

Perennial Challenges to African Independence and the Nagging Essentials of African Liberation

by

D. Zizwe Poe, Ph.D.

dpoe@lincoln.edu

Associate Professor, Department of History and Political Science
Lincoln University, Pennsylvania

Abstract

The African independence movement of the second half of the twentieth century achieved only a part of its goal to disconnect the imperial tether to African natural and human resources. The African Liberation Movement was first led by the Pan-African Nationalists of the African Unity Movement but eventually was sidelined by neocolonialist maneuvers. The African Union has the potential to revitalize the African Unity Movement and continue the work to consolidate African Independence by building the United States of Africa.

A little more than 50 years ago, a man that the British Broadcasting Corporation's (BBC) African listenership would later vote as 'the African of the Millennium', declared to a rousing crowd of delegates from independent territories, dependent territories, and observers that, "This decade is the decade of African Independence. FORWARD THEN TO INDEPENDENCE, TO INDEPENDENCE NOW, TOMORROW, THE UNITED STATES OF AFRICA" (Meyer p. 51). The year of the declaration was 1958 and the location was Accra, Ghana. The person making the declaration was none other than Kwame Nkrumah as he was wrapping up his opening address to the First All-African People's Conference. Nkrumah continued in that conference to urge the delegates to return to their respective territories, unite broadly, and prosecute speedy liberations. Such liberations, urged Nkrumah, should be followed by the consolidating force of African union. During that decade, from 1958 through 1968 more than two thirds of the African states declared their independence.

Independence may seem like a cut and dry concept unto itself yet it is a relative concept describing the relationship of one entity with another. In academic environments independence is a term that is most often used to describe the relationship between a particular nation state and European imperialism. Such a Eurocentric focus misses the essential character of African independence, which is the Pan-African interdependence of the African parts. Kwame Nkrumah stressed this point at the First All-African People's Conference:

Our enemies are many and they stand ready to pounce upon and exploit our every weakness. They tell us that this particular person or that particular country has greater or more favourable potentialities than the other. They do not tell us that we should unite, that we are all as good as we are able to make ourselves once we are free. Remember always that you have four stages to make:-

- (1) the attainment of freedom and independence;
 - (2) the consolidation of that freedom and independence;
 - (3) the creation of unity and community between the free African states
 - (4) the economic and social reconstruction of Africa.”
- (GP/A1670/5,500/6/61-62 page 5)

Those comments were made at a time when African independence was being shaped and reshaped through the political contests of debate and war. For Nkrumah and other Pan-African nationalists African independence was a component part of Africa's destiny it depended on political and economic unification of Africa. African independence clearly insinuated the choice of Pan-African interdependence or continued dependence on foreign imperialism.

The debate between the Pan-African nationalist view on African independence and the Eurocentric view offer a valuable method for interpreting the modern political and economic reality in Africa today. There is of course a temptation to recount the brilliant and gallant struggles of political parties and armed liberation movements as they engaged the evil forces of the empire but such an effort is akin to describing a marriage by presenting a photo album of the wedding. The album only displays the extent of euphoric hope and celebration and at best records the vows. If the marriage has soured because of some abandonment of vows the album appears as a sad reminder of a dream deferred. This metaphor is painfully apt in illuminating African independence. It is hoped, therefore, that this discussion will have a remedial effect similar to the marriage counselor that reminds the once optimistic couple of the progeny they had hoped to engender through their union. Like that metaphoric counselor it may be necessary to resurrect the vows that were to secure the union, in this case the productive liberty of African independence.

In 1994 Nelson Mandela was elected president of South Africa. For the political novice, this signal event marked the end of the European imperial era in Africa. More informed observers claimed that the era of neocolonialism had already entrenched itself in the African continent and that Mandela's election victory was a mere smokescreen. Many a heated debate has taken place over the results of the independence movement in Africa during the second half of the Twentieth century.

The experiences of African People since 1958 have proven that African independence requires the functional interdependence of the African masses within the African continent in cahoots with their dispersed relations abroad. By functional interdependence, or unity, the author means the willful organization of Africa's resources, natural and human, by Africans and for the African masses, with the interest of humanity in mind according to an African worldview. All else, in these first few decades of the twenty-first century, is neocolonialism. All is not doom and gloom but the sad reality today is that contemporary claims of widespread African liberty are ruses of neocolonial propaganda. A closer inspection of the facts and their subtext reveal the illusions being used to hypnotize a generation into a friendly fascism.

Some review of the lingua franca used to discuss African independence is useful and reveals relations of the actors in the ongoing global conflict between imperial centers and colonial appendages. Significant terms include: sovereignty, nation-state, sham-independence, neocolonialism, and Pan-African nationalism. Calibrating these terms allows one to render the available mountains of data useful for assessing the present state of African liberty and perhaps construct a voice to predict its future. The concept, 'sovereign nation-state', for example, needs contextualizing in this era of growing global interdependence. At first glance the concept evokes images of a monarchical government from a nostalgic period. The intended use of the concept, however, is a polemic reference to foreign rule. To avoid confusion the reader should accept 'foreign' to mean 'non-African' for the remainder of this writing. References to 'sovereign nation-states' in discussions about African independence are references to liberation from colonial rule and could imply a broad array of government paradigms.

The dimensions of African sovereignty are multifaceted but those most frequently mentioned are the political and economic ones. The pundits that rendered descriptions of world affairs during the second half of the twentieth century are responsible for this orientation. The era they described was marked by continuous wars of imperial competition and international conflicts compounded by melodramatic class struggles between annexed populations and imperial metropolises. In short, it was a time of wars and rumors of wars. In retrospect, empires built under the leadership of capitalist classes have war as a permanent character of their modus operandi. War, therefore, did not distinguish this historical epoch but the nexus of conflict did. The conflagrations appeared to reach such a crescendo that populations under colonial control were finally able to assert their own collective agency for liberation in contrast to the collective agents established by imperial centers.

States emerged as the preeminent faces of collective agents; subsequently political discourse employed the language of state relations. Implicit in those state relationships were class antagonisms reflecting the competition for real and imagined wealth. For this work, the term, 'class' is used in the way that Kwame Nkrumah used it in his text, *Class Struggle in Africa* (1968), in which he said, "a class is nothing more than the sum total of individuals bound together by certain interests which as a class they try to preserve and protect." (page 17) The claim by some political-economists that 'states' are machines ultimately working to protect the interests of ruling classes that validate them is also accepted in this work. Discussions about 'African independence' necessarily involve the relationships between states but state relations do not sufficiently describe the relations between African nations and global capital.

Concretization of the terms, 'sham-independence', 'neocolonialism' and 'Pan-Africanism' best enable an understanding of the conditions and exigencies of post-liberation realities. The first two of these concepts was thoroughly described by Kwame Nkrumah in his text, *Handbook of Revolutionary Warfare* (1968). He described a territory experiencing 'sham-independence' as one that continued to be exploited economically by alien interests "intrinsic to the world capitalist sector" (page 8). Nkrumah used the synonym, 'client state', an early twentieth century term for states subordinate to more powerful states when referring to these pseudo independent territories. Sham-independence was the artifact generated by the process of neocolonialism. It was the 'empire striking back' with a lick that negated the final ingredient required for any meaningful movement of African independence, 'Pan-Africanism' or more accurately, Pan-African nationalism. Without this Pan-African realignment of African polities independence quickly mutated into a sham reality and similar patterns of colonial interdependence emerged in more insidious ways than the earlier model. Pan-African nationalism offered an identity and structure to nurture African independence. It was a nationalism that sought to prioritize African agency at an optimal level of the African continent reflecting the productive potential of contemporary world-powerful mega-states. Such nationalism, however, had to should have been rooted deeply in the ideology of liberation movements in order to flower in the post liberation era.

The social engineers of the imperial order recognized this ideology as a lethal threat to capitalists' interests and induced independence in territories prematurely so as to abort the Pan-African nationalist movement. Neocolonialist architects casted, coached, and encouraged micro-nationalists giddy to play leading parts in remakes of earlier failed acts of governance. These B-actors, buffered by major financing, outnumbered and outmaneuvered the Pan-African nationalists supplanting the era of African unity with the era of neocolonialism. The United States of Africa was slowed by the creation of 'procrastinated states' of Africa led by gradualists as leaders.

The imperial act of colonizing Africa employed a matrix of ideological and cultural manipulation through state relations. African independence has been a dialectical product of state created nations often referred to as, 'nation-states'. Historically states have been conceived of as of national developments to resolve class relations. Africa nations, however, experienced a deliberate disintegration of its states at the hands of colonial agencies. National states that did not cooperate with the intrusive imperial order were dismantled and replaced with cooperative ones. States, therefore, became the products of their sponsoring classes often contained in foreign designed national boundaries. In the post-colonial era the boundaries were predominantly products of neo-colonial 'balkanization'.

Balkanization is a process of consciously dividing nations into micro-nations to weaken them so as to render them controllable by the sponsoring forces of fission. This process earned its name from its early twentieth century manifestation and has been used repeatedly by controlling nations to subdue those beyond their borders. The European colonial powers used this maneuver as they feigned the granting of independence to their African colonies. Africa was coordinated by less than ten administrations at the beginning of the twentieth century but was divided into over 50 administrations by the end of the twentieth century. This was all done in a century in which increased productive capacity required larger centrally organized populations with streamlined utilization of strategic resources. African mineral resources enriched Europe and Asia but the profits escaped the coffers of the African masses while redundant bureaucracies exhausted African reserves. Some of the bureaucracies that emerged in the balkanized states found it opportune and preferable to join European controlled associations and communities. Once associated with previous colonial overlords the Balkanized states and their ruling classes are recolonized. Balkanization has proven to be an effective tactic of neocolonialism.

In the neocolonial era imperial plunder yields higher profits and inflicts relatively greater suffering than the primitive colonial era. Essential elements of neocolonialism are: 1) wealth siphoning through the profit drain of finance-capital intensive operations; 2) interlocking military relationships; and 3) mass psychological manipulation through value orientation. Structurally the neocolonial era is marked by unprecedented cooperation among former competitive colonial states and increasing monopolization and consolidation of capitalists operations. Simultaneously, neocolonial propaganda is generated to intensify balkanization in the neocolonial appendages. Such a situation, if left to fester, may lead to an inevitable conflict reminiscent of the great world conflicts of the twentieth century. Without an authentic African independence a horrifying image is constructed of an imperial incubus draining the life blood of its African hosts and then fretting for its own insatiable existence and feeding on itself as the hosts run out of blood to supply.

The struggle for African independence was first and foremost a contest of classes within and between nations. Classes in African colonies, normally in tension, temporarily united to oppose foreign nationals during the highpoints of independence efforts. Internal class conflict was submerged in an effort to subdue 'a common enemy'.

This has occasionally been explained as a betrayal, albeit temporary, of class allegiance between merchant classes within the colonies and capitalist classes indigenous to the metropolises. Was the decade of African Independence an overall class betrayal or, as hindsight suggests, a modification of relations between these private-profit oriented classes as partnership renegotiations. Time would constantly change the relationship between the partners in particular and between Europe and Africa in general. Every European country that participated in the so-called 'carve up' of Africa at the end of the nineteenth century had to readjust its relationship with their previous wards by the end of the twentieth century.

Pre-colonial Condition of African Influences Responses to Colonial Agents

The competition for social leadership was present in Africa before the arrival of Europeans. The dialectical relationship between culture and time requires abandoning the earlier notion that African culture was static. The fact that new "traditions" were created within African culture reveals that there was a vital dynamism between old, and sometimes useless, traditions and cultural innovations. Seemingly successful innovations became the new traditions. Given this obvious process of cultural evolution, our understanding of "traditional Africa" must allow for dynamism. The prevalent view that social change in African culture was always undesirable is overly simplistic and inaccurate.

The classification of pre-colonial experience as uniformly communal may be at the root of this error. Before the existence of European imperialism and Islamic influence, Africa had experienced internal organizations controlling expansive geographical areas and populations. Contrary to the dogmatic edicts of unilinear models of development, Africa experienced centralized societies co-existing with relatively decentralized societies, sometimes sharing symbiotic relationships. Ancient Nile Valley civilizations, Sahara-Sahel and Mediterranean civilizations, Western-Central African civilizations, and the Eastern-Central-Southern corridor civilizations, show that Africa's cultural diversity included the social and political-economic areas. This diversity adds conceptual depth to the term "traditional Africa."

If we accept the declaration made by a number of historical and anthropological scholars that traditional Africa was predominantly communacritic then communalism itself must be viewed as a political-economic social order containing a general set of values that enables it to operate under a diverse array of organizational types. When dialectically considering the dynamic nature of social change one could correctly assert that the seed of counter-communalism was omnipresent in traditional Africa. It was a seed that generated competition between professions for management of nations. This could be seen as class struggle. The competitive seed usually yielded a minimal impact until it was strengthened to a nodal point of transformation by counter-communal forces from outside of Africa acerbating like forces within Africa. This is precisely what happened when African merchant groups developed an ongoing relationship with European merchants.

The relationship between merchant classes in Africa and Europe went through three stages over the second half of the last millennium. At the outset the initial relationship was one of trade between partners. This era helped to elevate the capitalist class into a ruling class in Europe and likewise strengthen the political control of merchant groups in African governance. Traditional monarchies were usurped in both locations setting the stage for a new world order. The organization of societies for profit generated European imperialism on a world-wide level and realigned collective agency in African geographical regions.

The merchant relationship eventually mutated into the infamous Atlantic Slave trade. This new relationship brought unparalleled wealth to European metropolises and utter chaos to African populations. After three centuries of this relationship the European capitalist class sought to reduce the partner position of collaborating African states and minimize their sovereignty. Thus, the last relationship to be established removed or reduced the power of agency of African merchants and their governments. Where governments and merchants remained strong a system known as indirect rule was established leaving the local leadership in place but subservient to external business interests. The alternative to indirect rule was direct rule in which governance was placed in the hands of European settlers and/or European appointed civil servants.

The inevitable entropy of capitalist economies combined with the plenum of class tensions generated protracted crises and social upheavals in capitalist societies. The wars between competing capitalist empires (1914 – 1945) destroyed a great deal of capital around the world. The second round of this war (WWII), which took place between 1939 and 1945, hit harder inside Europe than the previous round (WWI). The malaise that followed the devastation reflected the weakened state of the European countries. The finance capitalists of the United States of America used the opportunity to entrap Europe into a crippling debt that would strengthen the USA's foothold in the economic dealings of European enterprises. At the conclusion of the capitalist competitive wars France and England were in debt to USA finance capital and Germany was subdued by USA military power.

The chaos of the war and the shift in imperial leadership temporarily relaxed the grip of colonial control allowing the Pan-African Nationalists to entrench themselves in the African body politic. Some of these nationalists were keen to assert the universality alluded to in the declaration of the Atlantic Charter¹.

Ascendancy of the Pan-African Nationalists

Nkrumah began planting the seeds of African unity among future African heads of state before he left Europe. He organized with African intelligentsia studying or working in England and France in the years between 1945 and 1947 promoting the agenda of Pan-African liberation.

Following the general strategy laid out at the 1945 Pan-African Conference in Manchester, Nkrumah accepted an invitation from the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC) to return to what was then called the colony of the Gold Coast and organize the masses in support of the UGCC's gradual independence efforts. Nkrumah utilized this invitation to speed up the demand for independence and eventually split with the UGCC to form the Convention People's Party (CPP) and from then on he used that party as the primary vehicle to launch Pan-African nationalism from Ghana. As the masses of women, workers, ex-soldiers, students and youth elevated Nkrumah into the higher ranks of government leadership in the Gold Coast colony he prepared the groundwork to summons his cadre that were committed to the strategy of Pan-African nationalism. After being elected to head government business, Nkrumah traveled to England and the United States of America (USA). In both directions of his journey he met with his Pan-African cadre in England. While in the USA to receive an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from Lincoln University in Pennsylvania, Nkrumah expanded his trip to include Chicago and New York City where he invited supporters of African liberty and unity to support these efforts from Ghana upon its independence.

The Pan-African nationalists organized a two prong approach toward consolidating the independence of Africa. On one hand alliances would be formed between newly liberated states as a core of the United States of Africa and liberation movements would be encouraged to link unity intrinsically into their efforts for territorial liberty. For this latter group Nkrumah encouraged not only unity within an African Union but also functional unity among the factions of freedom fighters within their territories. On the other hand, states that were already independent were to be drawn into conferences that would draft pacts and encourage their voluntary allegiance to the formation of an African Union. Upon Ghana's declaration of independence a series of important meetings were organized:

First Conference of Independent African States – held in Accra, Ghana from the 15th through the 22nd of April, 1958. This conference was attended by representatives from Ghana, Guinea, Egypt, Libya, Liberia, Morocco, Sudan, and Tunisia. Six of these eight states were independent before Ghana but did not possess the Pan-African consciousness to launch this type of meeting. Liberia, for its part, would come explicitly for a go-slow approach toward unity in the near future. South Africa was invited but refused because of its racist leadership and its disdain for the other independent African state.

Eventually most of Africa would consider South Africa to be a pseudo independent state because of its racist settler-led government and draconian treatment of the autochthonous population. The conference was able to forge agreements on the need for a unified foreign policy characteristic of an African personality and a unified African policy to handle disputes peacefully. The collective support for Algeria's war of liberation was commonly agreed upon.

This conference was followed by a series of similar conferences with the aim generating unified action among freedom fighters, union organizers, journalists, and women throughout the African continent. These segments were seen as key agents of African liberation and the Pan-African nationalists wanted to ensure that the groundwork of their unified action was laid.

An additional factor that assisted the initial effectiveness of the Pan-African nationalists in the African Liberation Movement was the rearguard confusion taking place in the colonial metropolises. Class struggle in the metropolises was threatening the internal stability of the capitalist societies and reducing the united efforts of their societies to execute the maintenance of empire. The mounting devastation from wars around the globe reduced the confidence of the European masses in their home countries. Additionally, the wars to keep the Asian colonial territories subdued were not going well. For many of the youth and the intelligentsia in the metropolises alternatives to the conservative capitalist order began to be worth investigating. The disenchanted were on the verge of forming '5th columns' within the European countries. In the United States of America college students, high school students, and non-white groups, especially African descendents were, offering a similar level of disturbance. Some attention had to be focused internally to consolidate the imperial centers. This provided breathing space for Pan-African nationalists within the African Liberation Movement.

The existence of the USSR and Socialist China provided alternative models for economic interdependence in the global reality. The productive capacities of the populations in these societies impressed those that observed them in the colonies. Both nations showed that socialist organization allowed for the rapid transformation of underdogs in the global arena to world powers. This vision was liberating and revealed the viability of non-capitalist methods of organizing economic life. Such a vision unraveled another thread of colonial dependence.

To a rising generation of intelligentsia the inherent competition of capitalist economies began to be viewed as an economic model too precarious and haphazard to provide for the needs of the African masses. African liberation movements began to advocate their preference for socialism over capitalism. Their preferences were also influenced by the assistance that liberation movements began to receive from the Socialist Bloc.

Revolutionary activity throughout the globe directly affected African politics and trade. The Bandung Conference of 1954 gave a serious impetus to the African liberation movements and early independent African states. The liberation movements throughout Asia spread a contagious encouragement to other non-European peoples fighting to dislodge themselves from imperialist control.

Pan-African nationalists asserted socialist organization as a forgone conclusion for African independence. Such an outlook was seen to be in line with the communal and humanist past of African tradition. A debate in the liberation movement surfaced contrasting African socialism with scientific socialism. Divisive or not, the former colonial powers were disturbed by any consideration of socialism of all stripes.

The shrewdness of the imperialist powers deserves acknowledgement. After recognizing the revolutionary fervor of the African Unity movement and its orientation of the African Liberation Movement the imperialist powers developed a strategy to survive the declaration of African Independence. The strategy was to join the liberation movement by 'granting independence' to prevent the act of seizing of independence. That strategy slowed the momentum of the African Unity Movement and bogged it down into a quagmire of gradualism allowing the colonial operations to regroup, retool, and resurface in more subtle and obscure ways.

Colonial forces also observed the proposals within the liberation movement to obliterate colonial borders. Pan-African notions of nationhood provided opposing notions of sovereignty to irredentist and colonial notions of nationhood. The colonial forces could not sit idly by and allow the Pan-African nationalists to continue in the leadership of the African Liberation Movement so they joined, provoked, and arrested the movement. In 1960 France pushed the reluctant leaders of its colonies out kicking and screaming.

England, after careful observation and careful regrouping encouraged the remainder of its colonies without settlers to change their relationship with the metropolis. All that was required was the acceptance of old colonial borders and in some cases increased atomization as was the case with Nigeria's regional solution. In the matter of a few years the African Liberation Movement was dominated by members that challenged the Pan-African Nationalists and thereby challenged the African Unity Movement.

Assessing African Independence

One of the shrewdest implements of neocolonialism was the employment of structural adjustment programs (SAPs). These programs were policy appendages which often accompanied aid packages from financial institutions controlled by former colonial powers in cahoots with the United States of America. Initially SAPs required three conditions of grant or loan recipients: (1) reduction of social services provided by governments, (2) removal of tariffs and customs charged on foreign products, and (3) devaluation of the recipient's currency. Items 2 and 3 were said to encourage trade and investment while item 1 was said to be part of prudent government spending. In reality the three conditions reduced the ability of Independent States to improve the lives of their populations while simultaneously improving the trading positions of non-African business interests. The SAPs were not the strings attached to foreign financial aid, they were the chains.

The African Liberation Movement and the African Unity Movement

The conflict between the African Liberation Movement (ALM) and the African Unity Movement (AUM) illuminated the arrest the African revolution. While former colonial powers benefited from the stall but they were not the sole cause of the drag on complete liberation. There were some African politicians that rue the day that direct European tutelage would cease and openly complained that such a departure was premature. Those politicians were predominantly but not solely aligned with for the Paris connection. For these Africans even speedy liberation was problematic. However behind the times they appear to have been, they did share one prognosis with Nkrumah that relatively small, non-viable states declaring independence in the latter part of the twentieth century could not fare well without a secure umbrella of an overarching protector. For the conservative minority that protector was preferably France, England, the United States of America, or some combination thereof. For Nkrumah and his like minded associates that protector had to be an African Union allied with the global forces of anti-imperialists. The third perspective, the one that became the dominant one by the end of the decade of African liberation, was the one that advocated speedy liberation from colonialism and gradual unification.

Clearly then, the idea of Pan-Africanism and its corollary, Pan-African nationalism, was not a unanimous idea among the leadership of African freedom fighters and politicians during the decade of African liberation. The idea had not been automatic for Nkrumah. Nkrumah's clarity on the necessary connection of the two movements along with the essential requirement of the non-capitalist development for African society was connected to his global experiences and relationships. Nkrumah had once considered a federation of African regions. He would later reconsider that arrangement correctly predicting that it would bring about an unnecessary ossification of regional loyalties, slowing continental African unity.

During the earlier phases of the African liberation decade, Nkrumah and other Pan-Africanists were optimistic that some form of African interdependence would replace the irrational and anti-People organization of Africa that was characteristic of the colonial era. They did not want to leave the recognition of the liberation-unification connection to chance discovery, however. Conference after conference was held, with various levels of collective African agents invited so as to drive home the point of the required step for greater unity as insurance for genuine liberation from colonial forces.

This Pan-African nationalism that characterized Nkrumah's idiosyncratic approach as an African independence freedom fighter and later head of state deserves careful inspection. Nkrumah knew that his ideological association with the Pan-African movement was not an automatic trait of the African Liberation Movement. He had experienced petty micro-nationalism, a form of tribalism, between African students from different colonies when he matriculated at Lincoln University in the 1930s. He spoke on the conflict in his *Autobiography*. He would experience the resistance to African unity again as the struggle to unite independent African states got underway.

While the desire for speedy liberation became a common sense quest among most leaders of the African Liberation Movement the required linkage to a new African Union escaped many. African unity was accepted as a tactical necessity to support the liberation movement but was not broadly accepted as an exigency for sustained independence of African territories. Nkrumah and other Pan-African nationalists postulated that speedy liberation required speedy unity for consolidation but their arguments did not win over the majority of the new heads of state nor their organizations. The best that was done was a compromise giving rise to an organization known as the Organization of African Unity².

The Pan-African movement threatened the development of capitalist imperialism in Africa by redirecting the resources of Africa for the development of the African masses. Serving the needs of the African masses was never the goal of European imperialism regardless of propaganda to the contrary. The true intentions of the imperialists are made clear when one observes their response to Pan-African nationalists and plans for African unity. In the face of gaining popularity for rapid unification the global capitalist agents accelerated neo-colonial developments. Their first strategic goal was to ensure the slowing of the African revolution. Resistance to Pan-African nationalism did not only come from the colonialists and neocolonialists. The perceived nationalist interests of the USSR, combined with Marxist dogma, caused its leading party to resist Pan-African nationalism. Conflict between China and the USSR's caused by their ideological disagreements took on the form of proxy conflict in African territories attempting achieve or consolidate independence. These challenges from the Socialist Bloc often led to a reduction in material support to the Pan-African nationalists that attempted to tow the 'non-aligned' position.

Besides the external challenges to the establishment of liberation and unity and having a more retarding impact on the African revolution were challenges of petrified micro-nationalism, nostalgic irredentism, and concealed imperialist maneuvers of intelligence agencies. Nkrumah's premonitions were ringing true. The African intelligentsia has been saturated with counter-productive self-identifications and these were guiding, or misguiding, their political actions. In the face of general continental disorganization and OAU ineffectiveness, some local groups operating under the notion of 'we could do bad all by ourselves', advocated war if their pre-colonial borders and political structures were not reinstated. The military technology of imperialists increased their ability to spy and to wreak havoc in African societies not under favorable leadership. Pan-African nationalists remained favored targets for annihilation.

A new and insidious attack on African identity was launched by 'aid' organizations as they reversed their policy on reducing expenditures in education for African youth. In some cases grants and loans required set asides for education programs that would used approved curricula. The imperialists were going directly for the hearts and minds of the Africans and attempting to bypass their government spokes persons. In line with this approach active 5th columns were encouraged under the guise of 'Non-Government Organizations'.

These organizations could funnel monies from capitalists without the oversight of African governments. While the original aim was to limit the effectiveness of Pan-African nationalists the attack widened to weaken all African sovereignty not in line with neocolonialism. The era of digital communication ushered in a level of penetration that Nkrumah may have never imagined. The impact of this development on African youth in terms of identity formation is still to be assessed.

While much of the assessment above paints a bleak picture the battle is far from over. Capitalist metropolises are experiencing economic entropy while Pan-African exemplars such as Libya and Senegal are attempting to develop resistance to western cultural seduction. Continuous shifts in capitalist leadership as well as ongoing competition between the United States of America and elements of the European Union are compounded with the growing market strength China. This offers opportunities to escape monopolistic forces potentially provides for breathing space for African producers of wealth.

As more territories in the world shake off the control European and USA colonialism they will offer new partners for Africa's global relationships as well as healthy connections to bolster genuine independence. Cuba has long played an important part in Africa's liberation efforts and at times participated directly in wars on the side of African freedom fighters. Venezuela and Bolivia may soon add to that cross oceanic force of alternatives to European neocolonialism. The strongly anti-imperialist president of Venezuela, Hugo Chavez, has visited a number of African states, advocating an African, South American and Caribbean Alliance reminiscent of Nkrumah's suggestions in his text *Class Struggle in Africa*.

Contrary to imperialist propaganda, its empire is neither omnipotent nor omnipresent. The satellite belt that provides surveillance around neither the Earth nor the web of on-the-ground information networks of intelligence gathering organizations can prevent the cropping up of blind spots that develop in revolutionary activity. African culture has proved resilient in its resistance to annihilation through all forms of enslavement and imperialist encroachment. The voice of the African masses will eventually find its medium and when it does it will mobilize the People's class in ways that will challenge neocolonial order and resurrect the concept of African unity.

The masses of African persons are already breaching the arbitrary borders established during the colonial epoch in search of sustainable livelihoods daily. This movement across borders has the long run potential of eroding the rabid microstate nationalisms as African workers tackle the bureaucracy of interstate travel. The general discomfort with border bureaucracy is visceral at the level of common sense but remedies to the situation will take higher level calculations seldom available to common sense. The higher awareness of collective consciousness, employing wisdom and organization is needed. To concretize its authority, the African Union, a more Pan-Africanized version of the Organization of African Unity (OAU)³, should take steps to facilitate the seamless transportation and communication of the African masses.

Only the African ‘People’s class’, a self-conscious organization of cadre primarily concerned with the wellbeing of the masses, has the character potential to erect a nation-state with the spatial coordinates of the African continent, the temporal coordinates of human history, and the ideological coordinates of the Pan-African revolution. With the support of the AU, the People’s class can build a functioning United States of Africa able to withstand the wrath of inhumane natural disasters and social threats. This class, however, must encourage a resolute will among the masses and support institutions that undergird an organic national structure of a magnitude never before seen. The successful creation of the United States of Africa will be no less a world wonder than the great pyramids of Giza.

The Intentional Utility of the United States of Africa

Africa, the richest continent on the face of the earth yields its riches only through the great collective effort of human organization. Africa’s strategic minerals require the accumulated technique and appropriate technology that is accessible only to massive and optimal social organization. To maximize the value of these minerals an even higher level of technique and technology is required for finished processing. This all presupposes major organization of labor and capital. The same needs are required to yield the potential of Africa’s flora, fauna, and energy sources. In the hands of a united Africa, even the Sun, rivers and wind provide energy to life of the African masses.

On the other hand, without a United States of Africa the African masses suffer as victims from all and sundry parasites. Bloodsuckers, from mosquitoes to foreign imperialists, inject all types of deadly diseases into Africa. Without the edification of functional unity strategic minerals become lethal materials that kill the populations that touch them ‘blood diamonds’, ‘war causing coltan’, and ecologically destructive petroleum. Without proper continental unity even the Sun, the rivers, and the winds become forces of death. The edifice of the African nation must make the African continent more ‘user friendly’ for its inhabitants.

The collective intellect of the United States of Africa could rationalize the resources of Africa to eradicate scarcity and provide for the needs of humanity, beginning with the Africans. Solar power and hydroelectric power alone could provide the energy needs for the African masses to be on par with the so-called super nations of today. With the building of the United States of Africa there will no longer exist the concept of a ‘land-locked nation’ or a non-viable balkanized territory. The bountiful wealth of the continent could allow the common African to take on the higher level challenges of human development and peaceful coexistence with the problems of basic survival long put to rest.

The protective shadow of a united African nation would extend beyond the borders of Africa and hover over the African citizen and affiliate in every part of the world. These emboldened African members would reflect a new sense of security against all threats of arbitrary mistreatment and danger. A powerful African nation bolstered by the principles of right ordering, righteous order, and justice will engender powerful Africans that will counter disharmonious behavior inside and outside of Africa. In this way the edification of the African Nation will contribute an incubating environment for the African Personality. Such a state will allow the African Personality to develop in ways that Kwame Nkrumah envisioned it. Using the protective shelter of a United States of Africa the African Personality can positively impact the global world order in the interest of the masses of humanity.

The utility of the edification of the African nation will affect the global world order dialectically. On one hand such an edifice will liberate the will and genius of the African masses. On the other hand, this liberated African Genius will contribute greatly to the improvement of human culture in general by expanding the technique and knowledge base of humanity. The world is currently in awe of gadgetry and ignorant of life bearing traditions. Old discoveries are often overlooked by the ignorance of arrogance and the arrogance of ignorance. This imbalanced gnosis has the potential of threatening human survival. The historical depth of the African experience has the potential of enriching the self-awareness of humanity. The resurrection of ancestral respect and ecological reciprocity, resident in the general culture of the African masses, can imbue the contemporary intellect with the wisdom of collective memory. Collective memory is the fundamental lodestone of collective consciousness and collective consciousness is the steering force of human progress. The utility of a United States of Africa has global implications and should be a welcomed development by People's classes throughout the world.

Finally, the utility of an African Nation united across African regions and organized in unified states, has the ability to fortify African liberty by shoring up African agency at all levels, the personal, the familial, the local, the micro-state, the regional, and the abroad. Such an edifice will instill hope and a sense of security in all its members and affiliates while it receives respect and deference from its peers and adversaries. This is the real meaning of African Independence to the Pan-African nationalist.

¹ The following is the content of the Atlantic Charter which was the product of the Atlantic Conference which took place on the USS Augusta in August 1941. The charter was issued on August 14, 1941.

The President of the United States of America and the Prime Minister, Mr. Churchill, representing His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, being met together, deem it right to make known certain common principles in the national policies of their respective countries on which they base their hopes for a better future for the world.

First, their countries seek no aggrandizement, territorial or other;

Second, they desire to see no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned;

Third, they respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live; and they wish to see sovereign rights and self government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them;

Fourth, they will endeavor, with due respect for their existing obligations, to further the enjoyment by all States, great or small, victor or vanquished, of access, on equal terms, to the trade and to the raw materials of the world which are needed for their economic prosperity;

Fifth, they desire to bring about the fullest collaboration between all nations in the economic field with the object of securing, for all, improved labor standards, economic advancement and social security;

Sixth, after the final destruction of the Nazi tyranny, they hope to see established a peace which will afford to all nations the means of dwelling in safety within their own boundaries, and which will afford assurance that all the men in all the lands may live out their lives in freedom from fear and want;

Seventh, such a peace should enable all men to traverse the high seas and oceans without hindrance;

Eighth, they believe that all of the nations of the world, for realistic as well as spiritual reasons must come to the abandonment of the use of force. Since no future peace can be maintained if land, sea or air armaments continue to be employed by nations which threaten, or may threaten, aggression outside of their frontiers, they believe, pending the establishment of a wider and permanent system of general security, that the disarmament of such nations is essential. They will likewise aid and encourage all other practicable measures which will lighten for peace-loving peoples the crushing burden of armaments.

Signed by: Franklin D. Roosevelt & Winston S. Churchill

² Some have attributed the OAU to Kwame Nkrumah but in fact the OAU was formed as a counter proposal to Nkrumah's recommendation for an African Union as advocated in his text, *Africa Must Unite*. That text was written and distributed to the heads of state prior to the OAU's founding meeting in an effort to persuade the leaders to take a more resolute path of political union. To dampen these Pan-African efforts all but two delegations voted for a more gradual approach toward African unity. The utter ineffectiveness of the gradual approach would lead to a constitutional upheaval of the organization in 1999.

³ The transformation of the Organization of African Unity into the African Union was encouraged by a generation of African heads of state desiring to speed the integration of African society and eliminate the vestiges of colonialism. During an extraordinary summit in Sirte, Libya, on September 9th, 1999, these heads of state took the decision to amend the constitution of the OAU and put it more in line with recommendations that Nkrumah had urged during the initial formation of the OAU in 1963. These changes were guided by the influence of Mummar Ghadaffi but the essential commitment of political union has still been avoided by African heads of states as of this writing. Thus, the frustration and lack of implementation remain. Interestingly enough, the arguments that the go-slow heads of state employed previously are echoed today.