

## Planned Governance and the Liberal Revival in Africa: The Paradox of Anticipation

Ali A. Mazrui

Follow this and additional works at: <http://scholarship.law.cornell.edu/cilj>



Part of the [Law Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Mazrui, Ali A. (1992) "Planned Governance and the Liberal Revival in Africa: The Paradox of Anticipation," *Cornell International Law Journal*: Vol. 25: Iss. 3, Article 3.

Available at: <http://scholarship.law.cornell.edu/cilj/vol25/iss3/3>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by Scholarship@Cornell Law: A Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Cornell International Law Journal by an authorized administrator of Scholarship@Cornell Law: A Digital Repository. For more information, please contact [jmp8@cornell.edu](mailto:jmp8@cornell.edu).

# Planned Governance and the Liberal Revival in Africa: The Paradox of Anticipation

## Introduction<sup>1</sup>

Three processes have been underway in Africa in the last few years, sometimes contradicting and at other times reinforcing each other. One trend is an unmistakable pro-democracy movement that has inspired widely divergent political movements, ranging from the Islamic Salvation Front in Algeria (FIS) to the Forum for the Restoration of Democracy in Kenya (FORD). The second discernible trend has been the decline of central economic planning and greater reliance on the free market. Sometimes this decline has been due to domestic disenchantment with the role of the state in the economy, a result of pressures from international donors, creditors, and other pro-market forces abroad. The third trend in Africa, less clear-cut than the other two, involves a rise in political planning.

This paper considers these three trends and their interrelationships. Part I discusses the liberal revival in Africa, which has occurred mostly in the form of pro-democracy movements. Part II discusses the

---

\* Albert Schweitzer Professor in the Humanities, State University of New York at Binghamton, New York, USA; Albert Luthuli Professor-at-Large, University of Jos, Jos, Nigeria; Andrew D. White Professor-at-Large, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, USA.

1. This paper is indebted to the following related presentations that I have made: "Planning and the Liberal Revival in Africa," Annual Distinguished Lecture, conference on African Policy Issues, Institute of Africana Affairs, Washington, D.C., April 23, 1992; "Development in a Multicultural Context: Trends and Tensions," Address to the World Bank International conference on "Culture and Development," held at the World Bank, Washington, D.C., April 2, 1992; "Privatization, the Liberal Revival and the Market: Africa's Cultural Contradictions," paper presented at an international conference on "Liberalization of National Economies and Regional Economic Integration in Africa," hosted by the Confederation of Tanzania Industries and the Friedrich-Naumann Foundation, May 25-28, 1992, Arusha, Tanzania; and "Ethnic Separatism and the Liberal Revival in Africa," presentation made at the 25th Anniversary symposium of the *Cornell International Law Journal* on the theme "The Nations Within: Ethnic Group Demands in a Changing World," March 6, 1992, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.

fall of socialism and economic planning in Africa. Part III explores the rise of political planning and its role in economic development. Part IV considers the special case of Nigeria. Part V discusses the issue of gender and its absence from the political and economic agendas in Africa.

### I. The Liberal Revival in Africa: Between Two Liberation Struggles

Although much less publicized than that of Eastern Europe, there has been a wave of democratic activism in Africa, from Lusaka to Lagos, from Madagascar to Mali. The scale of activism and militancy has varied from one African country to another—but a liberal pluralistic fire has indeed been spreading across the continent.

Most African countries are multi-ethnic. As a result, the struggle for pluralistic democracy has, on the whole, been unifying across ethnic lines. Countries that have produced mass movements demanding greater openness and freedom of organization have found considerable bases of solidarity against the single ethnic group in power. When unfulfilled, democratic activism has often generated a sense of national purpose. But the actual achievement or implementation of pluralistic democracy can be fragmenting, and sometimes results in ethnic separatism. At the stage of *struggle*, the liberal revival in Africa has been unifying. However, at the stage of constitutional fulfillment, the democratic activism in Africa is often divisive. For example, the long struggle against apartheid in South Africa was, on the whole, a basis of solidarity for Blacks. But the very triumph of that struggle—even before final consummation—has already released demonic divisive forces within the Black population. The anguished cry among Blacks has now become: “How can we eliminate the evil of apartheid without destroying the solidarity of struggling against it?”

Ethiopia represents a special case of this trend. The country was a dynastic empire until 1974, with Emperor Haile Selassie as its last imperial crown. A neo-Marxist military regime, led by Mengistu Haile-Mariam, overthrew the Emperor in 1974. After the coup, the Empire disintegrated and different ethnic groups began to demand self-determination from the Amharic political center. Mengistu’s neo-Marxist regime has recently fallen, and there has been agonizing reappraisal in the country. Should Ethiopia—like the former Soviet Union—create a Commonwealth of Independent States, a confederation of autonomous ethnic entities? The current regime is considering a confederation of ethnic actors within a new political arrangement.

The 1990s are likely to be as momentous a decade for constitutional engineering on the African continent as were the last years of colonialism in Western and Eastern Africa in the 1950s. A new constitutional dawn seems to be about to break out upon Africa as pro-democracy movements stretch out from the Mediterranean to the Cape of Good Hope.

But there are other reasons, apart from the pro-democracy movements, as to why the 1990s are likely to be a fertile period for constitutional engineering. Many African civil wars, which had previously been fuelled and prolonged by the Cold War between the superpowers, are coming to an end. The war in Eritrea, for example, would not have lasted thirty years had it not been externally fuelled. The war in Angola would not have lasted fifteen years without the Cold War between the superpowers. The war in Mozambique with Renamo was the brainchild of racism in South Africa and the old Rhodesia.

As these wars come to an end, the people in these countries need new constitutional arrangements. These arrangements must not only protect different ethnic groups but must also fill the void created by decades of strife. This will require constitutional engineering as fundamental as that which preceded formal independence. The political mood is liberal and pluralistic.

The civil wars in Somalia and Liberia were only indirectly fuelled by the Cold War. The war in Somalia was partly inter-clan and partly inter-regional. The war in Liberia was inter-tribal, exacerbated by struggles between Americo-Liberians and indigenous Liberians. The beginnings of pacification are evident in Liberia, and both these countries will need constitutional innovation and a sense of political direction in the 1990s if they are to recover from the burdens of fratricide and anarchy. They will need pluralistic systems of governance.

Nigeria may provide a model for the constitutional engineering of the 1990s, as it moves from military to civilian rule. Under President Ibrahim Babangida, Nigeria seeks to learn from its political past, which has been characterized by inter-ethnic, inter-sectarian, and inter-regional strife. Past multi-party experiments have led to anarchy. Nigeria's first fully pluralistic government ended in civil war in 1967; the second democratic regime resulted in national bankruptcy from 1979 to 1983. A fully unrestricted multi-party system is potentially dangerous for Nigeria. President Babangida has thus imposed a two-party system, which may be a compromise between a multi-party system that leads to too little government and anarchy, and a one-party system that leads to too much government and tyranny. President Babangida's solution of dualism will hopefully take effect with the restoration of civilian rule in 1992.

One example of the President's attempts to mitigate ethnic strife in Nigeria is the national census. In the past, the census has been a politically explosive numerical exercise because of Nigeria's multitude of groups. The 1991 census, however, did not include traditional questions regarding one's tribe or religion. Additionally, the President avoided use of the census for resource allocation to different states of the federation; he will use the indicators for distributing money.

South Africa will also undergo constitutional engineering in the 1990s as it dismantles apartheid. Such engineering must be sensitive to social balance and majority rule. In this vein, is President F. W. De

Klerk another Abraham Lincoln? Are they both statesmen who, though born in the womb of racism, and racist themselves, became historically instrumental in ending particular forms of racial injustice? The following statement could have been said by either man in their early lives:

I am not, nor ever have been in favor of bringing about in any way the social and political equality of the white and black races . . . I am not nor ever have been in favor of making voters or jurors of Negroes, nor of qualifying them to hold office, nor to intermarry with white people; and I will say in addition to this that there is a physical difference between the white and black races which I believe will forever forbid the two races living together on terms of social and political equality.<sup>2</sup>

Lincoln said this on September 18, 1858, at an address in Charleston, Illinois, arguing that anti-slavery did not mean racial equality. It is possible that De Klerk will similarly assure whites in South Africa while still seeking to dismantle apartheid.

Given the existence of Africa's liberal revival, one must ask why it has occurred now. Some have suggested that the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe sparked the liberal revival in Africa. This theory, however, overlooks the fact that the present situation is a continuation of an earlier *African* trend. The Soweto *intifadah* (uprising) in 1976 may be more relevant for Africa's pro-democracy movements in the 1990s than were demonstrations in Prague in 1989. The Sudanese riots in the streets of Khartoum helped to bring Dictator Jaafar Numeiry down in 1985, well before the world knew much about Mikhail Gorbachev. In Uganda, Yoweri Museveni created an army against Milton Obote's dictatorship in 1981 and waged a war for several years before defeating the official army. The struggle owed nothing to any East European inspiration; there was no such influence.

One reason for the current liberal revival is the so-called "revolution of rising frustrations" in post-colonial Africa, which has culminated in the last years of the twentieth century. Most post-colonial governments have not only failed to meet the original "revolution of rising expectations," but they have often caused decay rather than development. Since the late 1980s, people have been ready to demonstrate for change in the streets of African capitals.

Pro-democracy movements have also occurred in the 1980s and 1990s because of the reemergence of Africa's democratic instinct, which had previously taken the form of anti-colonialism. In its earlier manifestation, Africa's democratic instinct had sought realization through nationalism. The result was Africa's first liberation struggle. But Africa's democratic instinct has not inaugurated a second liberation struggle. If the first one was against alien rule, this new crusade is for African democracy. If the first liberation effort was for political indepen-

---

2. Fourth Lincoln-Douglas Debate, Charleston, Illinois, Sept. 18, 1858, *reprinted in LINCOLN: SPEECHES, LETTERS, MISCELLANEOUS WRITINGS* 636 (Don E. Ferenbacher ed., 1989).

dence, this struggle is for wider human rights. If the first endeavor was for collective self-determination, this liberation struggle seeks individual fulfillment.

During Africa's first liberation struggle, almost no price was too high for collective freedom. Algeria paid with a million lives in the war for independence between 1954 to 1962, the most costly war in Africa in the second half of the twentieth century. Countries like Kenya, Zimbabwe, Angola, Mozambique, and Namibia sacrificed many thousands of lives for national liberation. It remains to be seen whether in this new incarnation of democratic instinct Africans will be as ready to sacrifice as they were in the struggle for independence. Will Africans be as ready to die for individual rights and civil liberties as they once were for national self-determination? The answer lies in the womb of history. The future of democracy in Africa is uncertain.

Again, South Africa presents a special case: it has fused the two liberation struggles—the struggle for collective self-determination and the socio-democratic struggle for individual rights and social justice—into one movement. Since 1910, South Africa experienced the internalization of white colonialism. Both the Union of South Africa and the Republic of South Africa were classic cases of undigested internal imperialism. While *Black-against-Black* violence usually happens soon after political decolonization—exemplified by fighting in Zimbabwe, the Nigerian civil war (1967-1970), and the first Sudanese civil war (1955-1972)—in South Africa it is occurring simultaneously with political decolonization. The present Black-against-Black violence may replace the typical post-independence violence, which often involves better arms and more deaths than pre-independence mob violence. Black South Africans may get so satiated with blood and violence before liberation that the country becomes a paragon of peace thereafter.

The 1990s are thus likely to be as fundamental a decade for constitutional change in Africa as were the last years of colonial rule. The 1990s are likely to be a decade of both fundamental economic and political reforms, specifically the decline of central economic planning and the emergence of more serious political planning. As there has been a decline of economic planning, there has been a move towards capitalism.

The economic movement towards capitalism may reduce ethnic consciousness and promote ethnic integration. Capitalism promotes class formation and reduces ethnic allegiance; it engenders criss-crossing loyalties between ethnic groups based on economic considerations rather than ethnic identities. It further promotes individualization at the expense of collective ethnic allegiance. Capitalism may thus increase national integration while liberal democracy, in contrast, exacerbates ethnic tensions and decreases national integration. Multi-party rivalry emphasizes competitive ethnic consciousness.

It should be noted that the longest surviving civilian regimes in Africa—Tanzania, Zambia, Côte D'Ivoire, Kenya, Guinea, Malawi—have

been single-party regimes. Multi-party politics guarantee massive inter-ethnic competition and sometimes separatism, and thus invites soldiers to come in as "saviors" of the nation, custodians of national unity. One-party systems discourage military intervention. While capitalism thus mitigates ethnicity and facilitates national integration, liberal democracy aggravates ethnic tensions and harms efforts at national integration, at least in the short run. One attempt at solving this dilemma has been political planning.

The paper now considers the basic nature of *Afrostroika*, or fundamental reform of Africa.

## II. Deplanning the Economy

Two major forces led to the decentralization of African economies: structural adjustment, as defined by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and privatization. Central planning as a strategy of economic development was under siege. By the beginning of the 1990s, over thirty countries had submitted to structural adjustment and decentralized their economies. Factors that prepared the way for structural adjustment in Africa include the collapse of commodity markets, the rise and fall of oil prices, Africa's declining access to foreign exchange, the impact of the debt crisis, the devastations of environmental degradation, and the much closer coordination and consensus among donors in support of the strictures of the IMF and the World Bank. Gone are the days when donors themselves were divided and competitive enough to enable African governments to play one benefactor against another.

The imperative of *privatization* also undermined the culture of central planning in Africa. Marketing boards were dismantled, the public sector had shrunk, consumer subsidies were in disfavor and trading partners demanded liberalization. State control of the economy lost legitimacy in one country after another. Planned economies were indeed becoming an endangered species.

The trend towards privatization in Africa was reinforced by events in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in the Gorbachev era. After independence, African intellectuals had often talked about "the crisis of international capitalism." By the end of the 1980s, they were discussing "the crisis of international socialism." In some ways, socialism itself was becoming an endangered species in the concluding years of the twentieth century. But past capitalist crises had resulted simply in ideological adaptation and capitalist resilience. It is possible that the current crisis of international socialism will also result in socialist adaptation and the triumph of Marxist revisionism. Again, the answer lies in the womb of history.

Alternative routes to socialism are likely to be more seriously considered in the 1990s than ever before. It may be possible to save the virtues of socialism without perpetuating its vices. One solution is mar-

ket socialism, which is a combination of planned distribution with unplanned production; a combination of the socialized welfare state with an increasingly privatized system of productivity. While the genius of capitalism is *production*, the genius of socialism is *distribution*.

The precedent for market socialism was set by Tito's Yugoslavia. It is arguable that the entire Gorbachev revolution follows the footsteps of Tito's ideological experiment. The Yugoslav Marshal's paradigm was one of the first nails in the coffin of central planning in an otherwise socialist society. *Perestroika* is one of the latest nails into the coffin. African leftism is now catching up with these changes.

Market socialism may be interpreted as the death of Leninism without the demise of Marxism. It was the Leninization of Marx that heralded centralization in the Soviet culture and fraternity. Lenin christened his basic doctrine "democratic centralism," although his real contribution was more centralism than the democracy. Lenin developed the principle of a monopolistic communist party, which equipped Marxism with one dominant strategy of implementation, the socialist vanguard party. It can be argued that Eastern Europe is rebelling against Leninism rather than Marxism, against socialist centralism rather than the socialist ethic of distribution. Africa need not abandon both Leninism and Marxism, although it has already done so in some countries.

Until the 1980s, Marxism was the most rapidly spreading belief-system in history. Within a single century after the death of Karl Marx in 1883, his ideas had captured more of the human race than the ideas of Buddha, Jesus, or Muhammad had in a comparable span of history. By the middle of the 1980s, more human beings were governed by Marxist principles than by Buddhist, Christian, or Islamic principles. Central planning seemed triumphant, especially when Marxism was Leninized. Before the end of the decade, however, Marxism had been more fundamentally challenged than either Buddhism, Christianity, or Islam. The system of values that had spread faster than any other in human history seemed destined to decline faster too. Central planning appeared to be a casualty of the reverse dialectic.

Yet as capitalism adjusted in order to survive, perhaps socialism will too. One adaptation is market socialism, which would privatize production while retaining planned distribution. In this type of system, central economic planning would still be in disfavor. In Eastern Europe, the pro-democracy movement in 1989 appeared to be an anti-socialist movement, but in Africa demands for democracy are not necessarily protests against socialism.

### III. Governance and Economic Development

While central planning in Africa has been declining in the economic domain, it seems to have gotten a new lease on life in the political arena. Until recently the very term "planners" connoted economic technocrats. The new era of purposeful political engineering calls for a redefinition

of concepts like “plannification” and “planner.” *Afrostroika* has arrived alongside new directions of governance. Algeria and Zimbabwe offer two examples of political engineering but feature different results.

Following the 1988 riots in Algeria, hasty political planning rapidly reduced the role of the National Liberation Front (FLN), expanded the powers of the legislature, curtailed the functions of the state in the economy, improved the prospects for political pluralization, and stimulated a trend towards a competitive multi-party system. The democratic process was aborted in 1991, however, when it seemed clear that the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) was going to be voted into power.

In Zimbabwe the trend has been in the reverse direction, towards partial depluralization. Since independence in 1980, President Robert Mugabe’s plan for the decade was to inaugurate a single-party system. Waiting until the system of racially reversed seats (constitutionally guaranteed for whites at the time of independence) ended, Mugabe cajoled and pressured Joshua Nkomo and his Zimbabwe African People’s Union (ZAPU) to merge with the ruling Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU-PF). Mugabe then implemented a more credible socialist strategy of transformation.

Zimbabwe and Algeria started off as similar African cases. Both had been colonies dominated by white settlers. Both had undergone bitter wars of national liberation. In both countries, the dominant white minorities had resisted the wills of their metropolitan governments—Algerian colons pitched against Charles de Gaulle, while Ian Smith pitched against Harold Wilson and his successors. On attainment of independence, both countries aspired to a non-capitalistic development strategy with a pronounced economic role for the state. Central planning seemed to be a shared faith between the two regimes, though Zimbabwe was slower in implementing it.

But by the end of the 1980s, Algeria and Zimbabwe were moving in almost opposite directions. Responding partly to the riots of 1988, Algeria was edging towards political pluralism and economic decentralization. A multi-party system seemed to be on the horizon in Algeria, until the FIS emerged as the likely winner, at which point the military intervened.

Zimbabwe, on the other hand, was moving away from political pluralism as Robert Mugabe pursued and is pursuing his *de facto* single-party ideal. Though political opposition was still legal and although the 1990 general election involved inter-party contests, Mugabe still aspires to create a one-party Zimbabwe in the course of the 1990s if he can persuade enough members of his own party. Although Zimbabwe was also interested in a more centralized economic order, its socialist bark was stronger than its socialist bite. Not a single major enterprise was nationalized in the first decade of Robert Mugabe’s reign (1980-1989). White farmers remained relatively privileged; the economy, though highly regulated and possibly over-taxed, was still a market economy. Although Mugabe assured the joint-party congress in Harare in Decem-

ber 1989 that socialism would never be imposed upon an unwilling populace, the ruling party's Congress reaffirmed its faith in Marxism-Leninism as a guide.

The contrasting trends in Algeria and Zimbabwe reflect the dialectical tensions between governance and the economy, between the imperative of stability and the imperative of development. The relationship between governance and economic development is deeply affected by the following interrelated factors:

*Size* - how big the government is;

*Role* - how much the government does;

*Effectiveness* - how well the government does it;

*Legitimacy* - how representative the government is.

The first consideration, "bigness," includes not only the size of the civil service or bureaucracy proper but also the parastatals. The second consideration relates to the role of the state in the economy and the nature of the government's functions. The third consideration concerns behavior. The fourth deals with democracy and representativeness, or lack thereof. Applying this model to Algeria, the government may be trying to reduce the size of the bureaucracy, curtail statism, improve administrative efficiency, and enhance democratization.

In Africa representativeness is often measured ethnically rather than electorally. Ethnic arithmetic helps to reassure different groups that they are truly part of the machinery and consequently among the beneficiaries. The extent to which a government is deemed to be representative is based on its reflection of the ethnic composition of the wider society. In Nigeria, this principle of representativeness is often referred to as "the federal character" of the nation. In Zimbabwe, the single-party ideal was originally designed to enable Ndebele of ZAPU to share power with Shona of ZANU-PF. Mugabe succeeded in enlisting Nkomo's Ndebele after all. But opposition among fellow Shona emerged.

The dynamic of ethnic representativeness has a propensity to enlarge governmental and bureaucratic institutions. The cabinet, civil service and the parastatals can get "bloated" in response to the delicate balance of ethnic arithmetic. Consequently, Zimbabwe may evolve into a more bloated bureaucracy under a single-party in the future. On the other hand, insensitivity to the need for ethnic balance can destabilize a country. The absence of ethnic representativeness in countries like Nigeria or Uganda often poses a bigger political risk than the absence of the opportunity to vote. Ethnic arithmetic is often a more compelling imperative than the ballot in the liberal sense.

As for the criterion of performance of the government, one central dilemma in Africa concerns the relationship between economic liberalization and political liberalization. In certain African countries, political pluralism has tended to be economically destabilizing. Under President Shehu Shagari (1979-1983), Nigeria was politically open and competi-

tive, although economically anarchic. Ghana under Limann and Sudan under Sadiq el Mahdi were also politically open but economically devastated societies. Southern Sudan was, of course, neither politically free nor economically protected and was devastated both politically and economically.

Consequently, in such African countries there is a genuine moral dilemma because political pluralism carries a higher risk of economic decay. Often a government must choose either political freedom or economic development, but not both. In such a situation what is the duty of donors and international institutions? Is there a genuine risk that institutions like the World Bank and the IMF would actually *prefer* military regimes like those of Ibrahim Babangida and Jerry Rawlings to democratically elected regimes like those of Shagari and Limann? Is there a risk that external bodies would encourage economic liberalization while discouraging political liberalization?

Corruption also is a factor in measuring the performance of a government. Corruption sometimes takes the form of privatization of the state itself, of which several forms exist. Ethnic privatization occurs when ethnic representativeness is abandoned, and one particular ethnic group monopolizes or disproportionately controls the state. Dynastic privatization occurs when the resources and symbols of the state are monopolized by an individual and his immediate family. Anarchic privatization occurs when state wealth and power are dissipated in a free-for-all scramble for advantage. Nigeria under Shagari exemplified anarchic privatization, especially from 1981 onwards.

The *political* dilemma in Africa is avoiding the danger of *tyranny* on one side and the risk of *anarchy* on the other. Tyranny is too much government and frequently features a centralization of violence; anarchy is too little government and features decentralized violence—often neighbor against neighbor. Ethiopia, Angola, Mozambique, and Liberia have experienced both centralized and anarchic violence. The *economic* dilemma in Africa is avoiding the risk of economic dependency (a truncated capacity for self-reliance) on one side and the peril of economic decay (a truncated capacity for development), on the other. The crisis of governance in Africa concerns the relationship between political evils of tyranny and anarchy and the economic evils of dependency and decay. One solution may lie in the role of central planning in political engineering.

#### IV. The Case of Nigeria: Planned Governance and Political Engineering

In Nigeria economic planning has always been honored more in the breach than in the observance. But in recent years belief among some Nigerians in centrally planned political reform has reached new levels of earnestness. The year 1992 has become at least as important for Nigeria politically as it is to Western Europe economically. While in Western Europe, 1992 is a date of planned economic integration, in Nigeria,

1992 is a target for one more step towards national integration as the country's ethnic walls undergo political erosion.

Although in the past Nigeria has played a special role in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the present government of Ibrahim Babangida may be more committed to national political development than to regional economic integration. Babangida's political plan for Nigeria includes the following political goals and targets: restoring civilian rule in 1992; reducing the number of political parties to two; making each party trans-ethnic and more genuinely national; making each party trans-religious and more genuinely secular; reducing the power of regionalism in forming political allegiances; balancing continuity and change by disqualifying previous power-brokers of Nigeria's first two republics; and reducing the role of money in winning votes and influencing elections.

Babangida established an elaborate timetable for this political plan, beginning with the creation of new political parties. In 1989, various political groups created new parties, although Babangida regarded this as neither adequately *national* nor sufficiently *secular*. The military regime took the initiative to create two alternative political parties, one center-right and the other center-left, and then asked the population to consider membership in one or the other.

The first quarter of 1990 was allocated to the printing, translation and distribution of the preliminary constitutions and manifestos of the two parties. Administrative officials of each party were appointed and trained with the help of the military government. The parties began to register members during the first six months of 1990. Party congresses and conventions at the level of wards and local government were also held at this time. Party congresses and conventions at state and national levels took place in the third quarter of 1990. The final drafts of manifestos and constitutions were submitted to the Armed Forces Ruling Council. Local government elections were held in the fourth quarter of 1990.

The main agenda for 1991 was the explosive issue of the national census, which provided the demographic foundation of electoral constituencies. If everything goes according to plan, it may be possible to finalize state elections—and inaugurate the governors and state legislatures.

Late 1992 remained the decisive year of federal elections. Elections for the federal legislature and the presidency should occur in the third quarter of 1992. The new civilian president will be sworn in and the final political disengagement of the Armed Forces should occur in the last quarter of 1992.

Historically incapable of central economic planning, Nigeria now has embarked on perhaps the most elaborate national political plan that

post-colonial Africa has ever attempted.<sup>3</sup>

The Babangida administration has also engaged in economic reform. Structural adjustment is a kind of economic engineering. Although 1990 was the year of consolidating structural adjustment (SAP), much remains to be done. The distinctive characteristic of the SAP in Nigeria is liberalization rather than centralization. Babangida's plan for the Nigerian economy is a plan committed to decentralization. The dismantling of the commodity marketing boards was one such move in the direction of planned decentralization.

## V. Gender: The Missing Agenda

Whatever one may think of Babangida's precise measures for reforming Nigeria, his grand design has shown sensitivity to the following divisions in Nigerian society: the *ethnic* divide; the *religious* divide; the *regional* divide; the divide between political *generations* (old politicians *versus* new); and the *class* divide (as affected by structural adjustment, for better or worse). The divide missing in the grand design is the *gender factor*. Throughout Africa, there is inadequate planning for the empowerment of women in the political process. The Babangida administration has been no different in this regard.

Post-colonial Africa has started using women in senior diplomatic positions more readily than in almost any other major public service—but more by default than by design. Uganda has had a woman foreign minister (Princess Elizabeth Bagaya) sooner than the United States has had a woman Secretary of State. Uganda has also had a number of senior female ambassadors since independence, at posts which have ranged from Accra to Paris to Copenhagen to Washington. Several African women are serving as ambassadors in Paris and represent a range of political regimes from Ghana to Tanzania, from the African National Congress to Uganda. The African National Congress (ANC) envoy, Ms. Dulcie September, was assassinated in Paris in 1988, probably by agents of apartheid.

The most famous African woman of the 1980s was Winnie Mandela, but again, this was not a planned political design. Winnie Mandela's ascent to political prominence was in the same tradition as Mrs. Aquino in the Philippines (in the wake of a martyred husband), Ms. Benazir Bhutto in Pakistan (in the wake of a martyred father), and Mrs. Bandernaike in Ceylon (in the wake of a martyred husband). Winnie illustrates female succession to male martyrdom.

Will Winnie Mandela stage a comeback and one day become a Foreign Minister in post-apartheid South Africa? Although thoroughly con-

---

3. I am greatly indebted to Jonah Isawa Elaigwu for advice and information about the Babangida experiment in Nigeria, though I have to accept full responsibility for my interpretation of it. I also acknowledge my debt to the work done for Volume VIII of the UNESCO General History of Africa on political and economic trends in Africa. The volume is scheduled for publication no later than 1993.

troversial in South Africa itself, Winnie Mandela would stand a chance for a Ministerial position in a post-apartheid South Africa—though she does indeed combine diverse critics and foes at home, with fervent admirers and apologists abroad. At present, however, the ANC is no more equipped with an agenda for the empowerment of women than any other liberation movement has been.

It seems fairly certain that any new government in South Africa, like Zimbabwe before it, will experiment with a system of racial reservation of seats for whites at least temporarily. Planned governance in Africa as a whole should also include a strategy of gender reservation of seats. One possible design would entail the following *three phases*: Phase I—Reserved seats in the legislature for women, elected only by women without prejudice to the rights of women as voters on the common electoral roll as well; Phase II—Reserved seats in the legislature for women elected by universal franchise on an electoral roll consisting of both men and women; Phase III—Abolition of special seats for women when the evidence shows a commensurate and more balanced representation of men and women through a common electoral roll.

Ironically the most likely laboratories of gender planning in Africa may be the Muslim countries. First, Muslim societies are more used to gender separation in other areas of social life. Second, Muslim countries like Pakistan and Egypt have already experimented with special seats for women. Third, Muslim African countries like Somalia and Libya have experimented with gender-regiments in the armed forces on a continent where soldiers remain among the major actors in politics. Fourth, the Muslim country of Algeria was the first to use women in the air force, often a major influence on political strategies in Africa. For example, the attempted coup in Kenya in August 1982 was led by the air force.

## Conclusion

Three historic—if flawed—trends in Africa are currently unfolding: the growth of a momentous pro-democracy movement, the decline of central economic planning, and new and hesitant efforts at planning the political future. Gender planning is perhaps the most serious of all the omissions in Africa's political and economic reforms. There exists a general shift in popular participation in Africa, declining faith among Africans in, "heroes and hero-worship." Some countries exhibit a new optimism about political engineering and planned governance. Gender planning needs to be included if Africa's grand design for the 1990s and the 21st century is to become comprehensive and fundamental enough to tilt the balance in favor of genuine societal transformation. *Afrostoika* needs to be androgynized if it is to avoid some of the pitfalls of *perestroika* elsewhere in the world.

