State and Civil Society in Contemporary Africa: Reconceptualizing the Birth of State Nationalism and the Defeat of Popular Movements

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There is virtue in bringing out this clash of perspectives in a simple but sharp manner at the outset. At one end is the point of view of the managers of the independent state - the view from the summit - that the sum and substance of the crisis is that the state reorganized at independence has lost the initiative and the solution must be no more than an endeavor to regain that initiative. At the other end is the view from below - from the valley - from which point of view the crisis *is* the summit; it is the state reorganized at independence whose very basis was the defeat of popular movements to transform society. The solution thus must lie in the rejuvenation of these movements so as to seize the initiative, and not in the reconsolidation of the state. To understand this latter perspective, it is necessary to reconstruct the salient points in the historical flow of the state-civil society relationship from the time when the movement against colonialism reached its zenith. It is the purpose of this paper to contribute to such a discussion.

The radical critique of the decade of African independence often argued that the colonial state was simply "inherited" at independence, that the independent state was a simple continuation of its predecessor. At its crudest, this assertion was no more than the statement of a theory of conspiracy; it abstracted social developments from the terrain of social struggle and explained them as a simple translation of the will of the colonial power into reality.

For, no matter how much the organization of the independent state resembled that of its predecessor - no matter how little the colonial state was reorganized in the process of independence - the nature of the independent state could only be understood as the outcome of a struggle between two polarities: on the one hand, the colonial state; on the other, the forces of nationalism. In the nature of independence, as of the state that was its hallmark, was underlined both the character of the colonial state and of the

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anti-colonial struggle. Methodologically, there was little to commend either the nationalist historian who held up the independent state as symbolizing a sharp and sudden break from the colonial era, or the radical critic who saw it as no more than a hoax, a simple continuation of the colonial era. Both were equally one-sided in their analysis.

For an Assembly deliberating over the several dimensions of the "African Crisis", it is necessary to revisit the struggle between colonialism and nationalism. For out of that confrontation were borne the contours of state and society in the period of independence. And it is that legacy which is in sharp crisis today.

The period following the Second World War saw the development of powerful popular movements in most African colonies. It was a time when ever-widening numbers of working people entered the arena of organized political activity under a variety of self-identifications: as peasants, workers, oppressed nationalities, religious minorities, women, youths, etc.

Within a decade, however, this upsurge had been deflated. The implementation of colonial reform politics was in full swing. "The initiative", bitterly remarked Bankole Awooner-Renner, the Secretary-General of Ghana's Convention Peoples' Party in 1952, "has passed from the hands of the oppressed to the hands of the oppressor"[1].

It was, as one may expect, the strongest of the colonial powers - Britain, France - that pioneered reforms to stabilize imperialism. Through practice, they learnt that popular movements could not be defeated by force alone. The colonial counter-offensive had necessarily to be political. To be effective, it had to be formulated, executed and presented - not as a military or even a law-and-order campaign - but as a political reform. True, this reform from above was a response to strong rivalries at the summit (with the rise of the US) and growing pressures from popular movements below; its purpose, though, was to restructure the camp of the oppressor and to disorganize the camp of the oppressed, to reorganize the structure of domination while at the same time deflating the movement against it.

The success of the reform was a political defeat for the popular movements of the 1940's. The reform had a double consequence. It first split the united front of the forces of anti-colonialism, by making concessions (initially political, and then economic) to bourgeois aspirants within that broad front. The point was to detach that stratum from the camp of revolt and to win it over to the camp of law and order, as a result not only to reform and to restabilize the order introduced by colonialism at the turn of the century but also to demobilize any radical challenge to it. The

1 Basil Davidson, *Black Star: A View of the Life and Times of Kwame Nkrumah*, London, Allen Lane, 1973, p. 86.

second aspect of the reform was to legalize the most important popular organizations (trade unions, cooperatives, friendly societies), to bring them under the scrutiny of the state and step-by-step to undermine their autonomy and any element of popular accountability they may have developed.

The defeat was not only political; it was also ideological. In fact, out of this very defeat was borne an ideological inversion: from a popularly-rooted conception, nationalism was turned into a state ideology.

The articulation of this new institutional ideology, state nationalism, went hand-in-hand with a series of dramatic political changes initiated from above: the reform wave of the 1950's culminating in a series of independence celebrations in the 1960's. It was consolidated in the context of a wave of state-organized and state-led "nationalist" struggles of the 1960's and 1970's. And its crisis-point was rooted in the crisis of the state form that emerged from the colonial reform of the 1950's.

The formulation of nationalism as a state ideology in the 1950's and 1960's required a dual shift: on the one hand, a delegitimation of all democratic struggles as partial, 'sectarian' or 'tribal', while upholding the state as the only legitimate expression of the interests of the whole (the country, the nation, the people); on the other, the displacement of all internal, popularly-derived efforts towards a way forward by an externally-imposed, state-centered, technocratic search for a solution.

Why raise this question today? Because it needs to be recognized that the crisis of nationalism today is the crisis of one particular anti-democratic variant of it. But the formulation of an alternate perspective on nationalism, based on a popular and democratic orientation, is not possible unless we move away from a state-centered approach to one which puts emphasis on the autonomy of popular organizations, and in the context of such a shift, raise the question of social transformation from below.

This essay is written at two levels, political and ideological, concrete and general. On the one hand, the analysis is political. It takes concrete historical material from Ugandan history, past and contemporary. The point is to analyze the political defeat of the popular movement of the 1940's (and in this context, the colonial reform of the 1950's, the high point of state nationalism in the 1960's and 1970's, and its crisis in the 1980's) and draw lessons for an analysis of the popular upsurge that has come out of the crisis of the 1980's and whose hallmark was the guerilla struggle organized by the National Resistance Army (NRA). On the other hand, the analysis is at the level of ideology. It is a critical exposition of the main elements of the ideology of state nationalism as constructed from the summit in the wake of the political defeat of the 1940's, and the rudiments of a new ideology of social transformation as can be glimpsed from the struggles of 1980-85.

The essay is organized in four parts. Part One is a theoretical introduction on nationalism as a state ideology. Part Two is a

historico-political analysis of the popular movement of the 1940's and its political defeat in the context of the colonial reform of the 1950's and the state nationalism of the 1960's and 1970's. The analysis is concretely carried out on the terrain of developments in Uganda. Part Three, also concretely focussing on Uganda, is an analysis of the political struggle against state terrorism and the conditions of its success by 1986. Finally, Part Four returns to the general discussion and articulates the opposition between the ideology of state nationalism in crisis and the rudiments of an ideology of social transformation emerging from the struggles of the 1980's.

Nationalism as a State Ideology

The phenomenon of nationalism is contradictory, both as ideology and as a social movement[2]. Nationalism is neither necessarily progressive; nor

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2 In the ideological struggles that prepared the groundwork for the French Revolution and subsequently defended it, and in the conservative reaction to it, we can trace two contradictory conceptions of nationalism.
The French Revolution and the enlightenment that preceded it is the springboard of the broadly democratic conception. For the French Revolution was understood by its proponents as first and foremost a revolution of the French people. It was associated with radically new ideas, as those of citizenship and popular sovereignty. In one fell swoop, in a revolutionary wave that was a radical seizure and exercise of rights, the French people were said to have created the French nation, the result of a "social contract". The nation signified a political category of freely associating individuals.
A contradictory tradition is rooted in the political and ideological reaction to the enlightenment and the French Revolution. It derives on the one hand from Herder, Fichte, and the German Romantics, and on the other from Edmund Burke and the reaction in England. It denies the rational and the implicitly contractual basis of nationalism. Instead, it asserts that national identity has an inherited and a traditional character; it is rooted in the genius of a people and in their unique culture and tradition. Nations are not created; instead, they wake up or are brought to life. Instead of a contractual, it advanced an organic conception of nationalism. Politically anti-democratic, methodologically it tended to stress the objective aspect of the development of national movements. (It should, of course, be noted that the organic conception of nationalism has tended to be put forth by diverse political tendencies, from the fascists in Western Europe to the populists in Eastern Europe; while the former were acutely hostile to the left, the latter were not always so).
This dichotomous soil within which were rooted contradictory aspects of the European nationalist tradition was stressed by Hans Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism*, New York, Macmillan, 1944, and has become very influential in academic circles. The contours of this European legacy are retraced in detail in a book-length manuscript by Geoff Ellie (Department of History, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, untitled, 1986).
Within the Marxist tradition, the dominant trend was set by the writings of Stalin on the national question. Stalin's major contribution was to underline the historical character of the development of national movements. Briefly put, he argued that nationalism cannot be understood except in the context of the development of capitalism. For it is the development of capitalism which generalizes commodity production, creates national markets, dissolves age-old communities established on the basis of 'natural' affinities in the crucible of this common market, and thus creates the objective need for a national state to consolidate the growing national market in the interests of the class that controls or has the aspirations to control that market: the national bourgeoisie. ("Marxism and the

necessarily reactionary. Through concrete analysis, the nationalism of the oppressor must be clearly distinguished from the nationalism of the oppressed.

From this point of view, the state nationalism of the 1960's cannot be considered as the flowering of the popular nationalism of the 1940's; rather, the former arose from the ashes of the latter. This much should be clear once we contrast the socio-political context of nationalism in the two periods.

In the 1940's, the conception of a Ugandan people was not being forged in identity with the state; rather, that concept was being borne in confrontation with the state nationalism was not a derivative of the process of state formation, but of the growing democratic struggle against state repression; national identity was the outcome of popular unity rooted in the crucible of popular struggle. In a word, national liberation and nation formation were two aspects of the same process.

The starting point of the production of a counter-ideology, the ideology of a colonial counter-attack, could be none other than the rudimentary elements of popular ideology. To reconstruct nationalism - this time as a state ideology - it was necessary first to detach it from any moorings in the popular struggle of the 1940's. Once divorced from the democratic struggle,

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National Question", in Bruce Franklin, ed., *Stalin: Major Theoretical Writings*, Croom Helm, London, 1973.)
Stalin's preoccupation with defining a nation - as "a historically evolved, stable community of language, manifested in a community of culture" - both tended to assume that a nation existed before coming to life and tended to provide some kind of a definitive checklist on the basis of a fixed historical experience of what was and what was not a nation. In other words, it tended to close the historical process on the basis of developments in a single historical epoch, that of rising capitalism in Europe.
The anti-dote to Stalin in the Marxist tradition can be found in the writings of Gramsci and Mao.
In his analysis of the failure of the Italian bourgeoisie in constructing an Italian nation, Gramsci weaved together the analysis of nationalism as ideology and as social movement. This was done on the basis of his conception of power as "domination plus moral-intellectual leadership". Thus, Gramsci underlined the role of intellectuals, but not in a social and historical vacuum, rather as "organic" to particular classes; and he went on to underline their historical significance, mainly by asking whether the intellectuals were organic to a fundamental social class with a national capacity for a social transformation. (See Carl Boggs, *The Two Revolutions: Gramsci and the Dilemmas of Western Marxism*, Southend Press, Boston, 1984, pp.. 159-62, 223-27.)
In his general theses on the national question in semi-colonies and colonies, Mao argued that nation formation and national liberation are two inter-connected aspects of a single process; in other words, the nation does not necessarily exist first and then become the basis of a national movement. Similarly, Mao's analysis of classes also underlined the connection between the national and the social questions; one only needs, for instance, to think of the by now famous distinction between the 'compradore' and the 'national' bourgeoisie drawn by Mao. (See "The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party" and "On new Democracy" in *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, Foreign Language Press, Peking, 1967..

the defense of nationalism could easily be presented as the defense of state interests. At the same time, all movements autonomous of the state, and therefore anchored in one or another section of civil society, could be recast as detracting from national unity, as divisive, and therefore, as anti-national.

This ideological inversion, of course, could not be in a political vacuum. To be effective, it had necessarily to go hand-in-hand with a political reform, a reform that altered the form of the state from a colonial to an independent state. Only the interests of an "independent" state could first be identified with and later substituted for the interests of "the people".

This is why nationalism was consolidated as an institutionalized state ideology really in the post-independence period. How deep-rooted was this development even in the intelligentsia, whether it "joined" the state or remained outside and critical of it, is clear from the fact that state nationalism continued to be the shared commitment - the common premise - of both the dominant perspective (modernization theory) and the contending school (dependency) in the social sciences[3].

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3 A discussion has been unfolding in recent issues of *Southern African Political and Economic Monthly* (SAPEM), Harare; critical of African intellectuals with an "entrist" perspective. While the basic argument in this discussion - the pitfalls of a statist perspective of social transformation from above - needs to be made over and again, the presentation of the issue in the pages of SAPEM appears to be from a perspective too narrow and at times more moral than political.

For the fact is that the statist perspective is not confined to those who have "entered" the state. It is the argument of this paper that the ranks of the intelligentsia *organic* to the ruling classes in Africa could be found both within and without state sectors. In this sense, in spite of real differences between them, both the modernization and the dependency theorists shared a common ground: that of transformation of society from above.

Conversely, it is possible to find individual intellectuals located within state sectors, but critical of a statist conception of social transformation. The point, in other words, is not as much the spatial location of intellectuals as their ideological orientation and political practice.

The point can be underlined with reference to an analysis of student struggles contained in a recent CODESRIA publication (Chris Peter and Sengondo Mvungi, "The State and the Student Struggles", in Issa Shivji, ed., *The State and the Working People in Tanzania*, CODESRIA, 1986). Peter and Mvungi comment on the banning of a student organization at the university of Dar-es-Salaam - the University Students African Revolutionary Front (USARF) - and its journal, *Cheche*, in the following words:

The death of USARF and its theoretical organ Cheche nipped in the bud the growth of a real revolutionary left in Tanzania. It destroyed the embryonic organization which could have enabled the left in Tanzania to operate in an organized form. (p. 180).

From what point of view could USARF be considered the embryo of a "real revolutionary left"? Peter and Mvungi themselves document the banning of autonomous student organizations - particularly that of the University College of Dar-es-Salaam Student Union (USUD) in 1966 - by a state power with growing authoritarian tendencies. Did not USARF rejoice at this banning because of the "reactionary" perspective of USUD? Was not the USARF perspective on socialist transformation essentially anti-democratic and statist, with its differences with the state power focussing not on the issue of the need for the autonomy of popular organizations but on the insufficiently socialist content of state

The discourse of modernization theory was constructed around two dichotomies: tribe/nation and tradition/modernity. The concept 'tribe' was employed for every ethnic group south of the Sahara. The implicit connotation that the groups referred to (and their practices) have a 'primordial' character went alongside a deafening silence as regards the social history of the group. The entire history of the spread of commodity production and exchange, of the associated development of a division of labour and of classes with distinct and at times even contradictory interests, and of social movements anchored in the interests of specific classes - all this was easily and quickly glossed over. In contra-distinction to this anti-thesis - "the tribe" - it was easy to identify "the nation" (practically embodied in the state) as the prime mover of historical development.

The tribe/nation dichotomy was further reinforced by yet another overlapping dichotomy: tradition/modernity. The 'tribe' was the repository of the 'traditional'; the 'nation' the harbinger of the 'modern'. A movement was characterized as 'tribal' or as 'nationalist' depending on two factors: first, the language in which its demands were articulated, and second, the geographical parameters within which it organized. Put in the unilinear evolutionist framework of modernization theory, 'tribalism' was defined as 'pre-modern' and 'backward', either hindering or at best preparing the ground for modern 'nationalist' movements. Neither was it always necessary to state directly the political conclusion of such a perspective: that national movements are modern and therefore historically progressive (or legitimate), and that tribal movements are pre-modern and therefore historically not progressive.

The radical nationalist critique of modernization theory evolved in the form of another school of thought, dependency. While it rightly criticized the silence of modernization theorists on the role of imperialism in the development and reproduction of Africa's backwardness - in the process reconstructing history from the point of view of the impact of external forces on African society - dependency theorists continued to share one major premise with the scribes of modernization. In its call for a reversal of the process, for a return to an autonomous development - summed up in the demand "delinking" - it continued to focus on the state as the real subject of history in Africa[4].

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policies? Was not then the perspective of USARF intellectuals organic to the class project of the Tanzanian state, in spite of the differences outlined?.

4 See, Mahmood Mamdani, Wamba-dia Wamba and Thandika Mkandawire, *Social Movements, Social Transformation and the Democratic Struggle in Africa*, CODESRIA, Working Paper 1/88, Dakar, 1988.

An adjunct to radical political economy was a particular variant of Marxism, which also developed as a state ideology. Except for a change in terminology, it was in substantial agreement with the ideologues of modernization: the essence of socialism, it agreed, was no more than the development of the productive forces, and because productive forces in Africa were relatively backward and classes not as distinctive, the real agent for the development of productive forces had to be none other than the state. In the language of this variant of Marxism, socialism was economic development minus the class struggle. The point is that democratic struggle was seen as detracting from the national project as defined by the state and was thus considered inimical to national unity.

From this point of view then - the point of view which collapsed the two notions of state and nation into one single non-contradictory combination - was written (or, shall we say, re-written) the 'nationalist' history of the 1960's and the 1970's. Nationalist history-writing was a one-sided enterprise executed from the perspective of the summit. It robbed the nationalist movement of its social content, writing no more than a national history of social movements, in the process reducing these to no more than so many local constituent elements of the 'national movement'.

As the pen of the nationalist historian remained dipped in a Universalist ink, the history of social movements was deprived of its social content since this was seen to have no more than a particularistic significance. Even when the history of a particular movement was written - say of workers (the Uganda Motor Drivers Union) or of peasants (Uganda African Farmers Federation) or of a religious group (the African Hellenic Church) or of a nationality organization (*Bana ba Kintu*) - the endeavour was to de-emphasize what was seen as its particularistic (i.e., social) aspect and to highlight its universalistic (i.e., national) aspect, so that even the history of social movements was recast as no more than the sub-histories of so many local chapters of the national movement.

As the historian tried to play down whatever features may detract from the national character of a social movement so as to emphasize its nationalist credentials, to remove the notes which could not easily be harmonized within a single national chorus, s/he also ended up obscuring local issues so as to cast in bold the one single national demand: self-government or independence! To use a somewhat modern metaphor, what was really a "rainbow coalition" was painted in a single grey!

But the local issues more often than not had inspired the organization of the movement in the first place. A history which played these down was also often without any clues as to the social character of the constituent elements of the national movement.

As a result, it is not uncommon to find the history of a rich spectrum of social movements organized in response to a variety of demands - not only

national but also social - often summarized as no more than the political history of the national movement; and in turn to find the history of the national movement reduced to the history of nationalist parties and organizations; and these in turn to the history of the "winning" nationalist party; and, in a surprisingly large number of cases, to find even this reduced to no more than the biography of the national leader! History-writing, in this case, proceeds as it were by a series of reductions, from social history to political history to individual biography.

To capitulate, then, the two by-products of the transformation of nationalism from a popular to a state ideology are: the production of a one-dimensional history of the "national movement"; on the one hand, the delegitimation of all contemporary democratic struggles as detracting from national unity on the other. I have discussed the former. Let me briefly elaborate on the consequences of the latter tendency.

With the delegitimation of all struggles autonomous of the state, the search for a solution to "the crisis in Africa" has tended to side-step the perspective and demands of the victims struggling for a way out of the crisis; instead, this search has focused on the perspective of those in charge of "managing" the crisis. Not surprisingly, then, the tendency has been to look for a solution more from above than from below, and eventually more from outside the parameters of the problem rather than from within these parameters, a solution more external than internal. In a sentence, it has been a search more technocratic than democratic, more utopian than realistic.

It has been a search for solutions more universalistic (in the sense of abstract) than concrete. As I have tried to argue, this has been true of both the major contending schools of thought since the War: "modernization" as well as "dependencia". The "modernization" theorists started by jumping on the nationalist band-wagon with an unabashed call for "nation-building", by which they meant nothing more than state-building. Faced with the crisis of the late 1970's, they shifted attention from the state to civil society, from the state power to the bourgeoisie (either actual or aspiring), championing a form of "privatization" that stood directly opposed to any meaningful conception of democratization.

In direct contrast to the growing comprador orientation of modernization theorists, the *dependencia* group focussed attention upon the state as the real defender of national interests. They turned the world as painted by modernization theorists upside down, presenting more often than not a mirror opposite as both analysis and solution. Thus, in response to the call for "privatization" by the gurus of modernization, the *dependencia* lobby lined up in defense of the state; in response to "structural adjustment" to the international markets, they called for "delinking" from it.

This is why to confine our discussion to a perspective informed by the "modernization" vs "dependencia" debate is to be locked within the

parameters of state nationalism. A debate whose alternatives are "privatization" vs "statisation" is a debate situated in the internal history of nationalism as a state ideology, at the most demarcating its high and low points. The former found expression in the much-publicized search for a "New International Economic Order" (NIEO) by the managers at the summit of each of these neo-colonies; the latter - its low, or crisis, point - is the imposition of "Structural Adjustment" (SAP) on these managers, no matter how reluctantly, from without.

No doubt, the shift from an international situation characterized by the search for a NIEO to one highly favourable to the imposition of a whole series of "Structural Adjustment Programmes". No doubt this shift expresses an adverse development, and cannot simply be ignored. And yet, one must also recognize that both the NIEO and the SAP are integral to the history of nationalism as a state ideology. Both partook of the perspective of changing society from above. The only difference was in the following.

The demand for a NIEO expressed the confidence of the new ruling classes in Africa that they were indeed capable of taking command of history; it summed up their programme for social transformation from above. The formulation of an alternate perspective - SAP - is indicative of a shift of responsibility in social transformation openly into foreign hands; it leaves the states in Africa with only the residual function of maintaining law and order.

Thus, we witness the expression of the crisis at the ideological level: fewer and fewer African states can articulate any ideology of social transformation; more and more openly stand as nothing but custodians of law and order. It is in this sense that NIEO and SAP represent two moments in the internal history of nationalism as a state ideology, the former its moment of triumph, the latter the moment of its crisis; the former its zenith, the latter its nadir.

It is in this context that we must situate the current debate in ruling circles on the role of the state in Africa - the debate on "statisation" vs. "privatization", the debate between the managers of the African states and their erstwhile foreign benefactors organized as the IMF and the World Bank. It is a debate whose common ground is the assumption that history has stopped in Africa, that no major social changes are likely to take place any more, and that the choice lies in either pruning or reinforcing existing relations and roles. It is a debate whose parameters are too narrow for a discussion informed by larger issues of democratization and social transformation.

This is why it is necessary to step out of this internal history onto the terrain of the larger history which was its overall context.

For whether comprador or nationalist, both sides in the above argument have stayed at an arm's length from concrete popular struggles against

concrete manifestations of the crisis, no matter how immediately fragmentary or ineffective these struggles be. Our point here is that any search for a solution must begin with an analysis of concrete attempts to arrive at a solution by movements of various strata; and that means necessarily returning to the analysis of social movements.

The point is not to begin an excavation to unearth so as to uncritically embrace one social movement after another - more or less in the manner of the "Africanist Historians" who celebrated the "discovery" of one kingdom after another, one royal lineage after another. It is not to replace the uncritical rejection of every 'local' social movement - that based in a region, a nationality, a religious or a social group - as 'sectarian' by an equally uncritical and populist embrace of these same movements. The point, is to ask: (a) what are the demands around which a social movement organized? (b) what changes, both in perspective and in internal organization, did a social movement go through to reach out to and organize those previously unorganized? (c) what social groups did it fail to organize because of its limitations?

The thrust of this paper is that the only standard that can be used to assess the political character of social movements at this point in our history is that of the democratic struggle: movements that struggle for rights (for equality) must be distinguished from those that fight for privileges (for advantage); the former must be supported and the latter isolated.

It is time we return to take a fresh look at that historical process which was summed up as the development of the national movement, or rather, to the various social movements that comprised its constituent elements, to identify the sum total of demands around which they organized and particularly to underline those that sketch in any way or form the elements of a critique of existing social relations and political arrangements. The point is to move away from the nationalist project that focused on writing a national history of social movements, and instead to write nothing less than a social history of the national movement.

This change in perspective - from an analysis of social struggles from the point of view of statist nationalism to their analysis from the point of view of the democratic struggle - can be grasped in terms of yet another shift. This is a shift from a geographical to a social perspective. The geographical point of view hinges on a spatial contrast between the whole and its parts. From a geographical point of view, then, national is synonymous with country-wide in a purely spatial sense; and sectarian with regional, tribal or religious. From a social perspective, on the other hand, it is possible for the narrowest of perspectives to monopolize the summit, and for the most advanced democratic struggle to be waged from the farthest corner of a country and cover no more than a tiny portion of it!

The Nationality Question and the Democratic Struggle in Uganda

The high point of the national struggle in the colonial period - in Uganda as in several African countries - was in the years following the Second World War. A tide which had peaked towards the middle of the 1940's was at a low ebb by the middle of the 1950's. Before trying to look at the contemporary situation, it is instructive to return to that decade and draw certain lessons.

Compared to the groups of the preceding decade, the organizations that sprung up in the 1940's were distinguished by three features. One, they had a popular character. The middle class intelligentsia that organized in the 1930's - as young men of Buganda, of Toro, of Busoga, etc. - seldom bothered to go beyond the narrow confines of their own class, either in the demands they put forth or in their organizational initiatives. This was the root cause of their failure. The intelligentsia that organized in the 1940's, on the other hand, consciously reached out to organize popular classes, peasants and workers, by putting forth popular and democratic demands through organized forms like co-operatives and trade unions.

Secondly, the wave of popular protest that culminated in the general strike and peasant uprisings of 1945 and 1949 displayed a variety of organized forms. The struggle for democracy was not confined to explicitly political organizations. It found expression in diverse groups, as far apart as co-operatives and trade unions on the one hand and religious bodies like the African Hellenic Church on the other. The form of an activity did not automatically define its content. For example, political activity inside the Church was not necessarily sectarian; to the extent it confronted the pro-colonial and anti-democratic practice of the church establishment, there took place a democratic struggle inside religious organizations.

And thirdly, as the democratic struggle advanced, it pitted popular classes inside a nationality against those interests which constituted the social base of the colonial state within the same nationality. The most dramatic illustration of this was of course in 1945 and 1949, when peasants in Buganda razed to the ground houses of Baganda landlord-chiefs. In other words, the further the democratic struggle advanced, the more it tended to dissolve the unity of all classes on a nationality basis, and the more it tended to reconstruct a unity of popular classes within that nationality on a democratic basis. It was thus erroneous to describe political activity organized along nationality lines as necessarily reactionary; to the extent that it was anchored in popular organization and aimed against pro-colonial and anti-democratic interests within that same nationality, its significance was positive.

As I have already emphasized, this movement was not defeated by the colonial state through simply the force of arms. Far more important was the

fact that the colonial state was able to seize the initiative, on both the ideological and the political fronts. Why was it able to do this and what was its initiative?

The success of the colonial state in seizing the initiative was for two major reasons. The first stemmed from the fact of the uneven development of the colonial political economy: that the national movement was rooted mainly in the small working class of the towns and in the commodity-producing peasantry. In other words, the base of the anti-colonial and the democratic struggle tended to be those nationalities most drawn into the crucible of commodity production and exchange, not those least drawn into it. This is why the colonial state was able to present the national movement ideologically as a movement of certain nationalities, and therefore a threat to other nationalities. It thus tried to represent a struggle for rights by popular classes within certain nationalities as a demand for privileges by all classes within these nationalities.

The second reason why the colonial state was successfully able to seize the initiative was due to the weakness of the democratic movement itself. The democratic movement was an alliance of various classes, with interests that coincided up to a point and diverged thereafter. The most important partners in this alliance were the middle class, workers and peasants. But, for both ideological and organizational reasons, the alliance between them was unequal.

Ideologically, the only class with a national capacity - with both an awareness of the state and a capacity to 'manage' it - with the middle class. "For events have shown", wrote Amilcar Cabral, "that the only social stratum capable both of having consciousness in the first place of the reality of imperialist domination and of handling the state apparatus inherited from that domination is the native petty bourgeoisie"[5]. Both the working class and the commodity-producing peasantry lacked such a capacity. This is why the leadership of trade unions and cooperatives tended to come from within the middle class intelligentsia.

This uneven ideological development was further reinforced by the organizational weakness of popular nationalism. For even the limited democratic perspective of this movement had yet to be translated into a democratic mode of organization; its popular character had yet to be consolidated in organizational terms. It was thus a movement which had yet to develop organizational forms whereby the base could hold its leadership accountable. It was a movement whose middle class leadership was not only susceptible to being wooed through partial concessions by the colonial state,

5 Amilcar Cabral, "Presuppositions and Objectives of National Liberation in Relation to Social Structure", in *Unity and Struggle*, London, Hienemann, 1980, p. 134.

but also had the necessary organizational freedom to do so at the expense of the popular classes.

The cajoling and capitulation of this middle class leadership, and the simultaneous demobilization of its popular base, was the sum and substance of the reform programme launched by the colonial state in the aftermath of the 1945 and 1949 peasant uprising and workers' strike. The purpose of this political initiative was two-fold: simultaneously to demobilize the popular classes in the advancing national democratic movement and to mobilize the property-aspiring strata both inside and outside that movement.

Let us first look at how the popular classes were demobilized by the reforms[6]. The legislation of the late 1940's and the early 1950's that was designed to legalize co-operatives and trade unions at the same time depoliticized these organizations. Both were brought under the scrutiny of the state, reorganized in a bureaucratic (rather than a democratic) fashion, put under the control of a middle class leadership for whom these organizations became new-found vehicles for career advancement and the accumulation of wealth. From then on, co-operatives and trade unions were less and less vehicles that advanced the interests of peasants and workers, more and more organizations that controlled the activity of these popular classes.

At the same time, the colonial state implemented yet another series of reforms. Directed specifically at the property-aspiring middle class, its sum and substance was "Africanization", of trade and the civil service in the main.

In the final analysis, the success of these reforms hinged on detaching the national demands of the movement from its social (democratic) demands, and then giving the former the narrowest possible content: i.e., anti-colonialism rather than anti-imperialism. To succeed, the reforms had to promise that independence would be 'granted', and at that, soon. Without this, it would not be possible to convince the property-aspiring middle class that it was about 'to arrive'; that the question of the hour was now strictly an internal question, that is, how were the fruits of the reform to be distributed amongst various middle class factions? The more this middle class divided and organized on a fractional basis, each trying to organize popular classes of its nationality (or religion, or region, depending on concrete historical circumstances) under its own leadership, the more the struggle for rights of the popular classes gave way to a jockeying for privileges amongst middle class-led coalitions, organized variously, on either a nationality, religious or a regional basis.

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6 For a detailed analysis of this question, see Mahmood Mamdani, *Politics and Class Formation in Uganda*, London, Hienemann, 1976, chapter 7.

The divorce between nationalism and democracy was consolidated in the period after independence. It is in this period that nationalism emerged as a state ideology. At first cut off from its popular base and later turning hostile to any demands for democracy, middle class nationalism became no more than a form of statism.

Nationalism as a state ideology represented not only a divorce of nationalism from democracy but ultimately an opposition of that specific form of nationalism to democracy. This is clear from the experience of a number of 'radical' African states: Uganda under Obote I (first period), Ghana under Nkrumah, Tanzania under Nyerere, to take but a few examples[7]. In each of these experiences, the counter-position of state nationalism and democracy was evident time and again. In the process, nationalism turned into a language of state repression. The demand for national unity became in practice no more than an attempt to legitimize state control in all its forms. Correspondingly, official denunciation of "sectarianism" and "tribalism" turned into so many attempts to discredit any demands for democracy, i.e., the freedom to organize outside and independently of the state.

And finally, we may note that the stifling of democracy in the name of nationalism and national unity tended to give rise to a double phenomenon. On the one hand, governmental power was increasingly exercised in the interest of - and was seen to be an expression of - the privileges of the property-owning or aspiring classes and strata of the nationalities (or religion) 'in power'. On the other hand, this encouraged the development of oppositional movements also based on nationality (or religious) affiliation, and also crystallizing the leadership of property-owning or aspiring classes and strata within the nationalities (or religion) 'out of power'.

The NRA Experience

The NRA experience can be divided into two periods: 1981-85 - the period of oppositional activity; and 1986 onwards, the period beginning with the capture of state power.

From the point of view of the question of nationalities and the struggle for democracy, the experience of the NRA from 1981 to 1985 was indeed remarkable. Most obvious was the success of the NRA in forging an alliance of popular classes cutting across nationalities, some of which had even hostile relations in the immediate past. The first phase of the armed struggle successfully established a peasant base in Buganda, but under a leadership

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7 See Jitendra Mohan, "Nkrumah and Nkrumahism", *Socialist Register*, 1967; reprinted in *Forward*, vol. 9, No. 1, 1987, Kampala, Uganda, for an excellent critique of Nkrumahism in independent Ghana as a form of state nationalist ideology.

which substantially came from outside Buganda. For the first time since the colonial reform of the 1950's, the hold of right-wing factions - on the one hand, the "traditional" landed oligarchy and on the other, the Catholic clergy-connected professional and middle classes - for the first time. The political hold of this right over the Baganda peasantry was broken. Buganda, the focal point of the democratic struggle in the 1940's, turned into the bastion of right-wing oppositional activity over the next three decades, once again throbbed as the heartland of the NRA-organized guerilla struggle from 1980 to 1985. The second phase of this guerilla struggle expanded this peasant base from Buganda to Bunyoro, establishing an alliance between nationalities whose dominant classes had been at loggerheads for most of this century.

In another article[8], I have argued that its success in organizing the peasantry of diverse nationalities needs to be traced to the democratic component of the struggle waged by the NRA. Key to the social programme of the NRA was not the replacement of one set of state agents by another, but in fact their replacement by popularly elected organs, called Resistance Committees. In other words, just as with the national movement of the 1940's, key to winning over the support of the peasantry of various nationalities from its 'traditional' state-connected leadership was the successful pursuit of a democratic struggle inside each nationality.

And yet, it is precisely this lesson that the NRA seems to have forgotten since its coming to power in January of 1986. This is the lesson that the democratic struggle cannot be brought to a nationality from without; that to have any chance of success it must proceed as a struggle from *within* each nationality, on the basis of organizing the popular classes and isolating the anti-democratic elements inside each nationality.

But before we can discuss this aspect of the NRA's experience since 1986, it is necessary to address the broader question of the course of the democratic struggle over the past three years. So as to underline the tentative nature of the discussion which follows, I shall proceed by way of posing a series of questions, each of which is intended to open up a field of inquiry, rather than by presenting any definitive answer that may tend to close the inquiry prematurely.

From the moment the NRA took power, a contradiction emerged that had not existed before. Can the struggle for democracy be waged from the position of state power? If the cutting edge of the democratic struggle is the establishment of popular democratic organs - Resistance Committees (RCs) - is it possible for the state power to take the initiative in establishing these

8 See Mahmood Mamdani, "Background to Takeover of State Power by NRA", *Forward*, vol. 8, Nos. 1 and 2, 1986, Kampala, Uganda.

committees, the very reason for whose existence is to resist any encroachment on their rights by officials of the same state power? Or, to put it in a nutshell, can the object of a struggle be its subject too?

And yet, one could argue that this contradiction was still embryonic in January, 1986, because the NRA could not be said to have 'taken power' in a definitive sense at that time. What the NRA did destroy was the neo-colonial repressive machinery. What it had yet to touch was the administrative and adjudicatory machinery of the neo-colonial state: the civil service and the judiciary. This aspect of the struggle would be particularly complicated for two reasons.

One, in the concrete conditions of Uganda, it can be said that almost every regime since independence has come and gone with its army. The pillar of the neo-colonial state that has remained firm since colonialism has not been its repressive but its administrative organ, complemented by the judiciary. The consciousness of this historical fact has tended to give the Ugandan civil service and judiciary a measure of confidence and arrogance in their relations with regimes. For, according to the former, the latter come and go while they alone guarantee a semblance of stability and continuity to the state.

Secondly, the struggle against the administrative and the judicial organs of the state cannot be waged using arms. It was bound to be a far more complicated and a far more political struggle. To be successful, it also had to be a profoundly democratic struggle, for success would require the organization of those popular classes who had historically borne the brunt of the injustice meted out by this same civil service and judiciary.

For these very reasons, it is clear that the outcome of the struggle could not be a foregone conclusion in 1986. One could, and many did, ask: Was the NRA going to transform the neo-colonial civil service and judiciary, or was it going to be swallowed up by the neo-colonial state leading to the consolidation of the latter?[9]

To return to the questions I posed above, it must be clearly stated that a democratic struggle cannot be waged from the position of state power. And yet, it must at the same time be recognized clearly that the opposition

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9 It is important to realize that the process of this swallowing up cannot be partial, confined to only the terrain of the civil service and the judiciary; it necessarily has to be total and include the army and associated agencies. The situation of "dual power" obtaining in 1986 could only be temporary; it was a situation necessarily characterized by tension and disequilibrium. True, the old army had been defeated. But, how was the new one to be structured? Would its restructuring once again reproduce the key relations around which the old army was organized? From this point of view, to what extent will the reorganization of the guerilla army along conventional lines the relations of hierarchy and the absence of democracy characteristic of neo-colonial armies *inside* the NRA?

between the perspective of social transformation from below and that from above cannot be posed in an absolutist manner. Certainly, ever since Lenin made his famous formulation on the hallmarks of an objectively revolutionary situation, political militants have recognized that revolt from below and division at the top are the twin characteristics of any situation that offers possibilities of progressive change.

Thus, if the NRA expected to continue to wage the struggle for democratic transformation (what it termed the struggle for "fundamental changes") in 1986, it could only be because it was not yet in control of state power; in fact, after January 1986, the contention for state power intensified, and the focus of this contention shifted to the very organs of the state that still remained intact: the civil service and the judiciary.

Under these conditions, for the democratic struggle to be waged successfully - this time from above and from below - three issues assumed vital significance. The first two concern the relation between the movement and the state on the one hand, and popular democratic organs and the state on the other; whereas the third concerns the advance of the democratic struggle into areas where the NRA had no organized base by the time it took power, i.e., areas "on the other side of the Nile". I shall outline them below, once again in the form of questions rather than answers.

First, the waging of a democratic struggle from above is possible only under very special conditions: that is, when the summit is not cohesive but divided with various forces in contention. And yet, such a struggle cannot be waged simply from positions of state authority. It requires the existence of a political organization anchored in some sector of the popular classes and independent of the state. Thus the question of the National Resistance Movement (NRM).

From available information, it would seem that in the armed struggle waged from 1981-86, there did not exist a political cadre separate from the military cadre. Except in places where there was no armed struggle - that is, in government-controlled parts of the country where an underground functioned and in the external wing - the political cadre and the military cadre were one and the same. This, no doubt, was because the NRM was never the political wing of the NRA; rather, it was its external wing. This is why in January 1986 the NRM did not exist except at the summit, as a Secretariat, but without any significant cadre.

In the period following January 1986, the NRM's experience in trying to create cadres through 'politicization' in the cadre school has gone through three phases. In the first phase, the political school admitted anyone and everyone who volunteered. This step suggested the lack of a concrete understanding of the society democratic forces inside the NRM intended to transform, that they had yet to distinguish between those social forces which

were bound to lose from a struggle for democratization and those that were likely to gain from such a struggle.

The result was a rush of lumpen and opportunist elements who expected to become the security personnel of the new regime. This realization was partly behind a change in admission policy in the second phase. Then, admission was in the main compulsory; its targets being primarily various categories of state functionaries.

One would have expected, on the other hand, that a democratic movement would look for its political cadre in the activists thrown up by the democratic struggle of the popular classes and the intelligentsia, i.e., in peasant struggles, worker's strikes, student's struggles, etc. - and not in the functionaries of the neo-colonial state, without any discrimination whatsoever. The question that arises as a result is: to what extent is the NRM today an adjunct of the state?

Recently, there has been yet another shift in the admissions policy for the cadre school. The emphasis has tended to shift from compulsory recruitment of state personnel to the voluntary admission of ideologically "progressive" graduates of institutions of higher learning. The NRM's answer to the question - who is to change Ugandan society? - would seem to be: the intelligentsia. And yet, does not the evidence of the entire Obote II period - particularly the waves of workers strikes and the pockets of peasant resistance - refute any assumption that the laboring classes of contemporary Uganda are not uniformly sluggish and sleepy, unable to express any initiative, incapable of participation in a process of self-transformation?

The shift in recruitment policy - such as that in emphasis from state personnel to the student intelligentsia - should not be taken as strictly sequential; rather, these shifts are far more indicative of an internal struggle in perspectives inside the NRA/NRM. In other words, the NRA/NRM appears to be as internally politically heterogeneous as other political groupings within the country; it harbours tendencies both democratic and anti-democratic, nationalist and comprador.

The second key issue from the point of view of pursuing the democratic struggle today is that of the relation obtaining between popular democratic and the state organs. I have already pointed out that RCs originated in lieu of state authority in the guerilla-held regions.

Since January 1986, there have been a number of changes in the role of RCs. To begin with, RCs are no longer seen as replacements for chiefs but as popular organs that are to hold state officials (chiefs) accountable. This, in my opinion, is a positive development. If the RCs had developed as replacement for chiefs, they would indeed have turned into new chiefs. Given the organizational weakness of civil society in general, and popular classes in particular, RCs would have been popular democratic organs in

name only, for there would have been few realistic ways of holding them accountable to the people.

But the development of RCs has not gone ahead without resistance from the very state officials RCs are supposed to hold accountable. And that is as one would have expected. A clear and growing tendency can be discerned that aims at turning RCs into adjuncts of the state. This tendency is expressed in various ways. To begin with, it manifests in attempts to turn RCs into administrative adjuncts of the state, whose duties are increasingly defined by top state officials as convenience demands (e.g. in the distribution of commodities). Yet another tendency can be seen in the attempts to turn RCs into political adjuncts of the state power whose members would remain in office only so long as they may be suffered by high state officials, (thus, e.g., decisions by District Administrators to dismiss entire Resistance Committees, as in Arua and Iganga).

My second question, then, is: to what extent are popular democratic organs - (RCs), also being turned into adjuncts of the state, in the process losing both their independence and their popular accountability? Does not the experience of "dynamising groups" in the Mozambique of the late 1970's clearly show that the first casualty in the crystallization of a statist perspective on social transformation is the autonomy of popular organizations?

Finally, the question of the "North", the hub of the nationality question today. In political terms, this issue has a dual significance. From the point of view of the division of labor between nationalities as devised in the colonial period, the changes of January 1986 represent a dramatic turn. For the first time, the historical division of labor between the "South" and the "North" no longer obtains. For the first time, the Southern propertied and middle classes control the main lines of business, the political machinery of government, and the repressive and administrative organs of the state. One element in the present situation is thus the acute political crisis of the "Northern" middle class.

The second issue of significance stems from the historical limitations of the NRA. The nationality base of the NRA was shaped initially by that of the very regimes it confronted and fought. The Obote II, unlike the Obote I regime, had given up any pretense at social reform; its social base was increasingly confined to certain nationalities - as was that of the Lutwa regime. In response, the guerilla struggle found fertile terrain in the popular classes of the remaining nationalities; there, the NRA found it relatively easy to politically isolate individual state agents.

The Obote and Lutwa regimes fell because of growing opposition from without and sharpening divisions within. Though the NRA that came to power in 1986 had no organized base in the "North" of the country, the situation that it confronted there was nonetheless favourable: marauding

armies of both Obote and the Okellos, particularly rapacious in retreat, ensured the NRA widespread sympathy amongst large sections of the Northern peasantry. At the same time, politically conscious individuals in the "Northern" middle class looked to the NRA for leadership in a struggle for popular social transformation in "the North". And yet, the NRA was unable to turn this sympathy into organized support and build an organization knitting together popular classes in the bulk of the country. Why?

Because of one crucial mistake. Faced with a rapidly disintegrating regime, and flushed with a victory more rapid than it had expected, the NRA began to give its struggle more of a military than a political significance. When its troops crossed the Nile and pursued the leading personnel of previous regimes, they did so from the point of view of confidence in their own military superiority, but unmindful of the need to build a local political base in "the North". Similarly, when it extended the NRM Administration to "the North" and put in place its own trusted cadre in politically sensitive positions, it did so without realizing the political cost of simply extending what looked and sounded like a "Southern Administration" northwards.

The minute the struggle against leading personnel of previous regimes was pursued as a military and not a political offensive, from that very minute the NRA lost the political initiative to its opposition. From then on, it was not very difficult for those members of the "Northern" middle class targeted as violators of human rights in previous regimes to convince the "Northern" peasantry that the NRA's "broad base" (united front) was simply another name for a "Southern" government! And that their own persecution was on account of their nationality and regional affiliation, and not in response to their record of murder and rape.

Shunned by the NRA, and unwilling to heed the calls of a variety of groups led by discredited lieutenants of Obote or Okello, the crisis of the "Northern" peasantry fuelled for sufficiently long a messianic religious movement that spread against all odds and in the face of heavy human losses[10]. And yet, ironically, it was this very fact which brought home to the NRA the lesson that the problem was more political than military. And that it could not confront the leading lights of previous regimes - no matter how brutal their record - without first isolating them politically. Also that, in the absence of this political homework, it had no choice but to extend its "broad base" to include those with a political base in "the North", no matter how anti-democratic their orientation. This much the leadership of the NRA

10 For a brief political analysis of the Holy Spirit Movement, see, Mahmood Mamdani, "Uganda in Transition: Two Years of the NRA/NRM" *Third World Quarterly, 10(3)*, July 1988:1155-1181.

appears to have grasped with its decision to halt military campaigns and launch a "peace initiative" in mid-1988.

Let us dwell on the significance of creating a "broad base" government of all dominant middle class factions within the country. In political terms, it would mean that the purveyors of the anti-democratic politics of the neo-colonial state will be rescued once again, in "the South" in 1986 and in "the North" beginning this year. In social terms, it would mean that the imperatives of peace have put a break on any impetus for social transformation. And yet, given the political mistakes of the NRM in 1986-88, a more favourable outcome is difficult to envision in the short run.

I have argued above that when the NRA reduced the dimensions of the democratic struggle in "the North" to simply a military confrontation against dominant forces in previous regimes, it lost the political initiative to these same forces. They were able to present their own grievances as those of "the Northern" nationalities, and their own demands as the democratic aspirations of "the Northern" nationalities: i.e., that all nationalities throughout the country be treated equally.

In the process, however, they narrowed the content and meaning of democracy to suit the interests of propertied classes. For the fact is that, from the point of view of contending factions in the propertied classes in contemporary Uganda, democracy is portrayed as no more than a political system that guarantees pluralism along nationality and religious lines. It is, in other words, both a progressive demand for the equal treatment of all nationalities and religions and a reactionary demand for leaving untouched dominant interests and therefore the social (class) question - inside each nationality and religion. This latter is the real meaning of its call for non-interference in the internal affairs of each nationality and religion!

We see here a situation underlining the contradictory character of democracy: that, under certain conditions, democracy can in fact be the demand of dominant classes opposed to social transformation along popular lines! The demand for democracy, to put in a nutshell, is not always progressive. When made by dominant classes, as in today's Uganda, it is given an extremely narrow and elitist content. Thus the need to underline the class content of every demand for democracy in a specific situation.

To return to the Ugandan situation. No matter how elitist the demand for democracy by dominant interests throughout the country, the NRA/NRM finds it difficult to oppose this with a call for democracy that would sum up a programme for social transformation. This is because of its own political limitations. For without an organization anchored in the popular classes throughout the country, without an organization that can knit together all classes that have an interest in and a capacity for social transformation, without an organization whose cadres are recruited not only from these classes but also from all sectors of society - nationalities, religions and

regions - and which can therefore pursue this struggle from within every religion, region and nationality, and not from without as some sort of an alien offensive; without such an organization, the NRA/NRM will find that to maintain peace it has to give up any aspiration for democratic social transformation ("fundamental changes").

Let me not be misunderstood. No doubt, against the backdrop of state terrorism and civil instability, even a regime that can organize peace and contain factionalism within a consolidated neo-colonial state must be considered a positive development. And yet, given the possibilities opened up by the democratic reforms upon which expanded the guerilla struggle of 1981-85, to rest content with such a "positive development" would be to fail to look beyond the proverbial nose. It would constitute a historical failure to struggle for fundamental solutions to the "African crisis", to weld together a coalition of social forces with a capacity to turn that crisis into an opportunity for social transformation.

Seen in that context, then, the central political issue in today's Uganda is the following: does the NRA have the capacity to reorganize its united front around a programme for social transformation which organizes and passes the initiative to popular and democratic forces in society? Or, will it remain content with a regime of law and order, leaving the initiative in economic and social affairs to the propertied classes that have come to maturity under the series of terroristic regimes that the people have had to suffer over the past two decades?

Contradictory Character of Nationalism

In the study of African societies, there has been an unfortunate tendency to divorce the analysis of ideology from that of politics. As a result, it has become customary for analysts to present the ideology of states, their self-description, as their *raison d'être*. In an era when not only varieties of nationalism but also of socialism have taken on the stature of state ideologies, this has indeed made for the proliferation of social science as apologia.

Implicit in this paper has been the contention that the analysis of ideology must be related to that of politics. Only then can we understand the concrete political role of an ideology, whether it is progressive or reactionary. It serves no purpose to make a list of ideologies, and then divide them into those "progressive" (e.g., nationalism, democracy, socialism) and those "reactionary" (e.g., religious ideologies, tribalism) outside of time and place. It is far more likely that, subjected to a contextual analysis, the contradictory character of ideologies is likely to come to surface.

Hence our emphasis in this paper on the contradictory character of nationalism, and on the need for a contextual analysis of nationalism as an

ideology. But I hope enough has been said in these lines, if not in between them, to suggest that a similar analysis could be made of the contradictory character of not only populism (of which nationalism is but one form) but also of democracy (which, from all indications, is the newly emerging sacred cow of apologetic social science).

Hence the insistence in this paper on distinguishing the popular nationalism of the 1940's from the statist nationalism of the 1960's and 1970's, and on underlining the fact that whereas the former went hand-in-hand with the democratic struggle the latter was not only divorced from it but was even turned into the spearhead for delegitimizing and demobilizing social movements with a democratic potential. And hence the insistence, in the present period when statist nationalism has been reduced to no more than an ideology for the preservation of law and order, that the pursuit of the democratic struggle is not possible outside of forging together an alliance of social movements around a programme for social transformation.