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**Dream of Unity: From the United States of Africa
to the Federation of African States**

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Introduction

During the first fifteen years of the struggle for independence in Africa (1945-1960), two competing views of African cooperation and integration were promoted by two groups of African nationalist leaders. On the one hand, the gradualists (or functionalists) led by Felix Houphouet-Boigny of Cote d'Ivoire, Nnamdi Azikiwe of Nigeria, Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, and Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, advocated a gradual, step-by-step integration in the areas of transport and telecommunications, science and technology, and the economy leading up—in a distant future—to political integration. The pan-Africanists, led by Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana—and including Ahmed Ben Bella of Algeria, Patrice Lumumba of the Congo, Ahmed Sekou Toure of Guinea, and Modibo Keita of Mali—proposed, following Nkrumah's blueprint as outlined in *Africa Must Unite* (Nkrumah 1970) immediate political and economic integration in the form of a *United States of Africa* consisting of an African Common Market, African Monetary Union, an African Military High-Command, and a continent-wide, Union Government.

This paper first shows how the pan-Africanist leaders' dream of unity was deferred in favor of the gradualist-functionalist approach, embodied in a weak and loosely-structured Organization of African Unity (OAU) created on 25 May 1963 in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia). Indeed, the Ghana-Guinea-Mali Union created in 1959 as the nucleus of the United States of Africa never really took off. Similarly, the French, through the *Loi-Cadre* (Framework Law) of June 1956, dismantled the large federations that they had set up in the early 1900s—*Afrique Occidentale Française*/ AOF and *Afrique Equatoriale Française*/ AEF—and, along with such faithful African allies as Felix Houphouet-Boigny of Cote d'Ivoire—, deliberately and consistently worked toward the break-up of these large federations (French West Africa and French Equatorial Africa) into small, economically non-viable states incapable of independent development. The same policy of "balkanization" was systematically applied by France to the 1959 Mali Federation, an attempt to partially salvage AOF by Senegal, French Sudan (Mali), Dahomey (Benin) and Upper Volta (Burkina Faso), which ended up in failure after the successive withdrawal of Dahomey and Upper Volta, and the irreconcilable differences that emerged between the political elites of the remaining two constituent units, Senegal and French Sudan/Mali (Benoist 1979; Cissoko 2005; Foltz 1965; Ndiaye 1980)..

The paper then analyzes the reasons for the failure of the pan-Africanists leaders' dream of unity, namely: fear of tampering with the colonially-inherited borders; reluctance of newly-independent African leaders to abandon their newly-won sovereignty in favor of a broader

political entity; suspicion on the part of many African leaders that Kwame Nkrumah intended to become the super-president of a united Africa; and divide and rule strategies on the part of major Western powers—led by France and the United States—meant to sabotage any attempt at African unity. It took African leaders some 40 years to realize their mistake. A project for an African Common Market, leading to an African Economic Community (*The Lagos Plan of Action/Final Act of Lagos*), was launched in 1980 within the OAU. Then, on 26 May 2001, the African Union (AU) formally replaced the OAU. One of the reasons why the project for a United States of Africa failed is that it was modeled on the United States of America. Similarly, because it is a top-down project modeled on the European Union, the AU is bound to know the same fate.

The paper then surveys past and current proposals for a revision of the map of Africa and a re-configuration of the African states put forward by various authors such as Cheikh Anta Diop (1974 & 1987); Marc-Louis Ropivia (1994); Makauwa Mutua (1995), Arthur Gakwandi (1996), Joseph Ki-Zerbo (2003) and Pelle Danabo (2008). While each of these proposals has merit, they are not (except for Cheikh Anta Diop) grounded in an overarching political framework and they lack specificity in terms of the actual structure and functioning of the reconfigured states. The paper concludes with a brief examination of Mueniwa Muiu and Guy Martin's proposal for state re-configuration in Africa (Muiu & Martin 2009). According to these authors, the pan-Africanists' dream of unity can only be realized through a model conceived by and for Africans themselves, namely the *Federation of African States* (FAS). The FAS is based on five sub-regional states in each main sub-region of the continent: Kimit (North); Mali (West); Kongo (Central); Kush (Eastern); and Zimbabwe (Southern) with a federal capital (Napata), and a rotating presidency, eventually leading to total political and economic integration. It is argued that only with the advent of FAS will Africa's "Dream of Unity" finally become a reality.

I. Contending Perspectives on African Unity: Pan-Africanism vs. Functionalism

1. Pan-Africanism and African Unity

Pan-Africanism

Broadly conceived, Pan-Africanism is a cultural, political, and economic ideal and movement designed to regroup and mobilize Africans in Africa and in the diaspora against racial discrimination, foreign domination and oppression, as well as economic exploitation. Thus, Pan-Africanism has three different dimensions: cultural, political and economic. Culturally, it aims at

reclaiming Africa's heritage, history, culture, traditions and values and is embodied in such historical movement as *Negritude* (in France in the 1930s) and the "Harlem Renaissance" (in the U.S., in the 1920s). Politically, Pan-Africanism is linked to the African nationalist struggle for independence. Economically, Pan-Africanism is linked to the struggle against imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism and globalization, i.e. essentially a struggle against the Western strategies of "divide and rule" which resulted in the balkanization of Africa (Esedebe, 1994: 3-38; Legum, 1962: 13-37; Thompson 1969: 3-41; van Walraven 1999: 75-100).

Following its thematic breakdown, pan-Africanism may be divided into two successive historical phases: pan-Africanism as ideal and utopia (cultural), 1900-1957; and "Homecoming" (political). The African phase, in which economic factors prevail, marks the transition from Pan-Africanism to African Unity (1957 to the present).

Pan-Africanism as Ideal and Utopia

This refers to the cultural dimension of the Pan-African ideology. At this stage, Pan-Africanism remains in the realm of ideas and is embodied in the ideal of the "Dream of Unity. It develops first during the first two decades of the 20th century around such prominent African American and Afro-Caribbean intellectual and activist leaders as W.E.B. Du Bois, Paul Robeson, C.L.R. James, George Padmore and Marcus Garvey. The latter founded a populist movement, the *Universal Negro Improvement Association* (UNIA) in 1919, created a shipping line, the "Black Star Line," and inspired the "back-to-Africa" movement that led to the creation of Liberia, founded in 1817 by freed slaves from the U.S. and which became an independent state in 1847 (Grant 2008). The cultural dimension of pan-Africanism is best exemplified by the *Negritude* movement aiming a re-asserting the value and contribution of African culture initiated in Paris by French-educated African and Afro-Caribbean poets such as Leopold Sedar Senghor (Senegal), Aime Césaire (Martinique) and Leon-Gontran Damas (French Guyana) (Legum, 1962: 94-6; van Walraven, 1999: 89-90; Wauthier 1979).

Homecoming: The Political Dimension of Pan-Africanism

As Esedebe has shown, the Manchester Pan-African Congress of October 1945 truly marks a turning point in the history of the Pan-African movement. Henceforth, the struggle for the emancipation of people of African descent focuses on the homeland. At that particular juncture, the North American Pan-African movement links up with the nationalist struggle for independence in Africa itself (Esedebe, 1994: 137-164). The roster of personalities in charge of the Congress' organization testifies to this: W.E.B. Du Bois (co-chair); George Padmore and Kwame

Nkrumah (co-political secretaries); Jomo Kenyatta (assistant secretary); and Peter Abrahams (publicity secretary).

As Thompson rightly argues, it is with the return of Kwame Nkrumah to Ghana in December 1947 that “Pan-Africanism moved from the realm of idealism and romanticism to that of practical politics.” Indeed, “Pan-Africanism remained in the realm of ideas until Ghana became a sovereign state” (Thompson, 1969: 126-7). At this point, the Pan-Africanist ideal is actually morphed into the policy objective of African Unity. With the Independence of Ghana (March 1957) and until the creation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU, May 1963), Ghana became the focal point of the struggle for African Unity, and Kwame Nkrumah became its indefatigable standard-bearer. Indeed, Nkrumah invited the elder statesman of Pan-Africanism, W.E.B. Du Bois, to come and live in Accra, where he started the *Encyclopedia Africana* and where he eventually died on August 27, 1963. Nkrumah also invited George Padmore to lead the *Bureau of African Affairs* within Ghana’s ministry of foreign affairs until his death in September 1959.

Radical Pan-Africanism: African Unity

According to this perspective—exemplified by Kwame Nkrumah but shared by many other African political leaders,¹—political integration is a prerequisite to economic integration: “economic unity to be effective must be accompanied by political unity. The two are inseparable (...)” (Nkrumah, 1965: 30). Furthermore, African leaders should aim at the immediate and total integration—political, economic, as well as military—of Africa within the framework of a *Union of African States*. These ideals were embodied in the African Charter adopted at the Casablanca Conference of radical African states of January 1961, as well as in the *Union of African States*—also known as the Ghana-Guinea-Mali Union—of 1958-1959 conceived as the nucleus of a future “United States of Africa” in which each member state voluntarily agreed to give up part of its sovereignty in favor of a broader continent-wide union (Esedebe, 1994: 171-73, 178-80; Legum, 1962: 55-9; Thompson, 1969: 147-8, 173, van Walraven, 1999: 84-97; Zartman, 1987: 96-102; 128-32; 126-33)

¹ Other prominent pan-Africanist leaders included Ahmed Ben Bella (Algeria); Barthélemy Boganda (Central African Republic); Modibo Keita (Mali); Patrice Lumumba (Congo); Gamal Abdel Nasser (Egypt); and Ahmed Sekou Toure (Guinea).

In a prefatory note to the new edition of his book *Africa Must Unite*, Kwame Nkrumah states bluntly that “unless Africa is politically united under an All-African Union Government, there can be no solution to our political and economic problems,” adding: “we are Africans first and last, and as Africans our best interests can only be served by uniting within an African Community” (Nkrumah 1970: v, 217). This book, published to coincide with the opening of the OAU’s founding conference, is truly a political manifesto of African unity. As a student of history, philosophy, politics and economics, strongly influenced by the ideas of W.E.B. Du Bois, Marcus Garvey, and George Padmore, Nkrumah became a passionate advocate of the “African Personality” embodied in the slogan “Africa for the Africans.” He viewed political independence as a prerequisite for economic independence. He argued that Africans must counter the neo-colonial policies of the former colonial powers (such as France) based on “divide and rule” and balkanization, i.e. the break-up of large entities (such as AOF) into small, unviable territories incapable of independent development. Nkrumah also rejected as essentially neo-colonial the association between Africa and Europe: “Pan-Africa and not Eurafrica should be our watchword, and the guide to our policies” (Nkrumah 1970:187; Martin 1982). More specifically, “The European Common Market (...) is but the economic and financial arm of *neo-colonialism* and the bastion of European economic imperialism in Africa” (Nkrumah in Legum, 1962: 119) The Union Government of African States (or *United States of Africa*) envisaged by Nkrumah shall consist of the following common processes and institutions: continental economic planning leading to the creation of an African Common Market; a common currency, a monetary zone, and a central bank of issue; a unified military and defense strategy leading to a unified Defense Command for Africa; a unified foreign policy and diplomacy; and a Continental Parliament (Nkrumah, 1970: 216-222). Similarly, writing in the late 1960s on the economics of Pan-Africanism, Reginald Green and Ann Seidman observed that

No African state is economically large enough to construct a modern economy alone. Africa as a whole has the resources for industrialization, but it is split among more than forty African territories. Africa as a whole could provide markets able to support large-scale efficient industrial complexes; no single African state nor existing sub-regional economic union can do so (...) Can continental African economic unity be achieved? The answer is not only that it *can* be achieved, but that it *must* be achieved (Green & Seidman, 1968: 22-3).

It is interesting to note in this regard that the ousted Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi proposed the exact same project (rejected by the majority of member states) at the 5th extraordinary summit of the OAU held in Qaddafi's hometown of Sirte (Libya) in September 1999 which adopted the Constitutive Act of the African Union (formally established in May 2001).

2. The Functionalist/Gradualist Approach to African Co-operation and Integration of the Moderate African Leaders

The Functionalist/Gradualist Approach

The leaders associated with this school of thought—whose undisputed leader was Felix Houphouet-Boigny of Cote d'Ivoire²—advocated a gradual, step-by-step approach to African integration, in accordance with the Functionalist theory of integration. According to this perspective, African states should not aim—as the pan-Africanists advocated—at immediate and total political integration; rather, they should start by co-operating in non-controversial technical and economic areas such as transport and communications, telecommunications, joint management of rivers/lakes, trade and customs, market integration etc. Immediately after independence in 1960, these moderate African states assembled within various fora and created a range of institutions such as the Brazzaville Group (December 1960), the Monrovia Group (May 1961), the *Conseil de l'Entente* (Council of the Entente, April 1959) and the *Organisation Commune Africaine et Malgache* (OCAM: Common African & Malagasy Union, February 1965) (Esedebe, 1994: 177-81; Francis, 2006: 19-23; Legum, 1962: 50-55; Thompson, 1969: 131-2, 161-77, 260, 286; van Walraven, 1999: 97-100; Wallerstein, 1969: 53-9, 91-3, 122-25; Zartman, 1987: 21-3, 28-35,). .

The Creation of the Organization of African Unity/OAU: A Victory for the Functionalists/Gradualists

On May 25, 1963, 32 African leaders representing a cross-section of the Pan-Africanists (Casablanca Group) and Functionalists/Gradualists (Brazzaville/Monrovia Groups) met in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) to set up a truly Pan-African organization inclusive of the North African and Indian Ocean island states. In the end, the Pan-Africanists gave in to the Gradualists/Functionalists and adopted a Charter creating a weak and powerless *Organization of African*

² Other leaders associated with this school of thought included: Nnamdi Azikiwe (Nigeria); Hastings Kamuzu Banda (Malawi); Jomo Kenyatta (Kenya); Leon M'Ba (Gabon); Julius K. Nyerere (Tanzania); Philibert Tsiranana (Madagascar) and Haile Selassie (Ethiopia).

Unity based on co-operation, the respect of sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-interference in internal affairs of states, and the sanctity of colonially-inherited borders. Most of the policy-making power was vested in an Assembly of Heads of States and Government (AHSG) while the *Administrative* Secretary-General was conceived as a mere executant of the AHSG's decisions (Esedebe, 1994: 165-225; Francis, 2006: 21-24; Thompson, 1969: 181-99; van Walraven, 1999: 142-53; Zartman, 1987: 34-41). Thirty years after its creation, the OAU finally adopted some of the institutions envisaged in Kwame Nkrumah's Pan-African project, notably an African Common Market (by 2020), leading to an African Economic Community (by 2025). Whether these projects will actually see the light of day remains to be seen.

The 37th summit of the AHSG meeting in Lusaka, Zambia (June 2001) decided to formally transform the OAU into an African Union (AU) which became operational in May 2002. As for the Union of African States' project originally conceived by Nkrumah and proposed by Libya's leader Muammar Qaddafi at the Lusaka summit, it was rejected by the African leaders in attendance as "unrealistic" and "utopian" (Martin, 2002:280). Modeled after the European Union, the AU does not essentially differ from the OAU and is basically "an old wine in a new bottle" as it continues—just as its predecessor—to be based on the hallowed principles of state sovereignty, non-interference in the internal affairs of states and inviolability of borders.

II. Re-configuring the African States: Toward a New Map of Africa

We shall now briefly survey past and current proposals for a revision of the map of Africa and a re-configuration of the African states put forward by various authors such as Cheikh Anta Diop, Marc-Louis Ropivia, Makauwa Mutua, Arthur Gakwandi, Joseph Ki-Zerbo and Pelle D. Danabo.

1. Cheikh Anta Diop's Federal African State

In a compact book of just over one hundred pages, Cheikh Anta Diop—arguably one of Africa's greatest scientists, most original thinkers and prolific writers—outlines the economic and cultural bases of a Federal African State (Diop 1974; Diop 1987). Building on earlier research documenting the essential historical, cultural and linguistic unity of Africa (Diop 1979; Diop 1982), Diop advocates the adoption of a single African language for official, educational and cultural use throughout the continent (Diop, 1974: 11-29). Warning against the dangers of the

“South Americanization”—the proliferation of small, dictatorial states afflicted by chronic instability—of Africa, and calling for a break with “fake institutions” (Franco-African Community, Commonwealth, Eur-Africa), Diop recommends the creation of a strong African army and notes that sub-Saharan Africa’s abundant natural, energy and food resources can easily sustain a larger population than the present one (Diop, 1974: 30-37); According to Diop, the Federal African State would extend from the Tropic of Cancer to the Cape, and from the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic, thus uniting Francophone, Anglophone and Lusophone Africa (but excluding North Africa). Sub-Saharan Africa’s hydro-electric potential, he argues, is one of the greatest in the world. The Congo Basin alone (with the Inga and Kinsangani dams) could provide electricity to the whole continent. Africa’s abundant solar and uranium resources could sustain an elaborate solar and nuclear industry. All of these resources should be harnessed toward the processing of the continent’s raw materials. Diop further argues that Africa’s import dependence could be drastically reduced if three key industries were developed: food processing (rice); clothing (cotton); and construction (cement and concrete). In the area of transport and communication, Diop suggests that priority should be given to the construction of tarmacked roads and the development of civil aviation, then maritime transport and last, railways (Diop, 1974: 56-80).

According to Diop, the constituent economic and cultural elements of a Federal African State would be: a single African language, based on the essential historic, cultural and linguistic unity of Africa; the immediate political and economic unification of Francophone, Anglophone and Lusophone Africa; and the creation of a strong pan-African army; an elaborate industrial infrastructure (heavy industry and manufacturing) using Africa’s abundant hydro-electric, solar and uranium resources in order to process the continent’s raw materials; an elaborate transport network; and a policy encouraging population growth (Diop, 1974: 46-52, 56-80 & 110-22).

It is noteworthy that the two blueprints of Nkrumah and Diop are infused by the same pan-Africanist ideal, but differ in emphasis in a complementary fashion. Nkrumah provides a broad canvas and elaborate political, economic and military institutional infrastructure, while Diop fills in the policy details in terms of language and culture, population, energy, industry, agriculture, transport and communication. The fact that Nkrumah was first and foremost a political man, and Diop essentially an academic and scientist, probably explains their different approaches (Martin, 2002: 275-6).

2. Marc-Louis Ropivia's Geopolitics of African Regional Integration

Marc-Louis Ropivia proposes a new theoretical approach to federalism and economic and political integration in sub-Saharan Africa. Ropivia summarizes the whole problematic of African federalism and of political integration in sub-Saharan Africa in six statements:

1. Being of North American origin, Pan-Africanism has only had a limited impact on the African continent. As a result, this ideology has not elicited a movement toward political unity in sub-Saharan Africa.
2. The whole of sub-Saharan Africa cannot be considered as a single cultural unit.
3. A federalism based on an association of independent states can only be built on the foundation of a prior cultural unity.
4. An ideology of the political unity of sub-Saharan Africa based on cultural unity naturally leads toward a unitary continental state, but does not create a federal continental state.
5. Sub-Saharan Africa must be considered as an entity predominantly characterized by cultural diversity.
6. Africa's cultural diversity is, at the same time, a regional diversity that leads to federalism in the form of a multiplicity of federal regional states (Ropivia, 1994: 23).

This new African federalism is based on two-state integrative units called "bi-state nuclei" or "federative dyads" within which the two federated units are linked to each other by a federative link. Thus this constitutes a gradual strategy to build federalism in sub-Saharan Africa, based on a two-state nucleus that is progressively expanded until it ultimately leads to a continental federal state (Ropivia, 1994: 41-43).

A federative link (or direct link) is characterized by an initial bi-state nucleus based on two states sharing the same colonial inheritance and leads to the most intensive type of integration. An indirect federative link usually develops around a core ethnic group that straddles one or several borders in states with different colonial inheritances, and results in a lesser degree of integration (Ropivia, 1994: 180-86). Based on this approach, the author proposes a re-structuring of the African political map into eight (8) super-states—one for each African sub-region, with two states in West, East and Southern Africa (Ropivia, 1994: 183). Ropivia concludes by saying that while nuclear federalism might be rightly viewed as utopia, it is on the basis of utopia that the great transformational political projects of humankind have been built. And Africa would thus be reborn as the phoenix rising from the ashes (Ropivia, 1994: 207-11; Muiu & Martin, 2009: 20).

3. MakauwaMutua's New Map of Africa

Starting from the observation that the “consequences of the failed postcolonial state are so destructive that radical solutions must now be contemplated to avert the wholesale destruction of groups of the African people,” the Kenyan human rights scholar-activist MakauwaMutua proposed in 1994 a re-drawing of the map of Africa to construct only 15 viable states as opposed to the 55 existing today. The criteria for the creation of these new states include historical factors (such as pre-colonial political systems and demographic patterns), ethnic similarities, and alliances based on cultural homogeneity and economic viability.

Based on these criteria, Mutua's map of Africa creates new countries by abolishing some and combining others. Thus, the new Republic of *Kusini* (meaning “south” in Ki-Swahili), would include South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Lesotho, Swaziland and Malawi. The new *Egypt* would combine Egypt and northern Sudan. *Nubia* would bring together Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and southern Sudan. *Mali* (an ancient medieval West African empire) would include Mali, Senegal, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde. *Somalia* would absorb Djibouti, the Ogaden province of Ethiopia and Kenya's north-eastern province. *Congo* would combine ethnically similar people of the Central African Republic, the Congo Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda and Burundi, while *Ghana* would consist of Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire, Benin, Togo, Nigeria, Cameroon, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea and Sao Tome & Principe. Benin would take in Chad, Burkina Faso and Niger. *Algeria* and *Angola* remain the same, while *Libya* absorbs Tunisia. Morocco, Western Sahara and Mauritania become *Sahara*. The new state of Kisiwani (which means “island” in Ki-Swahili) brings together Madagascar, Mauritius and the Comoros. Ethiopia and Eritrea constitute a federation (Mutua, 1994: 17; Mutua 1995; Martin, 2002: 278-9).

4. Arthur S. Gakwandi's New Political Map of Africa

Noting that “African leaders and intellectuals are desperately groping for solutions that will arrest the current drift towards the outer margins of global currents and steer the Continent towards the centre of world events,” Gakwandi goes on to assert “that *political restructuring* of the continent is a more important priority that needs to be addressed before economic restructuring can bring about the desired results” (Gakwandi, 1996: 181-82). Furthermore,

Gakwandi observes that the key to solving the African predicament lies in politics rather than economics. According to him,

The center of the problem does not lie in economics but in politics. Africa's economic stagnation is a result of political instability and not the other way round. The political framework therefore has to be changed so that dynamic, confident and coherent politics are established before economic goals can be pursued meaningfully (Gakwandi, 1996: 183).

Furthermore, Gakwandi agrees with many other African leaders and intellectuals that the colonially-inherited borders are the source of the small size of the majority of African states, leading to poverty, dependency, non-development and ethnic conflict (Gakwandi, 1996:183). This analysis leads the author to propose a re-structuring of the African political map based on the imaginary lines of broad cultural differentiation derived from "a broad coincidence between climatic and cultural zones." According to Gakwandi, the new political map of Africa would achieve the following objectives:

- Eliminate land-locked countries, as well as border disputes;
- Re-unite African nationalities currently divided by the colonial borders (such as the Hausa, Fulani and Yoruba);
- Provide all the new states with an adequate resource base and a critical mass of population that would form a solid basis for development;
- Considerably ease existing intra-state ethnic tensions;
- Enhance Africa's standing in the world, as well as the confidence in Africa and provide a fresh momentum to the quest for self-reliant and self-sustaining development;
- Reduce inter-ethnic tensions, thereby considerably reducing the number of African refugees and internally-displaced persons (Gakwandi, 1996: 187-89).

Consequently, Gakwandi proposes a new political map of Africa made up of seven (7) African super-states in each major African sub-region, namely: Sahara Republic (North Africa); Senegambia (West Africa); Central Africa and Swahili Republic (Central Africa); Ethiopia (as is, plus Eritrea); Swahili Republic (includes East Africa and part of Central Africa); Mozambique (Southern Africa); and Madagascar (as is) (Gakwandi, 1996: 188).

5. Joseph Ki-Zerbo's Federal African State

The late, prominent Burkinabe historian Joseph Ki-Zerbo's concept of African unity is very similar to that of Kwame Nkrumah. Like Nkrumah, Ki-Zerbo starts from the observation that "the typical size of the African micro-state is generally too small for industrialization and public services purposes," adding: "Africans must create large, viable economic units predicated upon a degree of political integration" (Ki-Zerbo, 1978: 631, 643). Ki-Zerbo then proposes a three-tier, pyramidal system of African citizenship: local citizenship, federal citizenship, and regional citizenship, as well as a Federal African state based on three main African languages (such as Hausa and Bambara/Maninka/Diula). The author also advocates a Federal multi-racial and multi-ethnic African state, possibly based on the re-constitution of such large and culturally homogeneous medieval African states as Mali (Ki-Zerbo, 2003: 45, 76-82).

6. Pelle D. Danabo's Pan-African Federal State

In his fascinating dissertation on "Africana Democracy," Pelle Darota Danabo pulls together elements of the analyses of Diop, Ropivia, Mutua and Gakwandi into a coherent and all-inclusive ideological framework. The author starts from the observation that what unites Africans more than anything else—such as our shared culture and geography—is "our shared and collective suffering and afflictions in the history of the modern world," i.e. the shared history of trans-Atlantic slavery, imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism (Danabo, 2008: 1-2). Noting that Western liberal democracy is antithetical to African values and traditions, he advocates an *Africana democracy* based on African values and traditions. Defining colonization as "a project of dehumanization pursued rationally," Danabo goes on to lament the fact that the greatest obstacle to Africa's democracy and development lies in the artificiality of the colonially-inherited borders which divided people sharing common ethnicity, language, cultures and traditions (Danabo, 2008: 129-34). The resulting balkanization of Africa in over 50 states is the root cause of Africa's current predicament. The solution, says Danabo, resides in the creation of a *Pan-African Federal State* (or United African Federal Union) based on a common pan-African identity and society. In addition, "both United Africa and Pan-African values ought to become the normative foundations of development, peace and democracy in Africa." Danabo further notes that "Since the core concept here is redressing both the spatial and political/moral injustices committed on African peoples, both inherited and practiced at present, it matters little whether large federations or union of states, or small self-governing communities are chosen in

so far [as] the decision is not imposed and enforced upon the people who made the choice” (Danabo, 2008: 159). This explains why Danabo’s proposed Pan-African Federal State is rather vague, lacks the specificity of the other projects reviewed in this section and offers various options:

A United African federal union (United Africa) can be constituted from various alternate federal arrangements of all possibilities also, a federal union of competing norms of federal arrangements, for instance. These may include ethno-cultural and linguistic federalisms (a federalism founded on shared history, common language, etc.), environmental federalisms centering around African Peoples sharing common resources like rivers or port services or other like the Nile Basin federation or the Niger river basin federation or the Great Lakes region federation, etc. The possibility and probability of regional unions of federal States is another sound way to go based on founding principles and choices of peoples concerned, etc. is conceivable also. Even the superposition of different complementary arrangements where nation-states, environmental federations, regional unions and other co-function depending on the reasoned and deliberated choices made by those concerned cannot be excluded. In Africa, therefore, suggesting the possibility, even the feasibility of a second level federal structure does not constitute stretching the issue to the point of irrelevance (Danabo, 2008: 161).

While each of these proposals has merit, they are not (except for Cheikh Anta Diop and Danabo) grounded in an overarching political framework and they lack specificity in terms of the actual structure and functioning of the proposed reconfigured states. Beyond proposing a new political map of Africa variously based on 7, 8 or 15 states, these proposals do not specify (except Danabo) the type of government to be set up, as well as the way in which power would be divided between the constituent federated states and the Federal government. MueniwaMuiu’s *Federation of African States* proposed in her book *Fundi waArika* (jointly authored with Guy Martin) actually fills this gap.

7. MueniwaMuii's Federation of African States

In *Fundi waAfrika* – tailor, or builder of Africa in Ki-Swahili – MueniwaMuii (with Guy Martin) introduces a new paradigm to study the African state. According to this paradigm, the current African predicament may be explained by the systematic destruction of African states and the dispossession, exploitation and marginalization of African people through successive historical processes – the trans-Atlantic slave trade, imperialism, colonialism, and globalization. In this book, the authors argue that a new, viable and modern African state based on five political entities – the Federation of African States – should be built on the functional remnants of indigenous African political systems and institutions and based on African values, traditions, and culture (Muii & Martin 2009).

In the *Federation of African States (FAS)*, Africa will have one constitution and a common foreign defense policy. Instead of the current 55 states, Africa will be divided into five super-states (see map of FAS, page 19). The new state of *Kimit* includes: Algeria, Libya, Morocco, Egypt, Tunisia, and Western Sahara, plus the Arab population of Mauritania, Northern Sudan, and Northern Chad. *Mali* will include Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo, plus the African population of Mauritania. *Kongo* will include Congo (DRC), Congo Republic, Cameroon, Southern Chad, Central African Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Sao Tome & Principe, Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi. *Kush* includes southern Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti, Somalia-Somaliland, Kenya, Tanzania, Zanzibar, Seychelles, and Comoros. *Zimbabwe* includes Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Malawi, Mozambique, Madagascar, Mauritius, Lesotho, Swaziland, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The new federal capital city will be called Napata. It will not belong to any of the five states. Each region will have a key player, based on population and resources, for example, Kongo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Nigeria, and South Africa. FAS will be protected by a federal army made up of diverse members from the five states. All external economic relations will be conducted by the federal government. Economic and political power will be decentralized, giving people more input in the day-to-day activities of the federation.

In FAS, power will be decentralized and start from the village councils, made up of the local people. This will be followed by a regional council of elders, then a national council that will be followed by the federal council of presidents. Each of the five regions of FAS will be governed by five rotating presidents on the basis of a federal system. Africa will have a popular

democracy—based on accountability and responsibility—that will be organized from below. Since each section of the population will have representatives at all levels of government, power will be decentralized and the people will determine their destiny based on their interests, priorities and needs (Muiu& Martin, 2009: 207-10).



Conclusion

Without political and economic unity among African states, and without a political system based on the interests of Africans and informed by indigenous institutions, there can be neither a united Africa, nor an African renaissance. As the preceding discussion amply demonstrates, this calls on Africans to take control of their own development. Kwame Nkrumah correctly observed in the early sixties: “We in Africa have untold agricultural, mineral, and water-power resources. These almost fabulous resources can be fully exploited and utilized in the interests of Africa and the African people, only if we develop them within a Union Government of African States” (Nkrumah, 1970: 219). Africa’s unity is still essential for development, peace, and security, Godfrey Mwakikagile notes:

If the future of Africa lies in federation, that kind of federation could be a giant federation of numerous autonomous units which have replaced the modern African state in order to build, on a continental or sub-continental scale, a common market, establish a common currency, a common defense, and maybe even pursue a common foreign policy under some kind of central authority-- including collective leadership on a rotational basis – which Africans think is best for them (Mwakikagile, 2001: 121).

On the occasion of his 75th birthday, the late former Tanzanian president Julius Nyerere left these words of wisdom for the benefit of Africans:

Africa (...) is isolated. Therefore, to develop, it will have to depend upon its own resources basically, internal resources, nationally, and Africa will have to depend upon Africa. The leadership of the future will have to devise, try to carry out policies of maximum national self-reliance and maximum collective self-reliance. They have no other choice. *Hamma* ! [meaning: “there is none” in Ki-Swahili] (Nyerere in Saul, 2005: 159).

At a more general level, for Joseph Ki-Zerbo, the main duty and responsibility of African intellectuals, who should act of the pioneers of the new African culture in twenty-first century Africa is to come up with concrete, positive proposals (Ki-Zerbo, 1978: 641; Ki-Zerbo, 2003: 160). And he concludes: “we must find within ourselves the intellectual and moral strength to initiate positive change (...) we must rely essentially on ourselves to create a new, autonomous African

civilization (...) the salvation of the continent will require from the Africans (...) an extraordinary effort of innovation and reconversion. We shall have to start anew, to go beyond the surviving colonial structures" (Ki-Zerbo, 1978: 632, 640-41).

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