Title

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Adeniyi S. Basiru, Mashud L.A. Salawu, and Adewale Adepoju

Abstract

The recent clamor by some African leaders for an integrated Africa, anchored on the notion of a quasi-federal government as championed by Kwame Nkrumah and other radical Pan-Africanists in the early 1960s, has revived an issue that many thought had been buried at the 1963 Addis Ababa conference. It has also placed the radical variant of Pan-Africanism on the discursive radar. Against this background, this article adopts descriptive, historical, and analytical methods to retrospectively examine and to provide a prospective prognosis on the place of radical Pan-Africanism in the African integration project. In it, we show that many agential and structural factors have frustrated and continue to frustrate attempts to achieve the supranational African community promoted by radical Pan-Africanists. We argue that these factors cannot be divorced from the nature of post-colonial African states, which offer opportunities to ruling elites that a supranational environment cannot.

Keywords: Pan-Africanism, imperialism, integration, colonialism, supranationality

Centuries of exploitation and the pillaging of Africa and its inhabitants by Western imperialists have generated many antinomies, two of which have continued to define and affect Africa's contemporary society, politics, and diplomacy.[1] These include the "de-indentification" and "depersonalization" of people and the forceful grafting of a state system that exploits, alienates, and marginalizes those same people.[2] Perhaps the imperative to arrest these twin legacies spurred the emergence, at the levels of both theory and praxis, of the radical Pan-Africanist approach to African integration.[3] Radical Pan-Africanism, as championed by

Kwame Nkrumah, Sekou Toure, Modibo Keita, and other radi-
cal intellectuals of the early independence era, is ideologically
and radically different from orthodox Pan-Africanism, even
though it has a historico-intellectual affinity with it.[4] This type of
radical Pan-Africanism espouses a brand of nationalism that pro-
motes, at its core, the integration, unification, and Africanization
of balkanized African societies through establishing a suprana-
tional, federal-type organization that supplants and eclipses the
extroverted micro-states.[5] Specifically, it posits the integration of
disparate people, under a union government, as the only logical
route to consolidate the independence of new states and to bring
about development and progress.[6] However, in spite of its appar-
ent popularity, especially among the intelligentsia, its ideological
foundations were questioned by the majority of African leaders
in the 1960s, who collectively insisted that Africa was not ripe for
the vision of integration proposed by Nkrumah.[7] As a result, two
contradictory visions of Africa's integration emerged.

     However, statesmen reached a consensus at the Addis Ababa
Summit in May 1963. There, the first Pan-African organization—
the Organization of African Unity (OAU)—was born.[8] People
expected it to be a primary platform for enhancing greater Afri-
can unity, confronting the last vestiges of colonialism, and leading
the continent out of underdevelopment. However, after almost
four decades, most evidence indicates that the organization has
not succeeded in tackling the myriad challenges that confront the
continent: famine, insecurity, environmental degradation, infec-
tious diseases, and so many others. Also, across the continent,
relations among OAU's members, despite their claims of African
solidarity, have not been as cordial as the organization's founders
had hoped. For instance, from the 1990s to the year 2000, suspi-
cions and tensions abounded among countries in the Mano Rivers
region in West Africa.[9]

     The OAU's impotence in effectively tackling these chal-
lenges, coupled with the demands of a globalizing world, have
led to calls to rework the organization's extant charter in order
to facilitate the type of greater African unity proposed by
Nkrumah and other radical leaders of the early 1960s. In this con-
text, two questions have become particularly germane. First, why
has radical Pan-Africanism, as championed by Nkrumah in the
1960s and in spite of changing realities, remained an enduring

idea and movement? Second, why has Nkrumah's dream of a supra-African state—with equal citizenship—remained only an aspiration? Using a content analysis method, this article engages both questions. Specifically, it provides retrospective and prospective interrogations into the terrain of integration in Africa through the lens of radical Pan-Africanism.

The article is divided into five sections. Following this introduction, the second section lays the conceptual and theoretical foundation for the article. In the third, we discuss the historical trajectory of Pan-Africanism within Africa. The next section examines issues that have prompted the transformation of OAU and the recent upsurge in discourses about the African Union Government (AUG). In that section, we also interrogate factors that have historically halted people's quest for a supranational entity on the continent. The fifth section concludes the article.

Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

The following is the first question of our theoretical investigation: Which model of integration does radical Pan-Africanism seek to promote? Within international relations theory, the notion of integration conveys divergent meanings and interpretations and is also underwritten by divergent theoretical perspectives—all of which are rooted in European intellectual history. However, before examining these, it is imperative to consider the ontology of Pan-Africanism in general and its radical variant in particular. Pan-Africanism, like other concepts that developed as a result of prejudice, is emotionally colored and difficult to define.[10] Consequently, different interpretations of its meaning abound within literature.[11] For instance, Esedebe, in his contribution to Pan-Africanist literature, identifies three actions that have shaped scholarly debates on Pan-Africanism: celebrating one genre of Pan-Africanism at the expense of others, relying on the European colonial record, and hero-worshiping Pan-African personalities without critically interrogating their intellectual contributions.[12]

Nevertheless, scholars and institutions have attempted to attribute the correct meanings to the word. To Padmore, Pan-Africanism was a reaction against the oppression of black people, racial doctrines since the period of slavery, and the slave trade.[13] According to Legum, it expresses a sense of unity and solidarity

among uprooted Africans in the diaspora who felt homeless and were subjected to alien cultures.[14] Thompson, in a markedly different tone, conceives it as a struggle in which Africans and people of African descent have been engaged since their first contact with modern Europeans. [15] Langley, in contrast, views the concept as a combined protest, refusal, demand, and utopia born from centuries of interactions with Europeans. [16] Esedebe posits that it is a political and cultural phenomenon that characterizes Africa, Africans, and people of African descent abroad as one unit, and it aims to regenerate and unify Africa, as well as to promote a feeling of solidarity among people of the African world. [17] Similarly, Skinner avers that it is an organized political activity in which people consciously and deliberately attempts to create a band of solidarity based on a community of faith imposed by the transatlantic slave trade and its aftermath.[18] Janis notes that Pan-Africanism acts as an umbrella term for a range of intellectual and political practices that seek to politically unify and to address the cultural issues of Africa and the diasporas, including African Personality, Negritude, the Pan-African Congresses, Afrocentrism, and Africana cultural theory.[19] In a recent intervention, Okeke and Eme suggest that Pan-Africanism represents the totality of the historical, cultural, spiritual, artistic, and scientific worldviews of Africans from the past to the present in order to preserve African civilizations and to actively resist slavery, racism, colonialism, and neocolonialism.[20] As the above examples demonstrate, many divergent perspectives about the meanings of Pan-Africanism have emerged within literature.

Okeke and Eme's classification of the term seems to capture this idea. According to the duo, there are two theoretical foundations for understanding Pan-Africanism: the orthodox idea approach and the political movement approach.[21] The orthodox idea approach posits that the idea of Pan-Africanism developed out of the efforts of black people in the African diaspora to end slavery, the slave trade, and other forms of dehumanization meted out to black men and women in the Americas, the Caribbean, and Africa during the nineteenth century.[22] They present Pan-Africanism as a political movement founded on the imperative to free Africans from the shackles of colonialism and shifted, after independence, to deconstruct the political and economic structures left behind by decades of colonialism.[23] As Idang notes,

Pan-Africanism " aims to develop an African state system that can save the continent from the ever-increasing dangers of neo-colonialism and its major instrument, balkanization."[24]

It was this brand of Pan-Africanism that assumed an exalted status at the Fifth Pan-African Congress held in Manchester, England, in 1945 and that launched the widespread independence movements that began with Ghana in 1957.[25] In the opinion of Momoh, "during the Pan-African conference held in Manchester in 1945, there was a large African presence or representation. The future leaders of Africa began to adopt the language of pan-Africanism to express or interpret the conditions and aspirations of their people, in their respective countries."[26] According to this paradigm, Pan-Africanism is not only an emancipatory project but also a political tool for reconstructing post-colonial African polities and for furthering the goals of independence.[27]

However, the question of how to translate the politics of Pan-Africanism into an agenda to integrate the continent has generated debates between advocates of supranationality and of inter-governmentality. Notably, scholars have deployed the concept of integration to describe either a process or a condition. Echoing the process school of thought, Haas sees it "as a process whereby political actors in several national settings are persuaded to shift their loyalties, expectations and political activities toward a new centre, whose institutions possess or demand jurisdiction over the pre-existing nation-state."[28] In contrast, Deutsch conceives it "as a condition in which a group of people have attained within a territory, a sense of community, and of institutions and processes strong and widespread enough to assume for a long time dependable expectations of peaceful change among its population."[29] Either way, both approaches to defining integration seem to pinpoint it as a mechanism for aggregating parts into a whole.

Since the end of the Second World War, two theoretical paradigms have framed debates about the route states should follow to integration.[30] The first, the federalist perspective to trans-state integration, celebrates the idea of eventually surrendering states' sovereignties to common supranational institutions that coordinate the cooperative efforts of all. According to Mitrany, "it suggests the coming together of diverse entities in order to create a central entity, to which they relinquish their sovereignties, thus leading to the creation of a supranational entity."[31] Viewed

in the context of international relations, the federalist approach to regional integration presupposes the transplantation of the principles of federalism to the realm of inter-state relations.[32] The major assumption in this paradigm is that the collective-action problems that often confront an anarchical society in the absence of a sovereign would be better be managed if sovereignties were surrendered voluntarily to a central institution.[33] In specific terms, the contention of the perspective, as defended by its proponents, is that trans-state integration would be fast-tracked if sovereignty and nationalism, the twin obstacles to development, were supplanted by supranational institutions—although not necessarily state-like institutions.

As laudable and elegant as the federalist framework is, it has been rejected by advocates of a gradualist and step-wise approach to regional integration. Such advocates insist that the federalist framework is utopian. Designated in integration literature as functional and neo-functional approaches respectively, the two paradigms differ, but, in some respects, both support an incremental approach to trans-state integration. According to Mitrany, a pioneer of functionalism, "sovereignty cannot in fact be transferred effectively through a formula, only through a function."[34] He adds that by emphasizing cooperation to find a solution according to a specific function, a basis would be created for a thickening web of cooperation, which would then lead to the formation and strengthening of trans-state institutions. He also notes that the more successful cooperation is within one functional setting, the greater the incentive is for collaboration in other fields.[35] The core of Mitrany's argument is that integration would be better effected through the creation of a transnational complex of economic and social organization rather than through the surrendering of sovereignties.[36] Put differently, in the long run, cooperative efforts among states in non-political, technical, and professional fields would lead to the deepening of the regional integration process.

The neo-functional approach was developed by Haas as a critical response to Mitrany's functionalism. Haas, writing from his observation of the activities of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in 1952, suggests that the creation of limited supranational institutions would gradually cause the political elites and interest groups of an involved country to support further

integration because they would see benefit in it for themselves.[37] As he notes, "it is not ideological commitment but pragmatic self interest that dictates a 'spill over' of integration from one sector to the another, a process that can lead to the transfer of more and more decision-making to supranational institutions."[38] Put differently, when key actors realize that their interests are best served by a supranational institution such as ECSC rather than by national institutions, regional integration is likely to proceed at a faster rate.

For over five decades, these perspectives have framed discourses on Pan-African integration among African statesmen. Political Pan-Africanists have always adopted one of these two approaches: federalism, which advocates having a union government and supplanting inherited colonial state structures with a supranational center, or functionalism, which expresses cynicism about the capacity of African leaders to sustain one territorial jurisdiction under a supranational body.

Pan-Africanism and Africa: A Retrospective Excursion

In the diaspora, Pan-Africanism emerged as an ideational project pioneered by Africans such as Henry Sylvester Williams, David Levering Lewis, W.E.B. Dubois, and many others. Since its inception in 1900, it has been used as a project to forge the unity of all people of African descent.[39] As a result, many scholars have written about its origins, its later attachment to the African continent, and its institutionalization under the OAU. In particular, the work of Landsberg is important to this study. In his landmark work on the transformation of the OAU, Landsberg identifies five historical waves of Pan-Africanism: resistance against European expansionism (1880–1945); decolonization (1945–1962); African unity (1963–1975); devolution (1975–1989); and the African Renaissance (post-Cold War).[40]

In this article, only the third, fourth and fifth waves are relevant, but the two earlier waves provided a foundation on which the idea of Pan-Africanism was politicized and the African integration agenda was developed.[41] People such as James Johnson, Edward Blyden, and John Chilembwe, who attended Pan-African conferences in London (1900), Paris (1919), Paris/Brussels (1921), London (1923), New York (1927), and Manchester (1945),

worked to concretize the ideas of Pan-Africanism.[42] In particular, discussions at the 1945 Manchester Conference spurred the decolonization epoch and subsequent struggles to reclaim African countries from Western imperialists. Interactions between people at the conference also prompted the radicalization of Pan-Africanist ideas as nationalists demanded independence. As Landsberg opined, it was during the 1945 to 1962 decolonization wave that people began espousing the idea that one country's independence would be meaningless until the entire continent was free of colonial rule.[43] By early 1962, the decolonization phase of Pan-Africanism had run its full course, and the majority of the erstwhile African colonies had attained statehood. Yet people continued to consider this feat meaningless except in the context of a wider continental project. As the first president of Ghana, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, said, "the unity of our continent, no less than our separate independence, will be delayed, if indeed we do not lose it, by hobnobbing with colonialism. African unity is, above all, a political kingdom which can only be gained by political means."[44] Nkrumah's vision of a liberated continent was anchored in the idea of a union government. As Wapmuk noted, "Nkrumah of Ghana and several other African leaders were committed to the idea of achieving continental unity through a single federation."[45]

However, as noted earlier, the vision of this crop of leaders drew the ire of their colleagues and polarized the Pan-Africanist movement.[46] As a result, two state blocs emerged, and they had contradictory visions about Africa's integration.[47] On 7 January 1961, Nkrumah and representatives of Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Morocco, Libya, Egypt, and the Algerian Provisional Government met in Casablanca, Morocco and adopted the Casablanca Charter, which favored political integration as a prerequisite for economic integration.[48] This group insisted that state-centered integration, which was being canvassed by their counterparts in the other group, could retard progress toward political union in Africa.[49] Specifically, Nkrumah called for establishing a committee of foreign affairs officials who were empowered to give the continent a blueprint for a common constitution, currency, foreign policy, defense, and citizenship.[50]

Dissatisfied with the Casablanca group's proposal for an African government, members of the other bloc, led by Nigeria's prime minister, Alhaji Tafawa Balewa, met in Monrovia in May

1961 at the instance of President William Tubman of Liberia.[51] At the end of their summit, the group rejected the Casablanca Charter and reiterated their preference for a gradualist approach to integration.[52] As President Milton Margai of Sierra Leone put it: "We support the principle of African unity which respects the territorial integrity of each state, the free choice of political ideology and form of government before pledging co-operation."[53]

Nigeria's prime minister, conscious of the problem that this open ideological rift could pose for the future of the continent, moved to resolve the dilemma by embarking on a diplomatic mission of appeasement; he tried to persuade members of the Casablanca bloc to join the Monrovia bloc. In January 1962, he convened a meeting of all independent African states in Lagos, Nigeria. However, members of the Casablanca bloc rebuffed Nigeria's invitation.[54] Despite the absence of the Casablanca bloc, the Nigerian prime minister successfully persuaded his Monrovia bloc colleagues to draft the Charter on Intra-African and Malagasy States, which many consider to be the best framework for a true African unity.[55] Further, he reached out to individual members of the Casablanca bloc. For example, he accepted the invitation of King Hassan II of Morocco in January 1963 and visited the country. During the trip, he reminded his host that the people of Africa, given all the continent's challenges, could not afford to bicker over an issue that required a united effort.[56]

The tussles between the blocs eventually culminated in a meeting of foreign ministers that was convened on 15 May 1963 at the request of Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie, a key member of the Monrovia bloc. A week later, a summit meeting followed, and its participants set in motion the agenda to establish an all-encompassing continental body. At the opening ceremony of the summit, the chairman, Emperor Selassie, played a balancing role by admonishing his colleagues not to leave Ethiopia without agreeing on a modality for African unity. According to Selassie, "we cannot leave here without having created a single African organization; with the character we have described it. If we fail in this, we will have shirked our responsibility to Africa and to the people we lead. If we succeed, then, and only then, will we have justified our presence here."[57] Lending his voice to the chairman's position, the Nigerian prime minister remarked, "I am pleased to say that, from now on, there will be no question of the so-called

Monrovia and Casablanca blocs. We all belong to Africa."[58] The leader of the Casablanca group, Dr. Nkrumah, also attempted to convince his colleagues of the necessity of a strong continental union:

> I am happy to be here in Addis Ababa on this most historic occasion. I bring with me the hopes and fraternal greetings of the government and people of Ghana. Our objective is African union now. There is no time to waste. We must unite now or perish. I am confident that by our concerted effort and determination, we shall lay here the foundations for a continental Union of African States.[59]

On 27 May 1963, after two days of deliberation, the involved government leaders set aside Nkrumah's proposal but accepted and adopted the Ethiopia draft proposal, which had first been introduced and adopted at the Council of Foreign Ministers meeting. This became the charter that established the OAU.[60] By the end of the three-day proceedings, the Monrovia bloc's views on integration prevailed.[61] As Elias rightly notes, "The only changes in the original Lagos Charter worth mentioning were a slight reformation of some paragraphs of the preamble and of the purposes and principles, as well as the inclusion of the Defence Commission among the Specialized Commission of the Organization."[62] Therefore, the OAU Charter that was adopted in 1963 mirrored the gradualist approach to integration promoted by Nigerian representatives and other members of the Monrovia bloc.[63]

What played out in Addis Ababa did not signal the end of Pan-Africanism; rather, it indicated the triumph of statesmen who wanted the continuation of nationalist, state-to-state approaches to Africa's international engagement.[64] From 1963, when the OAU was founded, to the 1990s, the main concerns of the majority of African leaders, civilian or military, were about how to consolidate and strengthen their respective Weberian states while also floating sub-regional communities.[65] During this epoch, sub-regional groupings proliferated, and some were even duplicated.[66] The West African sub-region provides an illustration. Between 1975 and 1995, the French-backed Communauté économique des États de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (CÉDÉAO), formed in 1973, competed for prominence with the larger Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), formed in 1975. In the words of Bach,

"they are not complementary but rather competitive."[67] Adedeji puts this in context and states that:

> within fifteen months of the adoption of the revised ECOWAS treaty in Cotonou in January 1993, the Union Monetaire Ouest Africaine (UMOA) was transformed into the Union Economique et Monetaire Ouest Africaine (UEMOA), while the ailing CEAO was dissolved in March 1994. The timing of these changes was exquisite. UMOA was doubtless transformed into UEMOA to get rid of the ailing CEAO, but also as a way of checkmating ECOWAS in a pernicious chess game. UEMOA has succeeded brilliantly in this mission. The Francophone-dominated organization has thrown ECOWAS into a state of paralysis.[68]

The foregoing clearly suggests that radical Pan-Africanism, promoted by Nkrumah and his fellow ideologues and focused on dismantling inherited state structures, was in retreat. In the words of Momoh, "Pan-Africanism has come to occupy a statist platform appropriated by African Heads of State. In this way it has become a nebulous and perverted ideology which expresses and is an outcome of failure, a defeated ideology."[69] Further, the Pan-African meetings that Nkrumah and other radical leaders organized to chart the continent's emancipatory and development agendas were relegated to platforms through which only vocal and marginalized intelligentsia discussed contemporary issues. In one such meeting, the Eighth Congress, held in Uganda in 1993, participants debated whether or not African leaders continued to have interest in Pan-Africanist discourse and projects.[70]

By the 1990s, the divine right and other forms of undemocratic legitimization reasons, which had been deployed for almost three decades to rationalize dictatorships and resulting human rights violations, had run their full course. African leaders began to examine the nexus between national sovereignty, which they had strenuously guarded for decades, and human rights in the context of an emerging global humanitarian order.[71] In 1996, the Secretary General of OAU, Salim Ahmed Salim, asserted, "we should talk about the need for accountability of governments and of their national and international responsibilities. In the process, we shall be redefining sovereignty."[72] The South African president, Nelson Mandela, equally echoed the unfolding development. At

the OAU Summit in 1998 in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, Man-dela advised his colleagues:

> Africa has the right and the duty to intervene to root out tyr-anny . . . we must all accept that we cannot abuse the concept of national sovereignty to deny the rest of the continent the right and duty to intervene when behind those sovereign boundaries people are being slaughtered to protect tyranny.[73]

These developments, coupled with the globalization of humanitarian discourses, generated significant pressures on Afri-ca's despots and pushed them toward embracing an agenda that demystified national sovereignty. Within OAU, old discourses about non-intervention gave way to new ones about non-indif-ference.[74] More importantly, many statements that called for the re-examination of national sovereignty were enshrined in var-ious declarative documents that were products of conferences organized under the auspices of OAU. For example, the Kampala Document, which incorporated the 1990 OAU Heads of State Declaration on the Political and Socio-Economic Situation in Africa, captured this evolving reality. Operationalized through the Conference on Security, Stability, Development, and Cooperation in Africa (CSSDA), the Kampala framework, a replica of the Hel-sinki Accords, privileged the rights of member states to intervene in other states' internal affairs when issues of genocide and other crimes were involved.[75] However, in spite of OAU's efforts to put in place new security and conflict prevention mechanisms, violent conflicts, even some of genocidal proportions, continued to ravage the continent and its inhabitants.

OAU's inability to stop some of these conflicts, coupled with other issues such as economic failure, social dislocation, grinding poverty, famine, and the necessity of being relevant in twenty-first century global society, provided motivation for the transforma-tion of OAU.[76] Because a rich body of literature already exists on factors that spurred the demise of OAU, we do not detail such factors here. However, it is important to underscore one particu-larly relevant factor: the OAU and its charter proved inadequate to address the challenges confronting Africa in the twenty-first century global system.

The Africa Union: A Completely New Paradigm or Same as the Old?

On two successive occasions in 1999, processes were incubated that led to the creation of a new continental body, the African Union (AU), at the 2002 Durham Summit. Both events yet again foregrounded the union government debate that originated at Addis Ababa on 28 May 1963. In terms of content, the new debate mimicked that between the Casablanca and Monrovia blocs of the early 1960s.[77] First, at the OAU's Thirty-Fifth Ordinary Summit session in July 1999 in Algiers, Algeria, African leaders discussed the future of their continent and called for its repositioning to meet the challenges of the upcoming twenty-first century.

Two months later on 9 September 1999, in the city of Sirte, Libya, at the Fourth Extraordinary Session of the OAU Summit, Libya's leader, Muammar Gaddafi, proposed a motion to dissolve OAU and called for a new organization anchored in the idea of a union government.[78] However, Gaddafi's call to replace the OAU with a federal-like organization was rejected by his colleagues, who nevertheless agreed that the continent needed greater unity to meet the challenges of globalization.

On 11 July 2000 at the Thirty-Sixth Ordinary Summit of the defunct OAU in Lomé, Togo, the follow-up to the Sirte Summit, African leaders debated and adopted the draft AU Constitutive Act, which was to replace the OAU Charter.[79] Members used the Constitutive Act to give legal backing to the transformation of the OAU into the African Union. However, the new organization could only take off after the deposition of the instruments of ratification by two-thirds of the OAU's member states.[80] On 26 April 2001, Nigeria submitted its instrument of ratification and became the thirty-sixth member state to do so. With Nigeria's ratification, the Constitutive Act legally established the AU, which paved the way for the organization's formal launch on 9 July 2002 in Durban, South Africa.

A critical examination of the objectives of the AU, which were enshrined in the Constitutive Act, clearly shows a significant departure from the OAU Charter.[81] As stated earlier, the objectives of the OAU Charter of 1963 did not mandate that member states had to promote democracy and human rights. However, the AU Charter sought to promote these liberal values.[82] Pursuant

to the objective to promote democratic government and con-
stitutionalism among member states, the AU Charter states in
Article 30, "Governments which shall come to power through
unconstitutional means shall not be allowed to participate in the
activities of the Union." [83] Equally important to note, some of the
principles in the AU Charter were new additions not found in
the OAU Charter. For example, while the OAU Charter simply
emphasized the principle of non-interference, the AU Charter
retained the non-interference principle but added a *proviso* in
Section (h) stating that "the right of the Union to intervene in a
Member State pursuant to a decision of the Assembly in respect
of grave circumstances, namely: war crimes, genocide and crimes
against humanity." [84] Overall, the new organization, like its precur-
sor, sought to uphold the old ideal of promoting nationalism over
continentalism. Indeed, a provision of Article 3 (a) specifies that
the AU seeks to "achieve greater unity and solidarity between the
African countries and the peoples of Africa." [85] This may be read
as an admission by the drafters of the Constitutive Act that the
quest for African unity was still a work in progress. Interestingly,
this open admission brought to fore the union government debate
which debuted at Addis Ababa on 28 May, 1963. The new debate
began on 9 September, 1999, at the Fourth Extraordinary Ses-
sion of the OAU Summit, in Sirte, Libya. On that day, the Libyan
leader, Mamman Ghadafi, submitted a blueprint for a complete
unification of Africa. In his opening address, he announced a pro-
posal for "United States of Africa," with a single African army,
a common currency, and a continental leader with presidential
powers. [86] However, his colleagues did not accede to this proposal.
Rather, they mandated the Council of Ministers to draft another
proposal that would provide the framework for creating another
organization that would replace the OAU. [87]

   However, rather than giving up on the union government
project, Gaddafi intensified his diplomatic efforts. This paid off
at the Fourth Ordinary Assembly of the AU, which was held in
Abuja, Nigeria, in January 2005. [88] At the assembly, African lead-
ers decided to carefully study Gaddafi's proposal regarding the
establishment of ministerial portfolios for the AU. They went fur-
ther and set up a Committee of Heads of State, led by Ugandan
President Yoweri Museveni, to look into Gaddafi's proposal, liaise
with the chairperson of the AU Commission, and submit a report

by the next summit in July 2005. At the July Summit in Sirte, Gaddafi moved to persuade his colleagues to support his proposal. In his speech, he articulated his argument around the concept of sovereignty:

> We accept from others outside Africa to reduce our sovereignty and to interfere in our internal affairs, but we do not accept the same in the name of African unity. When we talk of African unity, we say no on the grounds that it is in conflict with our national sovereignty. . . . Yet, we are prepared to cede our sovereignty to foreign powers. We accept that, saying this is the way things work in our own time, but when we talk of ceding part of our sovereignty to the African Union, we say no our sovereignty is too big a thing to compromise.[89]

Again, African leaders tactically and tactfully rejected Gaddafi's proposal by setting up another Committee of Heads of State, chaired by the Nigerian leader Olusegun Obasanjo, to draft recommendations.[90] The Obasanjo-led committee soon sent their recommendations to the AU Commission, which took place in Addis Ababa in December 2005.[91] The AU Commission subsequently commissioned a study group, which looked into the proposal and at a technical workshop held in Abuja in April 2006, drafted a document titled *Study on an AU Government Towards the United States of Africa*.[92] This document later became the report submitted by the Obasanjo-led committee to the Seventh Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly in Banjul, Gambia, in June 2006. Subsequently, at the Eighth Ordinary Assembly of Heads of State and Government held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in January 2007, members decided that national consultations should be held on the issue. This was followed by the "Grand Debate" on the union government issue by Heads of State and by governments at the Ninth Ordinary Summit in Accra, Ghana, in July 2007.[93]

The Grand Debate bifurcated African leaders into two blocs, which was reminiscent of the 1963 Addis Ababa Summit. In the first bloc were Nkrumah's pseudo-incarnates, the maximalists, who favored immediate unification. Led by Muammar Gaddafi and Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal, this bloc, despite its small number, insisted that the creation of a union government with ministries and departments should be of immediate priority in Africa. In the other bloc, the minimalists, represented by

leaders of Nigeria, South Africa, the Gambia, Angola, Lesotho, Mozambique, Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Mauritius, much like the gradualists of the early 1960s, contended that regional economic communities should be further strengthened before continental integration. After two days of speeches and debates, the Accra Declaration, produced by a committee led by Ghanaian President John Kufuor, simply summarized the divergent views of leaders rather than taking a position and deciding on the issue of a union government.

What is clearly deducible from these events is that the radical Pan-Africanists' vision of a supranational Africa is still an aspiration. Why? Scholars have suggested many factors that explain why this vision continues to be elusive. In this article, we contend that while these factors offer explanatory frameworks for this state of affair, they cannot be divorced from the nature of post-colonial African states.[94] Though weak structurally and territorially, the African post-colonial states offer almost limitless opportunities for their custodians to deploy state powers for the purpose of primitive accumulation within their territories.[95] It thus implies that beyond legal principles, such as *Uti possidetis*,[96] a core value for national ruling elites is the preservation of existing territorial state structures from internal threats and from external surrendering of sovereignties. Indeed, paradoxically, few contemporary scholars of African Affairs have asked why African states, the weakest in the international system, still defend the Westphalian territorial order.[97] As Clapham, in a comparison with Europe, rightly observes, "the map of Africa has remained almost unchanged in over a century of upheaval, from the colonial scramble, through two world wars, independence, the Cold War and its aftermath. The map of Europe, in contrast, has been redrawn many times".[98] Our argument here is that, since African states remain central actors in the processes of capitalist accumulation, African leaders are likely to safeguard them from being supplanted to supranational entities. Thus, the forces of elites' self-preservation lay hidden beyond occasional declarations and pronouncements at Summits.

Concluding Remarks

Like other continents where colonialism and other forms of exploitative order have footholds, post-colonial African societies,

at independence, needed a new political template that could reverse the iniquities of colonialism and transform inherited state structures. European statesmen drew from the experiences of the First and Second World Wars and moved toward greater European unity by ensuring greater transfer of national sovereignties. In contrast, African statesmen, as we have shown in this article, have not moved discourses about Africa's integration beyond rhetoric. Indeed, whether integration is assessed from a federalist angle, as favored by the radical pan-Africanists of the early 1960s and their heirs, or from the functionalist perspective, as defended by the promoters of the *status quo ante*, the goal of an integrated Africa, first accepted at Addis Ababa in 1963 and then at Abuja in 1991, is far from being achieved.

As we have shown in this article, through the example of West Africa, rather than strengthening the existing continental framework, the activities of statesmen and diplomats have been geared toward proliferating inter-governmental institutions and have made the journey toward an integrated Africa more challenging. Most importantly, post-colonial state structures have remained intact because they offer almost limitless opportunities for capital accumulation to their custodians—individual African leaders.[99] Thus supplanting them to supranational bodies might weaken the status quo. Ake has submitted that the weak material base of the post-colonial governing elites makes state capture a sure path to wealth accumulation.[100] Ake further posits that in order to achieve this grand objective, which is a continuation of the colonial design, statism has become the dominant developmental ideology of African governing elites.[101] Given this reality, post-colonial states in Africa, despite their limited capacity, have remained entities whose power must be protected from internal subversion and from external supplanting. In light of the foregoing, we thus submit that as long these structures remain untransformed, the least condition in the integration continuum—the achievement of an inter-governmental collaborative framework—may continue to be an issue and be difficult to attain. This implies that the radical Pan-Africanist idea of a supranational and federalist Africa may also remain at the level of aspiration—even though Pan-Africanism of all genres continues to be an enduring and appealing ideal.

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