Africa has with them been European-
> centered. Africa was only the space in which Europe
> swelled up.[2]

What European scholars meant by history was the study
of recorded documents and data. Since Africa was illiterate,
there were no records, and hence Africa by definition had no
history. The point which needs to be emphasized is that
without written records, Africa could be said to lack a
history--this non-historical, or "pre-literate," past of
Africa has, until recently, simply been the accepted view
of scholars, administrators, and most Europeans and Americans.
Indeed, African leaders began to recognize the fact that they
could not truly mold a "nation" unless they first created a

history of their own. Now, African leaders, tired of appear-
ing in history books only in connection with being taken as
slaves by white people, are determined to have a detailed
account of their own countries from the beginning to now.
Their own people will be the heroes, their own triumphs and
failures the very meat of their history, with the intrusion
of the alien Europeans and Arabs as the so-called "Bad Guys
at Work." Nkrumah insists that African history serve as a
guide and director of African action, becoming a source of
ideology to be used in the reconstruction of Africa.

In the reconstruction of African history, however,
African historians and writers must be careful not to
exaggerate their claims, going to opposite extremes of
falsification, and thereby endangering their cause. The
Senegalese writer, C. A. Diop, falls into this unfortunate
error when he asserts that Negroes "were the first to invent
mathematics, astronomy, the calendar, sciences in general,
the arts, religion, agriculture, social organization,
medicine, writing, technical skills, and architecture."[3]
He bases these false affirmations on history and linguistics,
and his mistakes are jeopardizing the very cause he hopes to
serve. Besides running the risk of harming the entire new
school of African historians, Diop's assumptions are an

injustice to Africans themselves. It will be unfortunate
if such historical inaccuracies as found in some books today
are transmitted, as truth, to thousands of unsuspecting
students in the near future.

This revolution in African historiography has had
manifestations in many areas, one of which is in the schools.
In schools and universities African history is no longer
subordinated to the "more important" study of European
history--indeed, the Peace Corps in Africa has even in-
corporated into its teaching programs the study of African
history with less emphasis on the colonial viewpoint. Today
African history departments and archives are found in most
African universities, so that Africans educated in their
own countries are coming into greater contact with the re-
constructed versions of their history, as opposed to those
who receive their education abroad according to the more
standard European point of view. In general, universities
in French-speaking parts of Africa have been slower, due
to their rigidity, to adopt the teaching of African history
than have English-speaking universities.

Within Africa the whole study and development of
ethno-history has been greatly stimulated by renewed world
interest in African history--enlightened individuals are

beginning to realize that a thorough investigation and collection of African folk-tales and folk-memories, as well as archaeological excavations and anthropological research, must be carried out in order to find out exactly (perhaps "approximately" would be a better word) what comprises African history. In the development of African ethno-history, it has been necessary to supplement and extend the conventional methods of historical study with archaeo-logical findings and, more importantly, with the examination of oral traditions (the Journal of African History reflects this breadth of approach). Historians, in general, have been more inclined to rely upon written records than word of mouth in their studies, and therefore, oral tradition has, in large, been neglected as a reliable source of historical information.

The validity of oral tradition has been questioned by critics who maintain that it is impossible to make accurate recollections of traditions, myths and legends which extend more than a century and a half into the past (this figure seems to have been conceived in a somewhat arbitrary manner). And yet, the ethnohistorical study of the Gwambe of Mozambique offers evidence quite to the contrary, "proving" the reliability of unwritten history in this

particular case--certain oral recollections of historical
migrations on the part of the Gwambe have been confirmed
by several sixteenth century Portuguese documents.

The method involved in ethnohistorical studies
necessitates a thorough understanding of the cultural
context of the oral traditions under examination. In order
to enhance the reliability of such verbal evidence, it is
important to obtain wide samples of oral accounts for the
purpose of comparison--among the collected versions there
may be both archaic and contemporary forms which would be
of use in tracing the continuity of a particular aspect of
culture over a long period of time. Moreover, the information
gathered should be interpreted from different points of
view in order to gain a greater perspective of the oral
traditions under examination. The study of myths and
proverbs (which various African governments have urged
their scholars to collect and catalogue), as well as the
historical linguistic examination of obsolete words and
idioms which have been retained in African languages and
dialects, offer clues as to the people and periods of the
African past which are currently subject to investigation.

Indeed, the difficult task involved in the study of
African ethnohistory was outlined at the International

Conference on the Teaching and Writing of African History held at Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, in September, 1965. The fact that the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) was co-sponsor of this conference along with the government of Tanzania, indicates the immense importance attached to this subject of African history by the world community of nations, a fact which gives Africans a feeling of great pride. African scholars, with help from foreign sources, are currently ransacking the libraries in Madrid, London, Paris, Brussels, and hopefully sometime, Lisbon, in order to find valuable, forgotten records on the African experience. An intense, international scholarly effort is being expended in the re-examination of old, previously unused, documents, as found in the moldy files of colonial District Offices, early gazettes, commercial houses, and missionary bodies.

New kinds of historical research are being carried out; for instance, that of Shepperson and Price on the Chilembwe movement of Nyasaland; that of M. G. Smith on the government of the Hausa state of Zazzau; that of K. O. Diké on the commerce of the Niger Delta region during the middle five decades of the nineteenth century; and other African historical studies too numerous to be mentioned.

Greater numbers of Arabic and non-European documents are in the process of being reworked in order to focus attention upon the African experience, rather than on Arabic political history and military invasions. African historians are also searching Persian and Chinese writings on Africa in order to find pertinent information.

An increasing number of scholars throughout the world today have come to recognize the importance of African history in the total span of world history (though many, perhaps, still would decline to award African history a position of importance equal to that of certain Western civilizations). At least the psychological obstacle to the development of African historiography--posed by those scholars who, in the past, have refused to acknowledge the existence of any "African" history--seems to have been eliminated from the intellectual scene. African leaders earnestly hope--and the Tanzanian-UNESCO Conference, attended by delegates and scholars from many nations, seems to indicate--that European and Asian scholars and historians will continue to cooperate with each African nation in the attempts to decolonize their history, presenting it in the "correct," and more dignified, African version.

It seems certain, for the near future at least, that the re-writing of African history will pick up where the intellectual concepts of Négritude and African Personality must inevitably leave off, in carrying the search for an African dignity to the masses--for it is only in such practical and realistic efforts that the great masses of Africans can find true involvement and can derive a genuine sense of pride and dignity.

CHAPTER V

FOOTNOTES

[1]Bown, Lalage, and Michael Crowder, eds., The Pro-
ceedings of the First International Congress of Africanists
(Evanston, 1964, p. 15.

[2]Ibid., p. 10.

[3]Immanuel Wallerstein, Social Change, The Colonial
Situation (N. Y., 1966), p. 594.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER V

NEGRO-AFRICAN CREATIVE AND PERFORMING ARTS

The very critics who, in the past, have denied Africa
a history of its own, similarly have often refused to recog-
nize African achievements in the fields of art, music,
literature, dance, and other forms of aesthetic expression.
And yet, African art has a rich and varied--and quite
distinct--history which stretches from prehistoric ages
across the centuries to the present day. Indeed, world
attention today is, increasingly, paying due tribute to
talented African artists and their creative works, a fact
which the leaders and artists of new African nations take
a great deal of pride in accepting. African dance troupes
touring the world have been enthusiastically acclaimed,
African art has become very popular among private art
collectors, and museums of African history and art are
appearing in greater numbers throughout the world. The
First World Festival of Negro Arts, held in 1966 in Dakar,
Senegal, was an African effort at self-promotion and ad-
vertisement with respect to an interested, yet critical,
world opinion.

Since the attainment of independence, the leaders
of many of the new African nations, through such efforts
outlined above, have been trying to capture the respect of
the world community of nations, if not in the technological
and material spheres, then certainly in the realms of the
intellect and aesthetics. The sensitive, educated members
of the African élite are striving to encourage individual
Africans to put their talents and peculiar geniuses to use
in creative, artistic endeavors; moreover, they are attempting
to inculcate in such talented individuals a sense of pride
in their abilities and achievements, hoping that this
personal sense of dignity will permeate to the national
(possibly even to the continental) level.

Within Africa, many governments have been active in
the encouragement and, in some cases, in the sponsorship of
the creative and the performing arts in their nations--all
in an effort to stir up artistic activity and to instill
in the African people a sense of pride in their national
cultural heritage.

Since 1961 the University of Ibadan Travelling Theatre
has been touring Nigeria annually, putting on such pro-
ductions as Shakespeare's The Taming of the Shrew and The
Comedy of Errors for audiences totaling more than 60,000 persons.

These productions, carried on by drama students, have been
enthusiastically received throughout Nigeria, and they
have reached areas where no previous theatre had ever
penetrated. Besides several Shakespearean Festivals, the
works of many Africans have been produced with great success,
notably the Nigerian play Danda, adapted from a novel of the
same title written by Nkem Nwankwo.

Ulli Beier, in conjunction with several other African
artists and writers, founded the Mbari Club in Nigeria in
1961. This club has served as a shrine for creative talent--
a place for exhibitions by small artists, the performance
of dramas, and intellectual forums. The Mbari Club offers
instruction in the arts, and sponsors exhibitions of
painting and sculpture by American and European, as well as
African, artists. Mbari, recently, has undertaken the
publishing of plays, poems, fiction, and books of art,
placing its products on the world market. A writers' con-
ference has been organized through the efforts of this club
in Kampala, Uganda, with invitations having been extended
to writers, publishers, and editors from many countries
throughout the world. Many new Mbari Clubs are opening
throughout Nigeria as conscious efforts to give impetus and
direction to the development of the creative arts.

In Ghana the government has extended encouragement and financial assistance to the Ghana Institute of Art and Culture, founded in 1962. The Institute provides art galleries, craft workshops, and studio space, as well as rehearsal and production facilities for the many active drama groups in Legon and Accra. The Workers Brigade Drama Group, a full-time repertory company, has successfully performed <u>Antigone</u> as well as two Ghanaian folk dramas, <u>Awo Ye</u> and <u>Afahye</u>. The Obadzeng and the Ga Troupes have put on dances, musical dramas, and several folk operas.

This Institute of Art and Culture fully recognizes the importance and validity of Ghanaian oral tradition, having expended considerable time and effort in this area. In conjunction with the University of Ghana, the Institute has established the School of Music and Dance at Legon. This school, financed entirely through government funds, is part of an officially sponsored program of African Studies, which encourages the study of the history, culture, institutions, languages, and arts of Africa in new <u>African-centered ways</u>, completely free from the taints of the colonial era. It is the hope of the Ghanaian government that such research will further stimulate artistic activity in Ghana and elsewhere in Africa.

Important archives of tapes, films, dance and
musical notations, and the like, have been created in the
growing number of cultural centers throughout Ghana. In
these centers, the scientific study and teaching of dance
forms and musical patterns is carried out, and a great deal
of interaction is possible between professionals in the
fields of art, dance, music, literature, and in many other
fields comprising the creative and the performing arts. It
has been estimated that major Ghanaian festivals in the
various fields of artistic endeavor occur on the average of
every three weeks, serving to promote a sense of pride in
the national cultural heritage.

NEGRO-AFRICAN ART

Among the cognoscenti, Africa is now famous for its
immense variety of art--the prehistoric rock drawings of
Rhodesia and South Africa; the ancient terra cotta art
forms of Nigeria; its metal art work, chiefly represented
by the brass and bronze works of Benin; ivory and bone
carvings from the Congo, Cameroon, and Nigeria (Benin City);
the simple ornamental art of the Bushmen and Hottentots; the
weaving and pottery of the Congo and Nigeria; as well as the
exquisite architecture and carvings found in the ancient

kingdoms of Zimbabwe (Rhodesia), Benin, Dahomey, Ghana,
Melle, and Ashanti.

It seems to be a general impression today that the
Euroamerican cultural impact has destroyed a great deal of
indigenous African art--art which it should have fostered
and treasured--through the imposition of European tastes
and standards, leaving only a trace of African classic arts.
Perhaps, however, classic art has merely adapted to the
outside influences acting upon it, and has re-oriented
itself toward a new market and new terms of artistic recog-
nition, retaining only those traditional concepts, forms,
and marks of prestige that seemed of value in the present
day.   The environment, as well, has been detrimental to
African art--termites, rain, and many other climatic factors
have totally destroyed many original works of art and badly
damaged others.

The development of art in Africa has been widely
sponsored in recent years by government officials, missionaries,
educational institutions, and businessmen (who often finance
artists). In effect, artists are being "taught" or "created"
by the above groups. In Brazzaville Africans who were never
artists in their own villages are being instructed in the
reproduction of colorful designs on paper and canvas, as well

as in the copying of "abstracts" as found in indigenous
cultures (on walls, masks, and the like). In Nigeria
missionaries have encouraged Ibo girls to transfer to
cloth as embroidery motifs certain cicatrization patterns
as tatooed on their own bodies. Yoruba schoolboys are being
taught to carve tiny figures from thorns and to perfect
their work according to the examples of their African
teachers who often sell carvings for very high prices. As
a result of such mass encouragement of the arts in African
nations, a great deal of mediocre work is produced by
"hack" artists who are aiming for the mass market. But
this is no deterrent to the artistic revival in Africa
which is a manifestation of the intense struggle on the
part of many educated Africans to create an African dignity.

European encouragement, which delights African
leaders, has served in many areas as a stimulus in keeping
alive African art. For example, Britain has brought a Benin
brass worker to Ghana in order to teach the Ghanaians the
Ashanti art of cire-perdue casting which had practically
disappeared in this previously important center of casting.
The Ghanaian government has also sponsored the casting of
jewelry which is sold in craft centers throughout Ghana.
As long ago as 1915 Britain encouraged Oba Eweke II of Benin

to revive traditional Benin arts and to initiate a new
type of carving, previously unknown, using true ebony, a
black heart wood found near Benin City. The King, following
up the British suggestion, founded a school of carvers using
ebony. Today, as a result, a flourishing craft center is a
going concern in Benin and in Lagos, and is still receiving
government support.

There is a current movement in the Congo and through-
out West Africa which is gaining momentum daily and at a
time when it has appeared as if traditional and classic art
were dying. This movement constitutes an attempt, mainly
by government officials, to prohibit the export of old art
forms in quantity. The governments of these nations want
to collect the best of the old pieces of art in order to
form the nucleus of national museums of art. These nations
are spending money trying to recover quietly fine pieces
of classical art from European and American dealers, museums,
or wherever possible, in a conscious effort to foster
national pride and dignity in the rich heritage of the
African past, and to inspire Africans of the future.

African art, as well as African music and dance,
have been items of cultural borrowing by Europe and America
from Africa. Plastic arts were especially adopted abroad

since they were so easily transportable to Europe. The
early twentieth century expressionist movement received
a needed impetus from African art forms. In the faces
represented in many of the paintings of Picasso and
Modigliani can be seen certain African, especially Baoulé,
characteristics. There are also some hints of a relation-
ship between Mediterranean and African art styles, as
evidenced in the faces (represented as an inclined plane
set at an angle to a spindly neck) of the Ashanti akua-ba
and in those of certain pre-Hellenic Aegean figures.

NEGRO-AFRICAN MUSIC AND DANCE

In Africa, music and dance, like art, are integral
parts of society, each fulfilling definite functions within
the cultural matrix. Music and dance are used in religion,
war, co-operative labor, childbirth, marriage, death, pro-
test, beer-drinking, and in innumerable other facets of
life. There is no separation of the artist from the
audience, for in African music and dance, all are participants,
even though some are more specialized than others.

The use of rhythm in African music has been widely
commented upon in musical circles throughout the world. In
Africa, a complex rhythmic pattern is used (sometimes

embodying several dominant rhythms) while most European music has only one dominant rhythm. Richard Waterman, in comparing European and African rhythm, said that ". . . from the point of view of European music, African music introduces a new rhythmic dimension."[1] A. M. Jones maintained that there was always a clash of rhythms in African music: "Rhythm is to the African what harmony is to Europeans and it is in the complex interweaving of contrasting rhythmic patterns that he finds his greatest aesthetic satisfaction."[2]

Some critics maintain that harmony has no part in African music, or, if it does, it is accidental or due to Western influences. Waterman argues, though, that harmony is a definite characteristic of African music. His assertion stems

> . . . from certain preconceptions concerning
> the evolution of music which have proved in-
> applicable to the present case. The argument,
> in terms of these preconceptions, is simply
> that Africans had not developed enough culturally
> to be expected to have harmony. Given this
> bias, it is easy to see . . . how an ethno-
> musicologist of a decade or two ago could have
> listened to African music, and even have trans-
> cribed African music, without ever hearing
> harmony used, even though harmony may actually
> have been present.[3]

Some change has been introduced into African music through Islamic and Western influences. There are certain

similarities between African and Western music which make
for some blending of styles in cases of contact. The
influence of missionaries as well as the exodus of Africans
from rural areas to the cities and the subsequent contact
with European music has caused certain modifications in
traditional African music. Yet African leaders quickly point
out the uniqueness of African music and its influence, in
turn, on the outside world. These educated Africans cite
jazz and certain so-called "South American" rhythms--the
conga and samba--as originating from Africa and spreading
throughout the world as popular music. These same sensitive
Africans insist that, in spite of the many areas of contact
with other music of the world, African music will maintain
its integrity and identity and will not disappear as a
style. It is to African music that African leaders are
looking as another source of dignity for their nations and
peoples--for this reason, professional musicians, as well
as dancers, are being sponsored by African governments on
world-wide tours and other well-publicized appearances.

Some professional dancing troupes have come from
Senegal and the Ivory Coast, and have performed successfully
in London, Paris, and the United States. But dancing is not
carried on merely professionally in Africa--it plays an

important part in the lives of all Africans.

> Africans dance. They dance for joy, and they
> dance for grief; they dance for love and they
> dance for hate; they dance to bring prosperity and
> they dance to avert calamity; they dance for re-
> ligion and they dance to pass the time.[4]

David Diop, in "To a Black Dancer," expresses this African

love of dance:

> Negress my warm rumour of Africa
> My land of mystery and my fruit of reason
> You are the dance by the naked joy of your smile
> By the offering of your breasts & secret powers
> You are the dance by the golden tales of marriage nights
> By new tempos & more secular rhythms
> Negress repeated triumph of dreams and stars
> Passive mistress to the Koras' assault
> You are the dance of giddyness
> By the magic of loins restarting the world
> You are the dance
> And the myths burn around me
> Around me the wigs of learning
> In great fires of joy in the heaven of your steps
> You are the dance
> And burn false gods in your vertical flame
> You are the face of the initiate
> Sacrificing his childhood before the tree-god
> You are the idea of all and the voice of the Ancient
> Gravely rocketed against our fears
> You are the Word which explodes
> In showers of light upon the shores of oblivion.[5]

African dances cannot be separated from their social

or religious contexts, as often happens when they are

exported abroad, without seriously weakening their significance.

To Africans the dance is a way of expressing all emotions

through the rhythm of bodily movements. Traditional African

dancing has verve, ingenuity, and precision such as no other

race or nation can quite match. Foreign audiences can watch
such dances only for entertainment, but they cannot identify
with them. To be sure, these audiences recognize the
talent of African dancers and musicians, and they enjoy
these African performances as well. But in seeking to
export African aesthetic expressions abroad, leaving all
intimacy and significance intact in the traditional setting,
African leaders seem to be pushing their search for dignity
a bit too far. For it is in the realms of social and
philosophical thinking, as well as in aesthetic expression,
that Africa offers, perhaps unknowingly, a wealth of ideas
and achievements--it is here that a primary source of
dignity could be tapped. But by divorcing their aesthetic
forms from their true meaning and significance, such
attempts at achieving dignity are merely self-defeating.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER V

FOOTNOTES

[1] William R. Bascom and Melville J. Herskovits, eds., _Continuity and Change in African Cultures_ (Chicago, 1965), p. 61.

[2] _Ibid._, p. 62.

[3] _Ibid._, p. 73.

[4] Geoffrey Gorer, _Africa Dances_ (N. Y., 1962), p. 213.

[5] Gerald Moore and Ulli Beier, eds., _Modern Poetry From Africa_ (Baltimore, 1966), pp. 59-60.

EPILOGUE

For decades Africans have been subject to a series
of traumatic experiences at the hands of their colonial
masters. They have been partially cut off from the
enjoyment of their traditional past and only gradually
introduced into the modern world. As a whole Africans are
a confused and anomic lot, having been thrust into unfamiliar
situations, and uncertain of which way to turn.

It is with mixed emotions of indignation and anger
that thoughtful, knowledgeable Africans have witnessed and
experienced the injustices, frustrations, and degradation
heaped upon the African masses and traditional African
culture. The rise of African nationalism and the drives
for independence--politically, as well as economically,
socially, culturally, and mentally--were direct responses
on the part of sensitive Africans to free Africa from the
colonial yoke. Over the years, and especially since
independence, certain educated Africans have been earnestly
trying to recapture (or, as has been argued, to foster)
that sense of pride and dignity in Africa--its nations,
people, and culture--that was so senselessly ignored and

destroyed with the coming of the white European to the
African continent.

The concepts of Négritude and African Personality
are intellectual, though somewhat mystical, attempts to
restore to the individual African his sense of identity
and dignity—to make him proud of his country, his blackness,
and his traditional African heritage. Yet, being intel-
lectual approaches, these ideas necessarily evade the
comprehension of the great masses of uneducated Africans;
as such there is considerable doubt as to the effective
range of their present influence (being restricted mainly
to the élite) or as to their permanence in the future.

Cooperative work groups and rural animation are
unique African efforts to put the ideas of African Socialism
into practice in several African nations. The sponsorship
of the creative and performing arts, as well as the im-
portant re-writing of African history—all of which are
embodiments of Négritude and African Personality—constitute
more realistic approaches to the creation of a sense of
dignity at the level of the African masses. Increasingly,
African leaders are recognizing that their struggle for
dignity must be waged not on a lofty, conceptual plane,
but at the grass roots with hard work and practical teamwork
encompassing all of the African people.

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