W EXPANDED EDITION

BLACK AFRICA

The Economic and Cultural Basis for a Federated State

By CHEIKH ANTA DIOP

With an Interview by Carlos Moore

Black Africa

Other Books in English by The Same Author

The African Origin of Civilization: Myth or Reality
The Cultural Unity of Black Africa
Precolonial Black Africa

IN PREPARATION

Civilization or Barbarism

Cheikh Anta Diop

BLACK AFRICA

The Economic and Cultural Basis for a Federated State

Translated by
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Foreword to the English Edition

Since 1960, when the first edition of this work appeared, the specter of South-Americanization that should have been staved off has instead materialized everywhere. African unity has made only limited progress in certain specific domains of economic, cultural, academic or other life. Even in those cases, we have had only regional or continental groupings, never involving any real surrender of an iota of national sovereignty and, therefore, not irreversible. They include: OERS (Organisation des Etats Riverains du fleuve Sénégal; Organization of States Bordering the Senegal River); UDEAC (*Union Douanière des Etats de l'Afrique Centrale;* Customs Union of Central African States); OERM (*Organisation Economique de la Région du Maghreb;* Economic Organization of North Africa); EACM (East African Community and Common Market; CEAO (*Communauté Economique de l'Afrique de l'Ouest;* West African Economic Community); CEDEAO (*Communauté Economique des Etats de l'Afrique de l'Ouest;* The Economic Community of West African States).

Most of these groupings died as they were born, about one every two years. Such was the case with the Union of East Africa (including Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda), which had given rise to so many hopes.

The CEAO (including Senegal, Niger, Ivory Coast, Mali, Mauritania, Upper Volta, Togo and Benin) and CEDEAO (Nigeria, Ivory Coast, Mali, Senegal, Upper Volta, Niger, Togo, Guinea and Sierra Leone) are recent c eations in West Africa but no less fragile. All of them are giants with feet of clay engaged in trying to square the circle: to achieve meaningful economic unity without political union. No one wants to make the necessary sacrifice to achieve political unity. All hope to gain the benefits of economic integration without sacrificing the selfish interests of their governing groups on

the altar of African unity. That is the fundamental contradiction lying at the base of all these ephemeral constructions and unions.

The subsidiaries of multinational companies established in the countries making up the so-called Union (whether CEAO or CEDEAO) will without difficulty get around the protective laws that have so laboriously been passed. For instance, within the CEAO Senegal and the Ivory Coast harbor most of the subsidiaries of foreign companies there to manufacture cheaply and to export to the rest of the West African zone. These two countries have not used the definition of a national company that other, less-industrialized nations have, such as Mali, Niger, Upper Volta and Mauritania. Whereas Senegal held that even a foreign-financed company operating within the CEAO must be considered a national company if it brought a 75 percent transformation to a homegrown product, the other partners were concerned with the company's origin, the ownership of its capital and the ultimate destination of its profits and, therefore, demanded a better definition of the concept of national companies.

The Organization of African Unity is better than nothing. If only its authority were stronger, if a determinate part of the sovereignty of the various states were transferred to it in specific domains, it would play a more efficacious role. At the moment, this would seem especially necessary in the matter of defense in order to counter the South African peril. Both Pretoria and Israel now possess the atomic bomb without having had to carry out their own nuclear explosions, thanks to Western duplicity.

Let the African peoples not be misled. The nuclear test in the Kalahari that Pretoria recently postponed does not mean it has given up on atomic weapons: it has them already. The test had been intended mainly to intimidate the African states. It was to have been a shattering way of letting them know that Pretoria had joined the atomic club.

Tomorrow, or in ten years, the German rockets that the OTRAG (Orbital Transport und Raketen Aktion Gesellschaft) Company is beginning to manufacture in Equatorial Africa will be able to deliver Pretoria's nuclear warheads with amazing precision. This will allow South Africa to have the entire Black Continent at its mercy—before Nigeria or Zaïre are aroused or become sufficiently effective.

We may hope that there might yet come into being an international solidarity of peoples to preclude such genocide; demographic pressure is at present the only "atomic weapon of Black Africa."

One is deeply disturbed to read such lines as:

> Plans formulated in the United States in 1970 to control birth rates are extremely far-reaching and suggest, for example, the idea of putting sterilizing agents into the water supply of cities or household salt, if need be over the objections of local governments.[1]

On another level, in this era of energy crisis there is good reason to redefine what ought to be Africa's energy doctrine, for that action in itself will show that this book, written long before the crisis came into existence, foretold it.

Toward an African Energy Doctrine

The days of the nineteenth-century dwarf states are gone. Our main security and development problems can be solved only on a continental scale and preferably within a federal framework.

Let us just take one example among many to illustrate this

idea. What is the meaning of the rights granted under the Law of the Sea to such tiny landlocked or semiarid states as Rwanda, Burundi, Zambia, Niger, Chad, Upper Volta or the Central African Empire? Within two generations, a good share of the customary materials indispensable to our daily lives (including iron, aluminum, copper, uranium, zinc, manganese and cobalt) will have completely disappeared from land areas. Suitable technical equipment will be required to extract them from ocean bottoms exceeding two thousand meters (a mile and a quarter). A right which one has no material or technical way of using is just a dead letter. How would states barely as large as one section of Paris or New York—even if their populations grew—be able to run the risk of sending expeditions on their own into the abyssal depths to secure urgently needed supplies of raw materials? It would be just as easy for a legless man to compete in races at the Olympic Games. An African Kuwait, such as Gabon, in less than sixty years will be an empty shell.

Enlightened self-interest itself argues for the adoption, before it is too late, of a federal system. Belgian-American interests, preparing for the political instability that would prevail in the colonies following World War II, working at maximum rates and beyond, mined all the uranium of the then Belgian Congo in less than ten years and stockpiled it at Oolen in Belgium. The Shinrolowbe mines in Zaïre today are emptied, having supplied the major part of the uranium that went into the Nagasaki and Hiroshima bombs. Until 1952, Zaïre was the world's leading uranium producer; now it ranks sixteenth in reserves and has ceased to be counted among the producers. This one example shows how fast our continent can have its nonrenewable treasures sucked away while we nap.

The upshot is that only a continentwide or a subcontinentwide federated state can offer a safe political and economic area, stable enough for a rational formula covering the development of our countries with their infinitely varied potentials to be put into effect. Because the federated state involves a real surrender of sovereignty, it is an irreversible structure that has nothing in common with the transitory economic groupings that have proliferated since independence.

Within a federated state, today's political boundaries would become mere local administrative lines, and disagreements—such as the ones which have pitted or presently pit Mali against Upper Volta, Ghana against Togo, Libya against Chad, Morocco against Mauritania in the Polisario, Somalia against Ethiopia—would no longer be conceivable. That, therefore, is the framework within which we have chosen to deal with Africa's energy problems.

The ideas presented in popular form in this work, which was first written in 1960 before the world energy crisis, are topical. In fact, it includes the whole of today's OMVS (*L'Organisation pour la Mise en Valeur du [Fleuve] Sénégal;* The Organization for the Development of the River Senegal) program, before the fact.

We would like in these prefatory pages to indicate how we conceive an African Energy Doctrine. What we are proposing is a schema of continentwide energy development that takes into account at one and the same time renewable and nonrenewable energy resources, ecology and the technical advances of the coming decades.

From such a starting point we will try to establish not only on the historical/cultural level but also on that of economic rationality a future African-Arab cooperation in the particular sphere of use of energy resources.

Black Africa will have to find a formula of energy pluralism that harmoniously combines utilization of the following sources of energy: 1) hydroelectric energy (dams); 2) solar energy; 3) nuclear energy; 4) geothermal energy; 5) hydrocarbons (petroleum); and 6) thermonuclear energy.

The first five sources of energy are already utilizable to various degrees in Africa and the rest of the world, while the last has not reached a practically operable stage. There can be no doubt, despite a requisite degree of pessimism, that its applications will become operational within the next forty years—that is, in less than two generations—at the very moment when the reign of oil will be ending with the exhaustion of the last deposits on earth. We cannot here go into technical aspects of the problems; that would make no sense in a text which aims to popularize ideas that are vital to us all. However, if that source of energy were to become available, with effective control of thermonuclear reactions, the energy needs of the planet would be answered for a period of a billion—repeat, one billion—years. The future instruments that produce this energy, whether called thermonuclear reactors or tokomaks (from the Soviet origin of the first experimental prototypes so named), will be fed in their final and truly operational stages by heavy hydrogen, obtained basically through the electrolysis of sea water.

Every country would be able to have its own electrolytic setup which would be more than enough to handle its current needs. But if energy consumption were to increase indefinitely, African dams would be the proper installations for the production of heavy hydrogen by way of electrolysis; at the same time they would supply ordinary hydrogen for stockpiling as eventual replacement for gasoline to fuel a type of internal-combustion engine to be invented.

As far as solar energy is concerned, ongoing research with a view to reducing the cost of solar cells will perhaps allow us on the threshold of the year 2000 to have operational solar powerplants, known as land or space heliovoltaics. We stated in this work that the practical application of solar energy for industry was basically a problem of physical chemistry; events have not proved us wrong. Nevertheless, solar technology is improving daily, and the application of solar energy to home heating and cooling is well under way. Solar energy has already been put to use in a number of high-rise buildings, and communal solar receptors are in operation.

For a great many reasons which would be difficult to detail here we believe that the continentwide options available to Africa should be the following: first, to bank on the triumph of thermonuclear energy and immediately create a pilot fusion center in an appropriate African country, open to all qualified African researchers willing to follow this line of pursuit; fusion is only very slightly polluting, either radioactively or thermally[2]; second, to bank supplementarily on solar energy; in the third place to bank on geothermal energy (also producing only slight pollution), especially for the volcanic regions of East Africa.

There is no need here to go into the sources of wind, tidal or other energy which, while less significant, are discussed in the text proper.

The three abovementioned sources (thermonuclear, solar and geothermal) now being domesticated fall into place with three others that are already standard: hydroelectricity (dams); nuclear fission, as opposed to the nuclear fusion just considered; and hydrocarbons.

The intensification of petroleum prospecting each year improves Africa's posture in the realm of hydrocarbons, but it is well known that these are highly polluting and are now being depleted throughout the world. Taking these two factors into account, as well as the imminent arrival of new sources of energy, one can anticipate that hydrocarbons will increasingly be considered only as raw materials for the synthetic chemical industry.

As for nuclear fission, it is regrettable that the political historical context no longer allows us a choice. We are obliged to develop this highly polluting technology on the African continent, because our peoples' survival depends

upon it. We will have to opt for second-generation reactors (that is, breeders or superregenerators), which at their operational stage with all the dangers involved produce more fuel than they consume—as is well known.

The seismic stability of the African continent will allow stockpiling of atomic wastes until a valid efficient method of disposing of these may be found, instead of embedding them in concrete or sinking them in the ocean by pipeline, as some of the great powers with Atlantic seacoasts, such as Great Britain, have been doing.

Finally, hydroelectric power today is the principal source of energy for sub-Saharan Africa. Let us not forget that in colonial days the Belgians had already calculated that equipping the Inga site on the Zaïre River would have been enough to supply all the African energy needs of that day—or to light the entire continent of South America. They at one time considered transporting this power in direct current (because there is less loss) from the Equator to Spain, Portugal and Italy and selling it to power-poor southern Europe. Their calculations showed that it could be sold in Europe at a competitive price per kilowatt, even after having been transported over so long a distance.

Abundant hydroelectric power has allowed Zaïre to undertake the installation of a plant for the enrichment of uranium, a technique requiring vast amounts of electricity.

We might also point to the dams at Kaborabassa, Aawan and elsewhere. Two-thirds of the world's reserves of hydro-electric power are concentrated in Africa.

Black Africa is, therefore, a continent rich in power. Equipping the present sites and connecting them in an African grid would permit the creation of an integrated continentwide electrical-energy market, covering virtually all the energy needs of the African states through rational distribution without waste. The interconnection of grids is so rational a solution that even countries with different economic systems resort to it. Certain Soviet purchases in Europe, namely, in West Germany, are paid for with electric power, or can be considered to be.

Establishment of the African grid would allow for power from Zaïre to be delivered even to the edges of the desert and, thus, keep the latter from spreading.

At this time, the longest powerline for electrical energy in direct current in the world is being built in Zaïre, between Kinshasa and the Shaba, a distance of 2,000 kilometers. Another line of the same type built by the Portuguese is unfortunately still in operation, between Kaborabassa (Mozambique) and Johannesburg, supplying power to Pretoria's factories of death. We are convinced that the Mozambican authorities will do their utmost to put an end to this as soon as possible.

A private organization, the UPDEA (*Union des Producteurs et des Distributeurs d'Electricité en Afrique;* Union of African Producers and Distributors of Electricity) has been set up in the past few years and is at work to complete the grid. The pitfalls of such a solution are evident. The ideal would be for problems as vital as this to be taken in hand by a continentwide federated state rather than by a foreign financial group. All deviations are conceivable!

We can also understand that such is the prerequisite for self-centered development—as economists employ that term when they emphasize this kind of development—and add that it is possible only by throwing off the (iniquitous) conditions of the international marketplace and making a break for as long as necessary with that kind of system, as was done, for example, by the Soviet Union or China. Economists have never spelled out the conditions that make such a withdrawal possible; this cannot be held against them, for such a definition is outside the framework of economics. Only a continentwide or subcontinentwide federated state can permit realization of such self-centered development.

Bases for African-Arab Cooperation

I have demonstrated in my earlier books all the biological and cultural kinship between Arabs and Black Africans, a kinship so old that it goes back to the fifth millennium BC and the beginning of the fourth with the birth of the Semitic world. I further explored the "genetic kinship between Pharaonic Egyptian and the African languages" within the framework of a chapter on "The Process of Semiticization." This kinship greatly antedates Islam, but all the prejudices inherited during the history of the intervening centuries have obscured it. One day it will come to the fore once again, and it is a factor not to be overlooked in the unifying dynamic of the continent.

These historic reasons are further supported by current reasons which belong to the complementary nature of our economies in the light of the coming depletion of hydrocarbon fossil fuels.

The form of energy eventually replacing oil in the semiarid Middle East will not be nuclear fission, for fissionable resources from the earth will give out at about the time petroleum supplies are depleted—to say nothing of the special inconvenience represented by a nuclear powerplant existing beyond its use. The substitute energy will very probably be thermonuclear, that is, from nuclear fusion, or else solar. We have seen that, if this is the case, Black Africa with its hydroelectric installations might be the inexhaustible source both for heavy hydrogen, which is the raw material for thermonuclear reactors, and for the future vector of energy (i.e., the means of stockpiling and transporting) which is ordinary hydrogen. Hydrogen-fueled automobiles will necessarily replace today's gasoline-fueled vehicles. The solar car, built with photocells, will undoubtedly also come into existence, but it may be less practical because of the alternation of days and nights, even after the problem of conversion and stockpiling of solar energy is solved. It may be that the photosynthesis reaction creating hydrogen from sunlight—accomplished in laboratory experiments by the Japanese—will soon become a practical reality.

With the future appearance of hydrogen as the energy vector, a whole new technology of internal-combustion engines and various other types of motors must come into existence. It is in terms of that not-so-distant future that we must rethink all of our developmental problems in order to avoid absurd choices that might condemn the next generation—today's sixteen year-olds—to face the worst kinds of difficulties tomorrow.

March 10, 1978

[1]Albert Sauvy, *La Population*. Paris: Presses universitaires de France ("Que sais-je?" Collection), 1975, p. 118.

[2]See the author's report to the PNUD (*Le Programme des Nations Unies pour le Développement;* United Nations Development Program) Ref. DP/TCDC/RAF/11, September 10, 1976, p. 68: "Technical Cooperation among African Countries."

Introduction

Our ideologists have not succeeded in moving revolutionary theory forward by one step in Black Africa. Indeed, though one be armed with so fecund a scientific method of analysis as Marxist dialectics (assuming it had been sufficiently assimilated), it would be hopeless to try to apply it to a reality of which one is totally ignorant. For a long time many of our compatriots have thought they could get by without any deep knowledge of African society and Africa in all aspects: history, languages, ethnicities, energy potential, raw materials, and the like. The conclusions reached have often been abysmally banal, when not plain and simply wrong. They have thought they could make up for the lack of ideas, breath, and revolutionary perspectives by the use of offensive, excessive, and murky vocabulary; they forgot that the truly revolutionary quality of language is its demonstrative clarity based on the objective use of facts and their dialectical relationships, which results in irresistibly convincing the intelligent reader.

In February, 1952, when I was Secretary General of the Democratic African Rally of Students, we posed the problem of the political independence of the Black Continent and the creation of a future Federated State in an article entitled "Toward a Political Ideology in Black Africa."[1] This article, which was in fact but a foreshadowing of my *The African Origin of Civilization: Myth or Reality*,[2] considered political, linguistic, historical, social, and other aspects of the question.

At that time, apart from the Malagasy deputies and the Cameroonian leader Ruben Um Nyobé, there were certainly no French-speaking Black African politicians who dared to voice the concepts of African nations, independence, or, let's face it, culture. Today's after-the-fact state-

ments endorsing such ideas are almost frauds; at the least they are bare-faced misrepresentations.

It would be illuminating to trace the history of the actual positive use (not just as trial balloons to be shot down) of these concepts by the "fathers" of African independence, even if the use preceded their writings.

If the priorities indicated in this book had been taken into consideration in due time, especially insofar as hydroelectric development was concerned, Black Africa today would have nothing to fear from the economic problems created by the oil crisis and the drought.

A rational industrialization program would consist first of all of harnessing the immense sources of energy which nature has given to Africa and thus making possible the whole process of development: In the beginning is energy; all else flows therefrom. While exploitation of such abundant energy might become a marketing challenge for private corporations, to a developing country which must stimulate manifold activities and bring into being the apparatus needed for its emergence into the industrial era, the idea of excess energy is pure nonsense.

[1]"Vers une idéologie politique en Afrique Noire," in *La Voix de l'Afrique Noire* (official organ of the Étudiants du Rassemblement Démocratique Africain), February, 1952.

[2]Westport, Connecticut: Lawrence Hill & Company, 1974, a translation by Mercer Cook of *Nations nègres et culture* (1955) and selected parts of *Antériorité des civilisations nègres: Mythe ou Vérité historique?* (1967), both published by Présence Africaine, Paris.

Part I

Historical Unity: The Restoration Of African Historical Consciousness

The time has come to draw practical conclusions from years of studying African problems, to sum them up in formulas that are as clear as possible and easy to apply.

Chapter One

Origins and History of the Black World

In all likelihood, present-day African peoples are in no way invaders come from another continent; they are the aborigines. Recent scientific discoveries that show Africa to be the cradle of humanity increasingly negate the hypothesis of this continent being peopled by outlanders.

From the appearance of *homo sapiens*—from earliest prehistory until our time—we are able to trace our origins as a people without significant breaks in continuity. In early prehistory, a great South-North movement brought the African peoples of the Great Lakes region into the Nile Basin. They lived there in clusters for millennia.

In prehistoric times, it was they who created the Nilotic Sudanese civilization and what we know as Egypt.

These first Black civilizations were the first civilizations in the world, the development of Europe having been held back by the last Ice Age, a matter of a hundred thousand years.

Beginning in the sixth century BC (525, when Cambyses occupied Egypt) with the end of the independence of the great Black power base, the African peoples, until then drawn to the Nile Valley as by a magnet, fanned out over the continent. Perhaps they then came upon small pockets of populations descended from paleolithic or neolithic infiltrations.

A few centures later, around the first century, they founded the first of the continental civilizations in the West and South: Ghana, Nok-Ifé, Zimbabwe and others.

We now know, thanks to radiocarbon methods, that the earliest sites in Zimbabwe do date back at least as far as the

first century of the Christian Era. On the east coast of Africa Roman coins have been discovered at the port of Dunford as well as in Zanzibar, indicating a flourishing sea trade.

The first Nigerian civilization, which Bernard and William Fagg named the Nok civilization, has been traced back to the first millennium BC, the ceramics found there being radiocarbon-dated over a range from 900 BC to 200 AD. The *Tarikh es-Sudan* tells us that the city of Kukia, on the Niger, former capital of Songhay before Gao, was contemporaneous with the time of the pharaohs. However that may be, we do know with certainty that in the eighth century AD the Empire of Ghana was already in existence, extending over all of West Africa, right to the Atlantic. So we can see that the African states of the Middle Ages had come into being practically when Egyptian-Sudanese antiquity came to its close. The Nilotic Sudan was finally to lose its independence only in the nineteenth century, and its old eastern province of Ethiopia would retain its identity until the Italian occupation of 1936, barring which, it never lost its independence. That being the case, Ethiopia is in point of fact the oldest state in the world. Ghana lasted from about the third century AD until 1240, to be succeeded by Mali from that date to 1464 (accession of Soni-Ali, founder of the Songhay Empire).

The dismembering of these nations was effectively completed in the nineteenth century by the European occupation of Africa. The breaking-up went on apace; what we saw then were tiny kingdoms, each jealous of its own independence, such as those of Cayor in Senegal conquered by General Louis Faidherbe under Napoleon III after a fierce resistance. The kingdoms of East Africa with trading cities on the coast prospered from the end of classical antiquity until the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries when they fell to the Portuguese. These kingdoms maintained a lively trade with India, Siam, and the Chinese Far East, evidenced both by chronicles and by Chinese potteries found there. It is

hard for us today to picture the opulence of the authentically Black trading centers of that period. Father Gervase Mathew, of Oxford, in relating Swahili tradition mentions that in these cities there were silver staircases leading to beds of ivory. Such luxurious furnishing are barely imaginable today. The houses, built of stone, rose to five or six stories. The people were authentic jet-black Africans. Their women had shaven heads as in Ghana.

These civilizations were overthrown by the Portuguese who, in the sixteenth century, altered the old trade routes and sea lanes of the Indian Ocean. The conception of African history just briefly sketched is today to all intents and purposes accepted and endorsed by scholars:

> Black African culture set for the whole world an example of extraordinary vitality and vigor. All vitalist conceptions, religious as well as philosophic, I am convinced, came from that source. The civilization of ancient Egypt would not have been possible without the great example of Black African culture, and in all likelihood it was nothing but the sublimation thereof.[1]

The history of the Nilotic Sudan, Egypt and present-day Ethiopia is well known. Until recently, however, the past of West Africa was related quite summarily. We have felt it necessary to bring this past to life through documents we have had at our disposal and by establishing a socio-historical analysis covering two thousand years.

The old political, social and economic organization of Black Africa over those two thousand years, the military, judicial, and administrative apparatus, the educational set-up, the university and technical levels, the pomp and circumstance of court life, the customs and mores—all details which had been presumed lost in the deep dark past—we were able to

bring strikingly and scientifically back to life, especially insofar as West Africa was concerned, in *L'Afrique Noire pré-coloniale* (Pre-Colonial Black Africa).[2]

A similar work should be undertaken for the Benin-Ifé civilization. What would be of special interest there would be the fact that even in its ideological superstructure the civilization of Benin borrowed nothing from either the Semitic or the Aryan worlds. On the other hand, it does display a close relationship with ancient Egypt, as might be expected: Its art, in a certain measure, represents African sculptural classicism.

The same kind of exhumation and revivification work on our history for the period from antiquity to the present can and must be undertaken in a systematic way for all of eastern, central, and southern Africa.

Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Persian, Chinese, and Arabic documents known to exist and with what archeology may add to them allow this to be done in large measure. Nowhere in African history are there holes that cannot be filled in. The empty spaces are only temporary, and the period that affects us runs without a break from Egyptian-Sudanese antiquity and fits right in sequence.

So, historical consciousness is properly restored. The general framework of African history is set out. The evolution of peoples is known in its broad lines, but the research already begun will have to be continued in order to fill the small gaps that still exist, thus reinforcing the framework. One can no longer see "darkest Africa" set against a "deep dark past"; the African can clearly follow his evolution from prehistory to our own day. Historical unity has become manifest.

The psychological unity existing for all those who inhabit the Dark Continent, and which each of us feels, is an elementary fact that needs no demonstration.

Geographical unity likewise is obvious, and it necessarily implies economic unity. The latter is what we shall discuss in the pages devoted to the industrialization of Africa.

A consideration of the structure of the precolonial African family, that of the State, the accompanying philosophical and moral concepts, and the like, reveals a consistent cultural unity, resulting from similar adaptations to the same material and physical conditions of life. This was the subject of my *L'Unité culturelle de l'Afrique Noire* (The Cultural Unity of Black Africa).[3]

There is also a common linguistic background. The African languages constitute one linguistic family, as homogeneous as that of the Indo-European tongues. Nothing is easier than to set down the rules that allow transfer from a Zulu language (Bantu) to one of those of West Africa (Serer-Wolof, Peul), or even to ancient Egyptian (cf. *L'Afrique Noire pré-coloniale*, Part II). However, the old imperial languages, Sarakole in Ghana, Mandingo in Mali, Songhay in Koaga (Gao), have had their areas of extension sharply reduced today. At the apogee of these African empires, the imperial tongues, the languages of trade and government affairs, were the African languages themselves; even after the advent of Islam, Arabic always remained only the language of religion and erudition, as did Latin in Europe of the same period.

With European occupation in the nineteenth century the official African languages were replaced by those of the various "mother countries." Local dialects surfaced and vied against the older national cultural languages which had virtually submerged them. It became less and less necessary for civil administration, politics or social intercourse to learn the latter. The demands of daily life required learning the European languages; the disrepute of the old linguistic unities in our day reached its depth.

While we may be able to build a Federated African State covering all of the Black Continent on the basis of historical,

psychological, economic and geographical unity, we will be forced, in order to complete such national unity and set it on a modern autochthonous cultural base, to recreate our linguistic unity through the choice of an appropriate African tongue promoted to the influence of a modern cultural language.

Linguistic unity dominates all national life. Without it, national cultural unity is but fragile and illusory. The wranglings within a bilingual country, such as Belgium, illustrate the point.

[1]Professor Georges Gurvitch, Sorbonne, "Message to the Second Convention of Black Writers and Artists," Rome, April, 1959 (in special issue, *Présence Africaine).*

[2]Paris: Éditions Présence Africaine, 1960. This work for the first time demonstrated the possibility of writing a history of Black Africa free of mere chronology of events. The type of study thus initiated, sometimes called "history of ideas," was immediately taken over by various historians, without benefit of acknowledgment, to be sure. (Cf. also, Diop, *The African Origin of Civilization,* cited above.)

[3]Paris: Éditions Présence Africaine, 1960.

Chapter Two
Linguistic Unity

1. Choice of Language on a Local Scale in the Framework of a Given Territory

Let us take Senegal as an example. Before any choice could be made, the kinship of the various tongues spoken in Senegal had to be demonstrated—which may not be as easily done in other territories. By setting out linguistic rules that would allow passage in a systematic way from Wolof forms to Serer, Peul-Toucouleur and Diola we demonstrated the deep kinship uniting the various segments of the Senegalese population.

The importance of this demonstration is that it shows us a kinship the ignorance of which had kept alive until the present local particularities (Serer, Diola or Toucouleur) at times as effectively uniting as mini-nations. Quite objectively, in a country such as Senegal, Wolof is the obvious choice for a national language, a language of government: All minorities are nearly bilingual, speaking Wolof in addition to their primary language. It can be seen that within the local context cultural languages, such as Peul-Toucouleur, fall into the class of minority groupings, whereas it is quite another matter in regions such as, say, Futa-Jallon or the Northern Cameroons.

2. Elevation of the Selected Language to the Level of a Modern Cultural and Government Language

It is in Wolof that researchers today are trying systemati-

cally to introduce all the concepts required to convey the exact sciences (mathematics, physics), philosophy and so on. An appropriate Senegalese government will one day apply a cultural policy aimed at favoring the development of the language in optimal order. It will be necessary to use artificial but effective methods, such as founding literary prizes, translating scientific works, creating a national commission to draw up an academic dictionary and various specialized ones (for mathematics, physics, philosophy, and so on).

Even now, we must start such work on a limited scale, in order to show once and for all that it is indeed possible to raise an African language to the prestige of any of the European cultural languages. What has so far been done and continues in this regard in Wolof has only exemplary value. Similar work must be judiciously carried out in the framework of each territory. The same criteria of selection will have to be applied in determining the territorial language with the same delicate study beforehand of linguistic, ethnic and other considerations in order to reduce any possibility of offending regional sensibilities.

As quickly as possible Wolof should become the language of government used in public and political documents and acts: parliamentary debate, drawing up of the constitution and legal code.

Until now, we have been in a period in which knowledge of the colonizing power's language was a prerequisite for holding any public office, especially that of deputy or legislator. Participating in debate in the French parliament made this indispensable. It is a paradox to continue such a state of affairs in any given African state. The major part of the population in any territory is still totally without knowledge of French; one can see that to elect people's representatives on outmoded criteria is patently inadequate and unjust. Using the colonizer's language is a convenient way to avoid facing the true complaints of the population, who may be illiterate but are not without good sense.

3. Choice of Language on a Continental Scale

When our demonstrations in Wolof have gone far enough, they will have proved that in due time it will be possible appropriately to choose one of the major African tongues and promote it to the level of sole governmental and cultural language for the entire continent. It will cover all territorial languages in the same way that Russian is overlaid on the language of each Socialist Republic within the Soviet Union.

The choice of such language will have to be made by a competent interterritorial commission imbued with deep patriotic feeling foreswearing any hidden chauvinism.

The language thus selected will at first be taught in the secondary schools of all territories, just as if it were an obligatory foreign language in the curriculum. Then, as textbooks on various subjects are completed in this language and adopted in high schools and colleges, the continental language will take the place of European languages as the vehicle for our modern national culture. European languages will not disappear from out schools but will progressively drop back to the position of elective foreign languages learned on a secondary-school level. A citizen of any given territory will be obliged to learn to speak fluently the continental language, while still being able to get secondary and even higher education in the territorial tongue.

Black writers and artists at their Rome convention (Easter, 1959) and the Federation of African Students in France at its July, 1959, seminar at Rennes, both officially adopted this view of the necessity and character of linguistic unity.[1]

During the transitional period, European languages will continue to be used, but that situation must not be allowed to endure too long, lest it eventually turn Africa into a super-Switzerland. There is nothing to be gained by urging simultaneous perpetuation of French, English, Portuguese, Spanish and Afrikaans, and why opt for exclusive use of either French or English?

We must remain circumspect about subtle efforts to Anglo-Americanize Black Africa, considering how many of the colonies were formerly British. The joint efforts of Great Britain and of the United States especially run counter to established "intellectual" habits and suggest to former French, Portuguese, Spanish, or other colonies that they ought to opt for English, so as to make that tongue the *lingua franca* of the whole continent. Linguistic unity based on a foreign language, however one may look at it, is cultural abortion. It would irremediably eventuate in the death of the authentic national culture, the end of our deeper intellectual and spiritual life and reduce us to perpetual copycats, having missed out on our historical mission in this world. Anglo-Saxon cultural, economic, social and even political hegemony would thereby be permanently guaranteed throughout Black Africa. We must remain radically opposed to any attempts at cultural assimilation coming from the outside: none is possible without opening the way to the others.

One might say that it makes no difference to a Wolof-speaking African whether he adopts Zulu or English or Portuguese. This is just not so. An African educated in any African language other than his own is less alienated, culturally speaking, than he is when educated in a European language which takes the place of his mother tongue. Likewise, a Frenchman who got an Italian education would be much less alienated than if inculcated with Zulu or Arabic in place of French. Such is the disparity in cultural interest which exists between European and African languages—something we must never lose sight of.

European languages must not be considered diamonds displayed under a glass bell, dazzling us with their brilliance. Our attention must rather be fixed on their historical development. Creatively, we discover that similar paths are open to all.

The influence of language is so great that the various European mother countries feel they can afford to withdraw politically from Africa without great loss as long as their (linguistic) presence remains in the economic, spiritual and cultural spheres. They assume that onetime colonies will officially retain the colonizer's language; anything else would be disappointing, ungrateful and inacceptable. Such a design is impossible of realization, even though former colonies continue to honor the tongue of the mother country as the prime foreign language in high-school curricula. We are not at all talking of a radical cultural severance.

Because of the huge difficulties to be overcome in mastering the African linguistic mosaic, some observers in Europe are convinced that we will not be up to the challenge, that we will be unable to undertake a change requiring so much human energy, so much intellectual lucidity, so much creative thinking. If they do not actually sneer, they are nonetheless sure that the drive for African cultural unity will fail. Cultural surrender is a foregone conclusion, in view of the ignorance of vital problems that extends to some of our most responsible political leaders. Political independence to a certain degree is, yes, what they envision now. None of what makes for the greatness of modern nations in national culture or even economic infrastructure will, when all is said and done, ever exist among us, they assume. On the other hand, they firmly expect perpetuation of the cultural mix they create, and one can already hear the pseudo-dialectical phrases that will be used to try to legitimatize such a state of affairs in the name of efficiency, progress, planetary unity and what have you.[2]

Our generation is out of luck, so to speak, in what we will not be able to avoid the intellectual storm; willy-nilly, we will be forced to take the bull by the horns, to rid our minds of intellectual formulas and tidbits of thought in order to enter resolutely upon the only truly dialectical path toward the

solution of the problems that history forces upon us. This connotes active research, in the most authentic meaning of that term, by clear and fertile minds capable of proposing effective solutions and realizing them without intellectual guardianship.

Historical circumstances now demand of our generation that it solve in a felicitous manner the vital problems that face Africa, most especially the cultural problem. If we do not succeed in this, we will appear in the history of the development of our people as the watershed generation that was unable to insure the unified cultural survival of the African continent; the generation which, out of political and intellectual blindness, committed the error fatal to our national future. We will have been the unworthy generation *par excellence*.

The selection of a single language for the continent—one which any foreigner, whether French, English, Russian, Indian, Chinese, Japanese, German, Dutch, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian or other, would have to learn to communicate with any African on our Black Continent—would thus obviously lead to a simplification of our intercourse with the outside world: International relations, far from becoming more complicated, would become much easier.

[1]As did the UNESCO-sponsored convention held at Bamako in 1964.

[2]I demonstrated (in *Nations nègres et culture*, Part II) the greater speed of assimilation of modern techniques through use of national languages and the multiple advantages of their systematic use as against use of European languages in educating the people.

Chapter Three

Political Unity and Federalism

The historical significance of national liberation movements in colonies, especially those of Black Africa, is no longer open to question. It is now readily admitted that this powerful decolonizing drive is as significant as the national movements of Europe during the nineteenth century. Apart from those colonies largely peopled by Europeans where resistance is inevitable, with few exceptions there is less and less violent opposition to the development of the movement. The new tactic rather consists in trying to direct it, channel it toward nonsocialistic forms, of the so-called Western type. If this goal were to be reached, the former colonial powers and the United States might stop worrying. Black Africa would be not Balkanized (for the political regimes of the Balkan countries are now relatively stable) but South-Americanized. It would be made up of a proliferation of little dictator-ridden countries without organic ties one to another, ephemeral, afflicted with chronic weakness, governed by terror with the help of outsized police forces, but under economic domination by foreign countries, pulling strings through the mere presence of an embassy. This was the case in Guatemala, where the following extraordinary situation occurred: A foreign business firm, the United Fruit Company (U.S.), overthrew the local government and replaced it with another more amenable to the company's aims, working in conjunction with the American embassy (and, as we now know, the CIA), thus proving the emptiness of the so-called independence of such a state.[1]

If we are to protect Black Africa from such a fate, the idea of federation must actually constitute—for all of us, espe-

cially those in high political positions—a method of survival (by way of an efficacious political and economic organization to be set up in optimum time), not just a dilatory demagogic formulation receiving merely lip service.

We must stop fooling the masses with minor patchwork and bring about the ultimate break with all the fake structures (*Communauté*, Commonwealth, Eurafrica) which have no historical future. Black Africa must finally and defnitively be started up the slope toward its federal destiny.

We cannot go on running with the hare and hunting with the hounds. The African countries, in the years ahead, will be forced progressively to strengthen their organic federal ties while ridding themselves of the remains of those that bind them still to their former "mother countries."

This need in no way result in economic chaos. West Africa alone, if federated, has an economic potential greater than that of France and England combined, that is, greater than that of the two countries most likely to impose economic sanctions on us. Naturally, that economic potential has to be developed. This creates problems of manpower and investment. In Part II of this program, we outline the path which can lead to the success of such an undertaking. Those in political power are the only ones who have not proved themselves up to coping with these problems, who indeed have never seriously given thought to them, who are terrified of taking the action which they conceive as economic weaning. They rather attempt, while acting as a screen, to perpetuate the same old economic/political guardianship in a more insidious manner, less visible to the masses but no less effective.

The proliferation of political leaders is a specifically African fact of life, resulting from colonization by different imperial powers and the consequent breaking up into administrative territories of conquered regions. It constitutes a serious difficulty that will have to be taken into account in any attempts at African continental unification.

No concrete way has yet been proposed that might lead inevitably and rapidly to a federation of African States, with partial or total surrender of local sovereignty. For all the fine public statements, multifarious individual and general interests are at work to make people cling to the established frontiers of the various territories.

No one has even suggested any sort of cartel of presidents or heads of state as an embryo federal government, which might be broadened gradually as the various states become emancipated. This might be the way to provide a collective directorship within which no one chief of state would hold the top position, pending full independence of the continent. Individual states' interests could thus be safeguarded at the same time as African unity.

On the other hand, the establishment of some kind of consultative assembly, the organization of a Latin American-type debating society, can in the long run lead only to an increasingly tolerated and finally fully accepted ossification of the various frontiers of African States. This would unavoidably mean a mosaic as in South America.[2]

Continental States

Unification of the entire planet does not seem likely in the immediate future, whatever a superficial mind might think of it. The social consciousness of the world, at this juncture, is far from having been sufficiently awakened for certain half-hidden feelings to be extirpated from it. Eternal vigilance remains an urgent prerequisite to eventual world unity.

What are sometimes called "grand designs" do not readily fit in with the history and interests of peoples. When the

true faults within them become apparent, they will doubtless follow the shape of continents for a period now difficult to assess. Nor will that period under any circumstances be shortened by anything but mutual respect or fear of one another's powers. Sincere fraternization and the unity of the planet will be possible only when the various peoples are equal in strength, and advanced to the point where none can any longer hope to deceive any of the others. The formation of continental states would appear to be a preliminary step toward planetary unity.

This is the more likely since Europe which, by itself, colonized nearly all of the globe, might well take umbrage when it reaches the end of its delusions and clearly understands it has lost all of its former colonies. European unification in that case might be based on bitterness, as suggested by certain flareups of neo-Nazism (Christmas, 1959) perhaps less devoid of deeper significance than some have alleged. Europe might well turn in upon itself and adopt a neonationalism encompassing all of Western Europe.[3]

Hunger in the Year 2000

A short-sighted political leader might today drive his country toward catastrophe. Despite all the improvements in living conditions that can be anticipated from the amazing accomplishments of science, some problems—such as feeding the earth's uncontrollably growing population—will not be solved in the near future. Scientists are already wondering how we will feed the six billion inhabitants of the globe in the year 2000—less than a quarter-century from now. This is of such urgency that a branch of the United Nations, the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), was given the job of studying world hunger. All it came up with is the suggestion that the underdeveloped countries be fed on fish meal. Other scientists have been urging the cultivation of algae. Some influential American groups have even recommended to their government that its foreign economic aid be restricted to those underdeveloped nations which agree to limit their birthrates. This is an obvious Malthusian approach.

Repopulation of Africa

It is clear that a continent such as Black Africa, the sole victim of slavery in modern times (with 100 to 200 million people killed or carried away), can only turn a deaf ear on any such suggestions. Our continent, with its demographic emptiness, has an imperative duty to apply a systematic policy of intensive repopulation in optimum time. Black Africa contains sufficient sources of natural energy, raw materials, and foodstuffs to feed and sustain such a population. It must avoid in the future becoming the receptacle for the rest of the world's human overflow. It cannot consider large-scale immigration from abroad, even for its least-populated regions (such as Central Africa), until it has regained a strong national personality capable of assimilating the outlander instead of vice versa.

All the hypocritical decisions that might be conceived along these lines on an international level by any organization, however apparently prestigious, must be rejected out of hand by us. Along these lines, the 1960 conference held at Tangier by a UN commission, presided over by the late Dag Hammarskjold, was a straw in the wind. The then Secretary General forthrightly expressed the opinion that the appearance of Africa on the world political scene would within the year create a problem concerning representation of two different categories of countries, dramatically differing not only in their levels of capabilities but even more so in their

numbers: the technically developed and the underdeveloped nations. This suggested that a reorganization of the statutes might be considered, so that the influence of older "civilized" European countries would not be outweighed by the mass of newcomers. This would mean nothing less than a directorate, already advocated by some heads of states.[4] But how could this result in anything other than the failure of the entire organization?

The Yellow Peril

The West's frenzied haste to undertake disarmament reflects a latent malaise, a hidden fear, which had seemed to be gone forever: that of the Yellow Peril. The more or less skillfully conducted debates have shown that the aim has been to bring France into line (on the question of atomic capability) so as to set a moral precedent that might be used, when needed, to condemn China to perpetual military inferiority by keeping her out of the atomic club. The interests of the capitalist world as a whole would have, of course, dictated that France give up becoming an atomic power. Not only would she thus have shown her willingness to stay in line, but also the higher interests of the Western camp would have been safeguarded to the extent that, having already its own atomic weapons, it could use a moral argument to dissuade China from developing any. The latter country is, after all, a yellow or colored power.

In certain circles one often hears expressions of concern at seeing such a power appear and fear of what it might become by the year 2000—with a full arsenal of atomic weapons. There is talk of China overflowing, of it swallowing up Europe in a full-scale replay of Attila the Hun. Efforts are made (by various means which may well have a broader scope at a later date), artificially to keep this absurd fear alive in nonsocialist minds and consciences, the idea being to stimulate a panic causing reflexive reactions in self-defense. What is especially feared is rapprochement between Asia and Africa.

The fact that France failed to hear the call, and that the moral/political maneuver directed against China did not work out, merely proves—if proof still be needed—that the capitalist world is full of insurmountable contradictions. Many Western politicos and military men welcome the split that has occurred between the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China, which is interpreted as the same kind of self-defense reflex on the part of the USSR, a "white nation having conquered part of Asia." They hope to see the rift maintained, despite any socialist objectives and interests those two powers might share.

Frontiers

How far would the Federated African State extend? Roughly speaking, from the Tropic of Cancer to the Cape, from the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic.

In *L'Afrique Noire pré-coloniale,* we showed what had been the historical frontiers of those old West African Black empires. They virtually followed the Tropic of Cancer. The border province of Teghezza is on that parallel. We know the name of one of the last Black governors there representing the Askia of Kaoga (Gao): the Teghezza-Mondzo, Mohammed Ikoma.

The Saharan zone that separates the Tropic of Cancer from the latitude of Sidjilmessa has never known constituted authority. It was the appanage of the Messouffa Berbers, who for a fee served as guides to caravans going through the corridors of the desert which they had explored.

I think there was great merit in the idea put forth by the

late Moroccan progressive Mehdi Ben Barka, when he said that all questions of frontiers today are made inoperative by the general evolution of Africa as a whole.

[1]Since these lines were first written, this process of South-Americanization has indeed begun in Black Africa. The phenomenon has become generalized: civilian governments are today the exception.

[2]The existence of the Organization of African Unity since 1963 has largely confirmed this view. *(Translator's Note)*

[3]More recently, neo-Nazism has indeed reappeared in West Germany and in some countries of Latin America (Chile, Brazil, and Argentina among them).

[4]The very existence of the Security Council perpetuates "weighted votes" (that is, proportional to the strength of the great powers).

Chapter Four

The Privileged Position of West Africa

After the failure of the Europeans' attempts to coordinate their colonial policies, West Africa became the arena in which France and England strove to outbid each other politically. Great Britain, having established no heavily settled colonies there, could easily create difficulties for France since all of France's African colonies, unlike those of the British Empire, were concentrated in West and Equatorial Africa.

As long as the discovery of Algeria's immense wealth of resources did not change France's colonial outlook, she found it hard to adjust to the British, who were withdrawing from West Africa the better to consolidate their East African settlement colonies (Kenya, Tanganyika, the Rhodesias, even South Africa, which to a certain extent falls into the same category). The lessons of the wars in Indochina and North Africa as well as the discovery of resources of the Sahara made it easier for the French to face up to the competitive situation. The destinies reserved for political movements in West and East Africa were to be quite different. One need only compare the fierce repression of the Mau-Maus with the negotiated recognition of independence for British West Africa (Nigeria, for example) or French West Africa. This accounts for the relative ease with which West African political problems (with the exception of those in the Cameroons) were solved by negotiation rather than gunfire. That ease did not, however, permit political cleansing nor reinforcement of national consciousness. What can be called the privileged position of West Africa may entail lasting consequences. Virtually all of Africa, with the excep-

tion of Rhodesia, Namibia, and South Africa, now is free.

This difference in treatment is due to the presence of white minorities in the various territories of the East and South. The struggle that had to be carried on in these regions was very much akin to what had gone on in North Africa and to the struggle which we will all in the last analysis have to join in together in South Africa. The real powderkeg of the Black Continent remains in the South.

White States

There can be no compromise, and we will in the future allow no creation of White states in whatever form or for whatever pretext, regardless of the apparent prestige of the hypocritical international organization proposing such states. We will drive no one out, for we are not racists. We will wipe out no minority but will insist upon democratically proportional participation in the way states are governed. We will not accept stratification of national life in these future states on an ethnic basis. No country, until now, has solved its minority problem in any other manner.

Those who cannot serve us as examples, are not qualified to offer us advice, much less give us orders.

Historical Mission of West and Equatorial Africa

The historical mission of West Africa to a large extent consists in taking advantage of the facilities history has given it to lose no time in becoming a powerful federated state, capable of freeing the rest of the continent by force if need be, rather than continuing indefinitely in weakness, divisiveness and with the declamatory promises of opportunistic patriots. We can already sense the political consequences mentioned above. There has been no political work accomplished that might radically have transformed consciences or prepared them for the austere tasks required by true independence.

National problems are still being met with a bureaucratic mentality. This accounts for the lack of any cultural policies worthy of the name in the first independent West African nations. None has adopted a systematic policy of restoration of the national language, and the only ones to adopt African languages as their official tongues have been Tanzania and then Kenya with Swahili. (UNESCO, taking over the ideas in the second part of our *Nations nègres et culture* about the development of African national languages, did establish a program of support for African states toward this end and in 1970 held a seminar on national languages in Tanzania.)

None has attempted without delay to set up a powerful modern army with a properly equipped air force, civilian-trained, unsuited to the putsches common in Latin America and capable of measuring up on short notice to historical tasks we might find facing us. On the contrary, we risk having nothing more than embryo armies with outmoded equipment, no air force, no ballistic missiles, yet counterbalanced by ultramodern dictatorial police forces.

Nothing will do but that we make up for the relative ease of our liberation through an immense effort of political education and cultural formation. Otherwise we may find ourselves opposing foreign nationalisms that are still expansive and inured to armed struggle with a mere folkloric nationalism endowed only with the piebald local colors of our native woven fabrics.

Nothing indeed could be more amazing, more fantastic, than the sight of the French head of state in Paris on the Place de la Concorde on Bastille Day of 1959, giving out colorful little national flags to the heads of state of the *Communauté* countries!

What can "retaining control of an independent country" mean?

If we are willing to go along with this capitalist process of bourgeoisification—which can only be fatal to the political health of our country—if we agree to becoming this auxiliary class of international high finance, fine and dandy. If, even better, we proclaim, "We are your spiritual and intellectual sons, your Black incarnation; just make us recipients of your financial and moral interests in due time, and the situation will be saved! One will no longer see you, although you will still be here. We will act as a screen; it will not longer be you, but we, Africans, who will defend your ideals against other Africans"—if we say all that, it will be grand!

That is why (and how) this new "liberal" policy—in order to be entirely effective and not too idealistic—has been everywhere (except in Guinea, where there was not time for it) underpinned with the setting-up of right-thinking politicos, with a whole supporting infrastructure. This new "liberal" policy has everywhere resulted in the eviction of true revolutionary movements and the triumph of traditionally conformist groupings. It tends everywhere to pass off these same conformists, in the eyes of the people, as pseudo-revolutionaries, so as to give them credence. The situation in Cameroon (1959–1960) in this regard was typical. One really wonders, assuming independence were purely and simply granted, what would keep France from remaining neutral toward the various parties and accepting in advance authentic elections if that were the only way to bring to power a team of leaders of the people's choice, assure general tranquility and stabilize the political situation.

But there are powerful material interests at work (Edea Dam, bauxite refinery). It would be unthinkable to favor a revolutionary team that might once again call so many interests into question. Something must be done, then, to keep

the people of the Cameroon from thinking they owe their independence to Um Nyobé's party. We are already everywhere and very severely undergoing the calculated inconveniences of internal autonomy, which is said to be the preparatory stage for independence: the division of revolutionary forces (before full and meaningful independence) in a manner that will make it difficult to recoalesce everywhere with equal ease; the ever-more solid stratification of African society into classes in the modern economic sense of the term; the virtual impossibility, as a result, of avoiding a class struggle in Black Africa.

Slogans do not engage the minds and hearts of the working masses and even less those of bureaucrats—for "Stakhanovism" and economic austerity can have meaning only within the framework of true independence, none at all within a regime conceived to improve foreign capitalistic production in full safety, using expedients which not all of the people can fail to perceive. Grandiose perspectives on the building of a strong modern continent-wide African state would permit creation of enthusiasm, a sense of abnegation and true patriotic feeling. Then—and only then—would the problem of national independence cease to be expressed in terms of wages (as is the case with those who are already muttering, "We would have been better off leaving things the way they were"). All of the foregoing expresses the absence of any revolutionary parties in power, anywhere in the *Communauté*.

Along the same lines, in order to counter the budding anti-intellectualism evident throughout Black Africa among those in political power, as if this were a defense mechanism, intellectuals have to be able to present perspectives for Africa, solutions to problems on a national scale which allow of no other possible ways out. The intellectuals must gain respect at the same time through their efficiency, their taste for unselfish work on behalf of the people, and their clarity.

They must be sincere, and to do that they must truly feel themselves animated by an ideal that will stand come what may. They must set themselves apart from those minds which shine only with deceptive light, as artificial as it is sterile, the flashy pseudo-intelligences that so readily prove to be insignificant.

Self-defense anti-intellectualism would spell a new loss of Africa if it were to become general. We cannot afford the luxury of rejecting what we have most been missing during these last three centuries.

[1]Algeria gained independence on July 3, 1962, and maintains full diplomatic relations with France. *(Translator's Note)*

Chapter Five

The New Strategy

General de Gaulle acted like a true strategist toward the colonies, hoping to kill any spirit of struggle or opposition to the mother country by depriving that opposition of visible reason.

He is reported to have said, "Territories which for ten years have not ceased dreaming of independence today are insistently demanding it. Should we allow this movement to grow against us or on the contrary attempt to understand, assimilate and channel it properly?"

This idea had grown out of a long meditation (dating back to the Fourth Republic immediately following World War II) on the possibility of maintaining colonialism.

The Indochinese and North African experiences served to forestall events in Black Africa. They allowed the granting of independence which was otherwise going to be seized. "I loosened the bonds before they were sundered," DeGaulle is reported to have said.

This was an act of high strategy obviously intended to atrophy our national consciousness, to reduce it and render it assimilable to all sorts of mixes. If he could win this "wager," the historical destiny of the continent might be checked. But all wagers of this kind, defying the destinies of peoples, have historically been lost. Otherwise, Eurafrica, with its "horizontal" and "vertical" links, would have come into being in an even more insidious and flexible form. The confederation now a-borning would then have been only another aspect of it, more suitably adapted to the circumstances. Toward that end, a convention was organized on the Riviera in November, 1959, bringing together African polit-

ical leaders and European industrialists, among whom the presence of many Germans was notable. All the magnates of European industry who envisaged transforming Africa into a politically stabilized field for economic expansion were there, eagerly seeking valuable interlocutors. They had to have political guarantees before they would hazard any investment.

Since the end of World War II, it had become evident that for such a condition to endure it was necessary to create a true native industrial, financial, and banking bourgeoisie, whose class interests would thenceforth coincide with those of international high finance. But this had been all too slow in coming about . . . It was a mistake of the European bourgeoisies that they were now trying to remedy within the time limits history allowed. Then the Saharan oilfields were discovered, and the French colonial outlook was totally transformed.

The French bourgeoisie thinks it will be, henceforth, most practical to tie in with Algeria. They think this can be done—at least more readily than they could bring off the old French Union or even the now-secondary *Communauté*. France is ready to admit that sooner or later Black Africa will be lost, in view of the modest military pressure that can be brought to bear and the irreversible evolutionary cycle which the Dark Continent has entered; before the inevitable, best to bow with good grace.

On the other hand, France believes that the presence of a minority in North Africa and proximity of the territory (as against France's distance from Indochina) are factors militating in favor of the maintenance of its authority there. By concentrating its efforts on Algeria, France has hoped to have a permanent source of energy and varied ores that she had previously been in the habit of seeking much farther afield (and outside the zone of her own currency). She believes she can become virtually the premier power in Western Europe, where energy is concerned.

Henceforth, in a parallel movement, she is becoming more liberal toward Black Africa, so as to reconquer on an emotional level the friendship of the former, perhaps embittered colonies while trying to grind up and assimilate Algeria.[1]

We are still not free, however, even after this loosening of bonds. We will never be allowed to select a political and social regime different from those of the Western World without running the risk of having to fight or seeing ourselves overthrown by intrigues, making use of local parties of Western allegiance. This is the last camouflaged line of retreat for the batteries of the imperialist West, alleging that its own economic fate and "civilization as we know it" depend on retaining control of Africa.

Chapter Six

Bicameralism

A study of our past can give us a lesson in government. Thanks to the matriarchal system, our ancestors prior to any foreign influence had given woman a choice place. They saw her not as sex object but as mother. This has been true from the Egypt of the Pharaohs until our time.[1] Women participated in running public affairs within the framework of a feminine assembly, sitting separately but having the same prerogatives as the male assembly.[2]

These facts remained unchanged until the colonial conquest, especially is such non-Islamized States as the Yoruban and Dahomean. Behanzin's military resistance to the French Army under Colonel Dodds is said to have resulted from a decision of the women's assembly of the kingdom, meeting at night after the men had met during the day and reversing them by ordering mobilization and war—after which, the men ratified the decision.

Black Africa had its specific bicameralism, determined by sex. Far from interfering with national life by pitting men against women, it guaranteed the free flowering of both. It is to the honor of our ancestors that they were able to develop such a type of democracy. Wherever we find this as late as the Aegean period, the southern Black influence is undeniable. In reestablishing it in modern form, we remain faithful to the democratic and profoundly human past of our forebears; once and for all, we relax the society of mankind by freeing it from a latent millennial contradiction. We might without any doubt inspire other countries in ordering their affairs.

To reestablish this ancestral bicameralism on a modern basis means we must find along with our women and to the exclusion of any type of demagoguery a truly efficacious mode of representation for the feminine element of the nation. The setting-up of this assembly, the method of electing its members and the structure of the basic building blocks of the militant parties of Black Africa are, therefore, so many practical problems to be solved.

Such reforms would allow the normalization of the political role of woman, the restoration of her dignity as the mother of the family, the realization once and for all in an efficient meaningful manner of what every country calls women's rights.

A comparable experiment was carried out in the USSR under Stalin at the beginning of Socialist construction but only in the domain of production. The women's assemblies created were to assume an educational role and especially production duties. Everywhere, the results were prodigious; the assemblies were dissolved before World War II when Socialist construction was sufficiently developed so there was no longer need to distinguish between womanpower and manpower. Such assemblies existed after 1945 in the newer federated republics of the Soviet Union, where social development was not so advanced, such as the Ukraine, Byelo-Russia, Latvia, and they are still operating.

Some of my compatriots feel that for the present we should be satisfied with simply a consultative assembly for women.

NOTE: I am especially indebted to Professor Diop Issa for helping me in reworking and adapting this chapter.

[1]Cf. Matriarchy, *The African Origin of Civilization: Myth or Reality*, pp. 142–145.

[2]In Senegal, in certain cases one refers to a man who governs according to custom as *N' Deye Dj Rèv* (Mother of the Country), and no one is shocked by it. This customary reference still exists among the Lebous.

Part II

Compendium of Energy Sources

Hydraulic Energy

World reserves of hydraulic energy are estimated at 50 billion kilowatt-hours per year, of which almost 90 percent are concentrated in underdeveloped regions; Europe has only 3 percent, the United States 4 percent, and the USSR 3.5 percent.

At the present rate of development, France will have exhausted its hydraulic potential in less than a decade. Harnessing the few remaining waterfalls in France or the U.S. would be prohibitively costly in view of their locations.

Black Africa leads all the world in hydraulic energy with its reserves of thousands of billions of kilowatt-hours representing about half the total world resources. The Zaire River, second largest in volume of flow (30,000 to 60,000 cubic meters per second) by itself holds more than 600 billion kilowatt-hours of annual reserves or two-thirds of the entire production of the world at the present time, the Sanaga and Ogooué half as much. Engineers have calculated that the Sanaga (Cameroon), having its source at 1400 meters altitude and a flow three times that of the Rhône at the Génissiat hydroelectric plant, could deliver as much energy as all of the waterways of the French Alps combined.

Black Africa, through its hydraulic resources alone, is one of the world leaders in energy. Hydraulic energy is not comparable to uranium ore which, if need be, can be exported. Up to the present, hydraulic power has had to be used on the spot, and with alternating current can be delivered only over relatively insignificant distances, but Soviet and Swedish technicians have recently accomplished great advances in the long-haul delivery of electric power.

When electrical energy is transmitted by alternating current, line reactance, comparable to enormous resistance, accounts for tremendous losses en route so that huge though the originating voltage may be (400,000 volts) it finally delivers only very slight energy if the distance is of any magnitude. If instead of alternating we could use direct current, line reactance would disappear. What Soviet and Swedish engineers have done is to maintain alternating current at the source with generators that produce several tens of thousands of volts. Transformers then raise the tension to a threshold of a million volts, reversing the current and making it ready for transmission in direct current. Jean Rivoire has shown that Sweden is beyond the theoretical stage in this matter: Since February, 1954, an underwater cable has been carrying energy from Sweden to the island of Gotland at 200,000 direct-current volts, and it could carry as much as 600,000 volts. If a million volts were reached at an intensity of a thousand amperes, each line of this type would transmit a million kilowatts, and its full capacity in one year would be nine billion kilowatt-hours.

Once the problem of moving electrical energy in the form of direct tension has been solved, harnessing the hydroelectric power of the Zaire Basin alone (Inga and Kisangani dams) could supply all of the Black Continent with electricity.

Solar Energy

On an average the sun daily sends to earth 10^{15} kWh (one quadrillion kilowatt-hours), that is to say, a quantity of energy comparable to the sum total of all the energy resources in oil, coal, uranium and natural gas at present known to exist on our planet. Each square kilometer on which the sun shines each day gets a quantity of energy equivalent to that of an ordinary atomic bomb. However

topical atomic energy may be, scientists agree that solar energy is that of the future, since it will exist as long as there is sun. Hydraulic energy, having a comparable permanence, is indirectly dependent on it to the extent that the sun affects our weather. From Archimedes to Félix Trombes, men have tried to tame the sun, and today they are near the point of success.

Solar energy can be utilized in a direct form. To do this, one must (as Félix Trombes did at Mont-Louis in the Pyrenees) cover a parabolic surface with small rectangular mirrors in adjustable positions. Depending on the surfaces involved, the focus of the great parabolic mirror thus created could reach a temperature as high as 3000°C (5400°F), the heat of the solar atmosphere itself. Félix Trombes has succeeded in using solar forces to melt metallic oxides which heretofore had been completely refractory. A solar oven uses solar heat directly: at Mont-Louis, a metric half-ton of iron can be melted in a day. An even more gigantic project was planned in the north Sahara at Colombéchard under the direction of the same scientist. It was to deliver 1000 kilowatts of power but was abandoned as a result of the war in Algeria.

If instead of trying to achieve a high temperature concentrated at one spot in an oven the dimension and shape of the mirror were varied to spread the heat over an axis, enough steam could be accumulated to operate a power plant. The heated axis could then be girt by tubing filled with oil, which would be extended into a boiler of water to which it would transmit its calories. This is the Schumann method that was used at Maadi, Egypt (in a purely experimental plant, no longer operating).

In the most efficient solar connectors, the direction of the mirrors is synchronized to the movement of the sun. Such installations are limited by the enormousness of their size, the state of the sky and, therefore, the latitude and the alternation of day and night. Nothing daunted, some scientists, hoping for plants that can run without shutting down at night, are studying the operation of chlorophyll in greenery to determine how solar energy is stored in leaves. There is a solar plant in operation at Tashkent, USSR, that produces electric power.

Solar energy can be utilized in an indirect form by employing solar cells made of semiconductors (silicon, germanium, etc.). These techniques have become common and require no further elaboration here. Home electrical energy can now be supplied directly by the sun and soon solar panels will be mass-produced. Man is no longer slave to oversized machinery. Calculators are common and can slip into a breast pocket when once they were larger than chests of drawers.

Due to the cost of silicon surfaces, solar energy does not appear to be any cheaper than hydroelectric power at present, but it remains a prime future energy source. Present expectations are that future installations will not be on the equator itself, because of the permanent cloud cover there, but territories on either side of the tropics might be ideal for solar installations: Sahara, Libya, all of the Sudanese zone as far as Ethiopia and a large part of the southern African region.

Atomic Energy

Controlled fission of uranium and thorium is at the basis of atomic energy. A chain reaction is created, giving off enormous heat. Two thousand metric tons of uranium 235 are the energy equivalent of all the world's reserves of petroleum.

Current concern with atomic energy makes a discussion of its properties unnecessary here. We can say that it will

become part of the industrial equipment of all modern nations within the next ten years or so. Until 1952, the then Belgian Congo supplied 50 percent of the world's production of uranium. Today, Africa in all likelihood comes immediately after Canada and the United States with its nearly five thousand metric tons of uranium metal in marketable concentrations (Zaire and South Africa combined).[1]

There is uranium in Ethiopia, Cameroon, Nigeria, the Sahara, Zaire, Ghana, Zambia, Mozambique, Uganda and the Union of South Africa, where a thorium mine has also been found at the Cape. A good deal of vigilance must be exercised in the exploitation of nuclear energy. The material supplying the energy (uranium and thorium) is not comparable to hydroelectric or solar power, which one would be hard put to carry away in bottles. It is a simple ore, and Africa might easily be stripped of it in record time while it was being stored elsewhere—if the political future were to become uncertain while mechanized mining was allowed without limit.

Breeders, using high-velocity sodium-cooled neutrons, are the reactors of the future for the industrial exploitation of atomic energy. It has been calculated that when present research is perfected these reactors will produce more fuel (plutonium) than they consume—which seems something of a miracle. It is in this form, and other kindred ones, that Black Africa will have to consider the matter of its industrial nuclear outfitting.

Thermonuclear Energy

Atomic, or more properly nuclear, energy is a first step in the creation of thermonuclear energy. A mass of uranium, disintegrating within a confine containing a certain variety of hydrogen (deuterium or tritium) in a millionth of a second

creates heat on the scale of 16 million degrees Centigrade (or 29 million degrees Fahrenheit) comparable to that inside the hot stars, especially the sun (26,000,000°C, 36,000,000°F). This little sun with its temperature is indispensable to overcome Coulombian resistance, to bring about the fusion of two hydrogen nuclei and produce helium with a slight loss of mass. This lost mass takes the form of radiating calorific energy: In order to evaluate it, one must multiply the mass by the square of the speed of light, that is 9×10^{10}, according to Einstein's formula. The enormous heat of the fusion of hydrogen nuclei due to the reduction of mass adds to the heat of the atomic fission of the uranium, explaining why the H-bomb frees so much more energy than the A-bomb. Unlike atomic energy, thermonuclear energy is not yet available for industrial use.

In a reactor, or atomic pile, a chain reaction can be started; it can be intensified, then held to a given temperature as long as desired and afterwards turned off by pushing in or pulling out the boron or cadmium steel bars that regulate the flow of neutrons—the neutrons being the bombardment agents that start the chain reaction (the degree of reaction or intensity depends on their flow). As this is written, thermonuclear reactors are still largely the province of theoreticians.

The British team headed by John Cockcroft, which thought it had discovered how to create controlled fusion without the use of an atomic starter, has been proven wrong. The neutrons, the presence of which was supposed to have been the team's proof, turned out to have come from the outside, perhaps from the walls of the casing or a fission of deuteron nuclei as a result of the weakness of the neutron-proton combination (2.2 Mev as against 30 Mev for helium as a result of the saturation of nuclear forces). The process used was probably the same found by a young Russian researcher. A reactor is a huge ring, the center axis of which is a column of combustible gas (deuteron) to be fused without

coming in contact with the walls. An external coil creates the large magnetic field required to keep the column of gas away from the walls. Indeed, whatever the walls were made of, they would melt at the temperature of 4 to 16 million degrees Centigrade, which the column of gas should reach through powerful electrical discharges. This method holds some hope for the control of thermonuclear energy. No one at present is able to put forward a date at which thermonuclear energy will be controlled on an industrial basis. There might be a sudden leap ahead that would allow quick perfecting of a fusion method, but there could just as well be a very long wait for that. The continuing interest shown by industrial powers in the classic source of energy, oil, tells us that we are still far from thermonuclear substitutes which may eventually take the place of all others.[2]

Once thermonuclear reaction has become adapted to industry mankind will without doubt, as the scientists foresee, have an abundant new source of energy. Electrolysis of sea water would become a direct source of the indispensable raw material, heavy hydrogen or deuteron present in sea water to the extent of .02 percent. This tiny percentage is not be be scoffed at, considering the enormous temperature reached by fusion.

Production and processing centers would necessarily have to be near the sea in Africa. A territory such as Zaire would be in especially good position. Indeed, in view of what was said above, creation of thermonuclear energy will first require expenditure of an enormous amount of electrical energy for electrolysis. Hydraulically created electricity could prove economical for such an operation. The fact remains that at present we must go by way of atomic energy to get to thermonuclear energy, and until new discoveries have been made, the quantity of hydrogen for fusion will depend on the amount of fissionable material the earth disgorges.

These are the great energy sources within Black Africa

which, in and of themselves, could make this continent one of the most highly industrialized. Although the future of energy research is full of promise, we have listed here only those energy sources that exist in quantity today. This is why we have not discussed either oil or coal. The future place of these two sources in the African economy is undeniable. Pessimism of bygone years has given way to the greatest hopes, based on tangible indices. An enlightened policy will consist of encouraging further exploration and development in the double area of coal and oil, in which Black Africa is not now self-sufficient.[3]

One must also take note of other complementary energy sources mentioned by some authors, such as Ivan du Jonchay, as due to become important in the future.

Wind Energy

It has been discovered that, thanks to the tradewinds, the entire West Coast of Africa could be equipped with huge windmills, as could the Cape region. The Canaries and Kerguelens are already so equipped. It would be wrong to minimize this source of energy, since in Denmark, for instance, wind energy supplies 15 percent of national requirements. Wind-motors or windmills would do wonderfully for initially irrigating the soil and supplying water to cattle in the impoverished semiarid regions of Senegal, such as the Ferlo, Cayor, part of Baol and Djambour.

Thermal Energy of the Seas

Carnot's formula can be used to power a plant through the temperature differential at the sea's bottom and its surface. The method employed is that of Georges-Claude Boucherot.

It was applied at Abidjan between the coastal lagoon and a ditch known as a "bottomless pit," five hundred meters deep. The temperature differential is 22 degrees Centigrade (70 degrees Fahrenheit), enough to make a 7500-kilowatt powerhouse practicable, according to du Jonchay *(op. cit.)*.

The Djander region in Senegal is equally well suited to installation of this type of plant. However, one drawback which has been insufficiently anticipated is delaying the work. By creating a vacuum, it is possible to make water within an enclosure boil at 70 degrees Fahrenheit and give off steam that can be directed at turbines to produce electricity. The gases contained in salt water are simultaneously released in the vacuum and create a bubbling that impedes the operation. What is required is advance degasification of an enormous mass of several tons of water within a closed circuit if boiling in the vacuum at low temperature is to be successfully achieved, giving off homogeneous steam to drive the turbines of the powerhouse. This may be one of the reasons for the Abidjan project having been discontinued.

Tidal Energy

Making use of the movements of the tides, one can harness an appropriate estuary and create reservoirs, some of which, being relatively high up, might be filled by siphoning at high tide. The reservoirs thus created would act exactly as do the holding lakes behind dams. At low tide, the water would flow from these reservoirs toward the turbines to keep them working.

The drawbacks of tidal energy are twofold: installation

and equipment are so costly as to be affordable only by a great economic power. The sites that prove practical, after detailed studies of terrain, are rare. The difference between high and low tide has to be very impressive, in the neighborhood of eight meters (almost twenty-seven feet). In France, the Bay of Mont-St.-Michel and the estuary of the Rance would be suited for such huge enterprises, but actual undertaking of the projects, which would result in economic rebirth for all surrounding areas, is continually postponed because of the enormous costs involved. The French National Electrical Company has calculated that by creating such a powerhouse it would be able to supply fully half of France's present energy needs (25 to 30 billion kilowatt-hours per annum).

It would be of interest to survey the rise of sea tides in the estuaries of African rivers, especially those of the Senegal River, the effect of which can be felt as far upstream as Podor, and the Salum, Gambia, and Casamance rivers. The theory of tidal-energy powerhouses is fairly complex; it even includes the earth's rotation within its margins for error. We will return to this question in discussing the industrialization of Mali (former Senegal-Sudan Federation).

Global Heat

Carnot's principle can be applied, too, to the temperature differential between the earth's surface and a hot subterranean source reached by drilling. This differential could boil water and produce steam under a vacuum at well below 100° Centigrade (212° Fahrenheit). Research and a start toward application have already been carried out in Zaire (du Jonchay, *op. cit.*).

Volcanic Thermal Energy and Geothermal Energy

This can be employed on the spot by thermal generators that send into pipes buried in lava a great mass of water which, as it evaporates, delivers steam to be directed to operating turbines. The circuit is a closed one, and the recondensed vapor after being used is returned by a pumping system back into the lava. This might be installed at the foot of Mount Cameroon in Kenya. Generally speaking, all of East Africa (Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and the entire Rift Valley region) would be eminently suited for the installation of plants powered by geothermal energy.

These are the energy resources of Black Africa. Their utilization by Africans themselves—not to create industries to supplement those of Europe but to process the raw materials that the continent contains—could turn Black Africa into a paradise on earth.[4]

[1]These were 1959–1960 figures. More recent figures reveal the following:

	Current Uranium Resources (1975)	Production
Black Africa (including South Africa)	272,800 metric tons	4736 metric tons
United States	262,000 metric tons	8840 metric tons
Canada	185,000 metric tons	3560 metric tons

[2]What was ture of thermonuclear development in 1959 is still largely true today. However, the use of lasers to incite thermonuclear reactions does allow for great hopes. JET (the Joint European Torus), which makes use of the "Tokomak configuration" developed by Soviet researchers, is planned to demonstrate the possibility of controlling thermonuclear reaction on a practical level. If it proves successful, it will be time to go on to the next stage, the construction of the first prototype thermonuclear reactors, which should probably occur in the year 2000.

[3]Since this was first written, oil deposits have been discovered in Gabon, Nigeria, Senegal, Angola and the Congo. Cf. Ivan du Jonchay, *Industrialisation de l'Afrique* (The Industrialization of Africa) (Paris: Payot, 1953).

[4]It may be noted that hydraulic energy, solar (which includes the energy latent in winds and tides), thermonuclear, volcanic and geothermal energy sources are nonpollutant, unlike the use of coal, oil and atomic energy. The disposal of nuclear wastes has, however, become a controversial problem of magnitude.

Part III

The Industrialization of Black Africa

The joint concentration of energy sources and raw materials determines the existence of eight natural zones for industrial development in Black Africa.