



Department of Political Science, PPE

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“Pan-Africanism and its impact on African Unity and Integration”

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Table of contents

Introduction	3
CHAPTER I - The historical evolution of Pan-Africanism and its major exponents.	
1.1 Pan-Africanism: a historical cultural movement.	4
1.2 Pan-Africanism and the 19th century: from W.E.B. Du Bois to George Padmore.	9
1.3 A new exponent of Pan-Africanism: Kwame Nkrumah.	15
CHAPTER II - Regional Integration and the Role of Supranational Organizations.	
2.1 Regional integration in Sub-Saharan Africa.	19
2.2 The role of the various African supranational organizations.	23
2.3 The complexity and the fragmentation of the African legal systems.	29
CHAPTER III - The beginning of the OAU - Organization of African Unity.	
3.1 The beginning and development of the Organization of African Unity.	34
3.2 The relationship between the EEC and Africa.	40
3.3 The transition from the OAU to the African Union (AU): integration and regulatory harmonization.	43
3.4 Agenda 2063: “The Africa We Want”	48
Conclusions	51
Bibliography	53
Summary	54

Introduction

Pan-Africanism still today is a movement promoting the spirit of solidarity and cooperation among African leaders and societies and aims at the political unity of the African continent, centred on the feeling of common identity.

Historically, it has taken the form of a political and cultural movement, but there are many varieties of Pan-Africanism.

In general, Pan-Africanism is a movement dedicated to establishing independence for African nations and the unity of Afro-descendants whether outside Africa or within. The most significant representatives of Pan-Africanism in the 20th century are W.E.B. Du Bois, George Padmore, Kwame Nkrumah who denounced neo-colonial economic interests causes that prevented true African independence. Nkrumah firmly believed that in unity African peoples would secure their total liberation from the pains of imperialism and neo-colonialism.

Kwame Nkrumah, after fighting for Ghana's independence, had become president, and as an advocate of Pan-Africanism sought the liberation of the entire continent from colonial domination, offering financial support to other African nations.

His policy was geared towards the realisation of the United States of Africa, but he was challenged by the willingness of the new leaders of the newly formed states to maintain their sovereignty.

The first chapter explores the origin of Pan-Africanism and the thinking of its major exponents. The second chapter examines the role of the various African supranational organisations, in particular ECOWAS, COMESA, ECCAS and SADC.

The third chapter highlights the birth and development of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and then the African Union (AU) and its fundamental role in the realisation of a united and free Africa.

Chapter I - The historical evolution of Pan-Africanism and its major exponents

1.1 Pan-Africanism: a historical cultural movement

Pan-Africanism, even today, is a movement that promotes the spirit of solidarity and cooperation between African leaders and societies, and which aims at the political unity of the African continent, centred on the feeling of common identity. African intellectuals, in opposition to the colonial administrations, began to meet driven by the need to rediscover their history.

The first Pan-African conference was held in London in 1900, and succeeded in mobilising great solidarity for Africans threatened in various ways by the exploitation of colonisers in many parts of the continent. The conference discussed not only the events of the Second Boer War and Rhodesia's expansion into Central Africa but also the enactment of the so-called 'Jim Crow laws' in the southern United States¹.

Marking the transition from a passive, i.e. purely intellectual, state to an active and militant one was the Pan-African Congress in Manchester, England, held in 1945².

The most prominent protagonists of the meeting were the intellectuals George Padmore, Kwame Nkrumah, Jomo Kenyatta and Leopold Senghor, who soon became the reference points of the movement.

Anti-imperialism and anti-colonialism became the major themes of the Congress and, for the first time, it was openly argued that national independence was the only valid solution to Africa's aspirations. The Congress culminated in the adoption of the Declaration of Colonial Peoples, which spelled out the objectives of the movement³. It stated:

*"We affirm the right of all colonised peoples to be the protagonists of their own destiny. All colonies must be liberated from imperialist foreign powers, both economic and political. The peoples of the colonies must have the right to elect their own governments, without restrictions imposed by external powers. We say to all peoples under domination that they must fight with all their means to achieve this end"*⁴.

¹ Available on <https://www.nationalgeographic.it/storia-e-civiltà/2020/02/1e-leggi-di-jim-crow-hanno-creato-un-altro-tipo-di-schiavitù>

² I. Wallerstein, *Africa: The Politics of Independence and Unity*, New York, Vintage Book, 1967, p. 33.

³ W. Reinhard, *Storia del colonialismo*, Einaudi Editore, 2002, p. 26.

⁴ *Ibidem*.

The cause had thus been transformed from a forum for anti-racist solidarity into a movement for the self-determination of African peoples, centred on the eradication of colonialism and the promotion of African nationalism.

The objectives pursued were the following: the complete political and economic independence of the entire continent, fraternal cooperation between African states, the creation of an African unity based on a federation of sub-regional groups, with a consequent limitation of state sovereignty, and non-interference in the internal affairs of states.

There was consensus that regional cooperation and unity were crucial in order to utilise the vast resources of the African continent for the improvement of the living conditions of its peoples. When the Congress ended, however, the structure, within which the ideas of the movement would be carried out, was unclear.

The only structure to be set up was the East African National Secretariat in London in 1946, where discussions began on the possible creation of an 'African Union of Socialist Republics'⁵. Subsequently, the All African Peoples' Conferences (AAPC) were established, the first meeting of which was held from 5 to 13 December 1958 and brought together African nationalist leaders in Accra⁶.

Achieving independence was the priority issue⁷ for the delegates, and Tom Mboya⁷, elected president of the conference, said that the problem was not whether they wanted independence, but how to achieve it. A resolution was then adopted denouncing the artificial borders established by the imperialist powers to divide the peoples of Africa, and especially those borders that divided ethnic groups and peoples belonging to the same community.

The resolutions were not really radical, however, as they took a cautious stance, given that most sovereign states were not yet meeting⁸.

For the first time, a 'Federation of Free African States' was discussed as an end goal to be reached gradually from regional federations. Two fronts for action were formed: the first was the national movements, which were lobbying the colonial administrations for independence⁹. A second front was the one formed at the United Nations, where independent African states were collectively lobbying for an end to colonialism.

⁵ I. Wallerstein, *Africa: The Politics of Independence and Unity*, op. cit., p. 34.

⁶ Ibidem.

⁷ He is a supporter of pan-Africanism and has played the role of activist for the independence of Kenya.

⁸ W. Reinhard, *Storia del colonialismo*, op. cit., p. 32.

⁹ Ibidem.

The importance of the AAPCs was crucial as they allowed nationalist leaders from various parts of the continent to meet with others who had already achieved independence or were fighting for it.

The Accra Conference was followed by two others: one in January 1960 in Tunis and one in March 1961 in Cairo.

The Tunis Conference focused on the new forms of colonialism, i.e. the tendency of colonial powers to grant independence but keep these nations subjugated due to economic dependence. A social and economic resolution was drafted stating:

“The Conference [...] recommends that African governments actively engage in liquidating the neo-colonial groups [...], considering more important than ever the social and economic enclaves created by the imperialist countries in Africa in the industrial and agricultural sectors, with the establishment of monetary, technical, financial and social institutions wholly controlled by them and noting how these enclaves are the result of the exploitation of Africa’s human, natural and mineral resources [. .] proposes the creation of a common organisation to carry on trade and finance, social and economic research [...]”¹⁰ .

Furthermore, the conference criticised the French government which, led by General De Gaulle, had created the French Community in its former colonies, judging it to be ‘a new form of imperialism, depriving countries of real state sovereignty’. While Ghana’s proposal to form a political union was rejected, the Moroccan and Algerian proposal for an international corps of volunteers to come to the aid of the Algerian people was accepted. The presence of many delegates pushed the conference to adopt a more moderate attitude, trying to reduce extremist elements.

The Cairo conference focused mainly on the Congolese question, where the crisis had meanwhile erupted. The Secretary General, Abdoulaye Diallo, stated at the opening of the conference: “Today there are two forces in Congo: forces representing imperialist interests and forces affecting the Congolese people. The first is led by Kasavubu, Tshombe, and their colleagues, the second is led by Mr Gizenga, who has the support of the majority of the population”¹¹.

The AAPC conferences highlighted the emergence of three main groups:

- African nationalists from the not-yet-independent states, whose ardour was linked to the cause of liberation;

¹⁰ W. Reinhard, *Storia del colonialismo*, op. cit., p. 33.

¹¹ *Ibidem*.

- political leaders whose militancy was tempered by the need for diplomacy and pressure from the Western business world;

- the radical nationalists who regarded the former group as a puppet in the hands of the West.

Although it was the latter group of radicals that often dominated the conferences and set the tone for the resolutions, it was the second group that dominated the structure and held the reins of affairs¹².

At the Cairo conference, a fourth meeting was planned for 1962, in Bamako, Mali, but it never took place because both the host government and the Secretary General of Guinea were reluctant. According to Wallerstein, 'the Casablanca group was happy to let the AAPCs disappear in an attempt to create good relations with other governments'.

There are different notions of Pan-Africanism that have evolved in definition and practice. These different views on continental Africa arose in an attempt to give Africa visibility and importance, albeit in a negative sense.

Some notions of Pan-Africanism also emphasised the need for greater collaboration and unity of African countries on certain issues such as climate change and terrorism.

Other definitions, such as Williams', were more about the unity of black people around the world against the hegemonic control of Europeans and now the United States.

He addressed all people of black origin in the Caribbean, Latin America, the United States and other parts of the world and urged them to come together and articulate their common grievances as one.

These grievances are oppression and exploitation and emphasise the need to mobilise Africans within the continent against colonialism and racism.

They see Pan-Africanism essentially as an affair of people who reside on the continent and are apparently blind or deliberately unconcerned about the plight of blacks in other parts of the world, particularly in Latin America¹³.

Their mention of racism, however, is relevant to Pan-Africanism beyond African people residing on the continent. Racism has been a common problem for African people and their relatives in other parts of the world.

Their vision of Pan-Africanism was also limited by their appeal to colonialism alone. Pan-Africanism was also used to combat neo-colonialism in all its forms. It was an ideology and a movement that encouraged the solidarity of Africans around the world.

¹² I. Wallerstein, *Africa: The Politics of Independence and Unity*, op. cit., p. 36.

¹³ Available on <https://www.policlic.it/il-panafricanismo-dalle-origini-alla-resistenza-africana-nel-xxi-secolo/>

It was based on the belief that unity is vital for economic, social and political progress and aimed to ‘unify and uplift’ people of African descent.

The ideology stated that the destinies of all African peoples and countries were intertwined.

Underlying Pan-Africanism was the belief that African peoples, both on the continent and in the diaspora, shared not only a common history, but also a common destiny¹⁴.

For Pan-Africanism to succeed, the solidarity of Africans around the world is necessary and this solidarity will lead to socio-economic and political progress that will improve the lives of Africans.

¹⁴ F. Kumah-Abiwu, J.R. Ochwa-Echel, *Rethinking the Ideas of Pan-Africanism and African Unity: A Theoretical Perspective of Kwame Nkrumah’s Leadership Traits and Decision Making*, 2013, p. 24.

1.2 Pan-Africanism and the 19th century: from W.E.B. Du Bois to George Padmore

The doctrine of Pan-Africanism had the merit of being able to awaken the most sensitive Africans to the consciousness of an original unity, for all blacks wherever they were after their diaspora due to the slave trade.

All black peoples of African descent had to recognise themselves in the common origin and this doctrine was born outside the African continent.

In fact, in 1897 W.E.B. Du Bois presented a paper, 'The Conservation of Races', to the American Negro Academy of the United States.

Du Bois, strongly influenced by the 19th century writer, minister and Africanist Alexander Crummell, argued that the history of the world was a history of 'races'.

Both African and American blacks were common 'members of a vast historical race that had slept since the dawn of creation, but had awakened in the dark forests of the African homeland'.¹⁵

The essay was Du Bois' first step towards a pan-African philosophy that helped him move towards London, where he attended the first Pan-African Congress in July 1900.

Du Bois asserted that it was precisely at the London meeting at Westminster Hall that the word Pan-Africanism was first used, where a group of young black men gathered to protest against the land-grabbing of the natives by the Europeans¹⁶.

The meeting was mainly organised by Henry Sylvester Williams, a Trinidadian lawyer who had coined the term Pan-Africa as a political response to the Berlin Conference of 1884 in which Europe had divided the African continent into colonial segments.

In 1921, the Congress met in London and published a manifesto calling for an 'international section in the Labour Office of the League of Nations, charged with the protection of indigenous labour'. In 1923, a third Congress in Lisbon passed a similar resolution.

The Congress had negligible influence on the League of Nations, which was much more committed to preserving colonialism than to eradicating it.

In 1926 he made the fateful decision to travel to the Soviet Union and while in Moscow, he visited the Communist University for Oriental Peoples, which included figures such as the future Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping, and the Chinese University, named after Kuomintang founder Sun Yat-sen. He was impressed by the Soviet commitment to the education of national minorities, noting the faces of 'Russians, Ukrainians, Jews, Tatars, Gypsies, Caucasians, Armenians and Chinese'.

¹⁵ Available on <https://jacobinitalia.it/il-socialismo-panafricano-di-du-bois>

¹⁶ Ibidem.

Du Bois, who had always been considered a fine intellectual, had started a pan-African movement that rather than dying out would gradually gain in importance, until its complete triumph, man and programme. His theories of history, racial particularism, culture and civilisation were selectively inspired by Hegelian themes, merging them with an Afro-Asiatic genealogy of the history of the development of civilization¹⁷.

A systematic account of the interconnectedness of Africa, Europe and the Americas slowly emerged, complicating and broadening the vision of black suffering and self-emancipation in the United States.

International slavery provided the logical justification for this perspective, going hand in hand with Du Bois' desire to highlight the plight of blacks, rigidly imprisoned within the modern world made possible by forced labour¹⁸.

Du Bois was of the opinion that black people in the United States could only hope for a different future through effective integration into the American context, since centuries of slavery in America had bound them inseparably to the new continent, leaving their imprints in the various fields of American life¹⁹.

A prerequisite for non-humiliating integration was the regaining of self-confidence, of one's own identity. This perspective was evident in one of his best-known works, *The Souls of Black Folk*²⁰. The text was based on a collection of his previously written essays and supplemented with previously unpublished essays and was divided into three moments that coincided with what Paul Gilroy saw as the three phases of the black self-realisation process.

The first phase was defined by the struggles against the institution of slavery conducted in all parts of the world. The second phase was based in the ongoing struggles to obtain a status as human beings and the consequent bourgeois rights and freedoms for free black people in modernised and industrialised countries in which Freedom, Justice and Law were branded 'Whites Only'.

The third phase could be defined as the search for an independent space in which black communities and autonomies could develop in their own direction.

In Du Bois's work, the first dimension was expressed by the need to gain access to the national community and American political and civil society; the second by the need to make that

¹⁷ T. Filesi, *Evoluzione Storico-Politica dell'Africa. Lineamenti Fondamentali*, P. Cairoli Editore, Como, 1966, p. 28.

¹⁸ P. Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*, Cambridge 1993, p. 35.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*.

²⁰ W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, Boston, Bedford Books, New York, 1997 (or. ed. New York 1903), p. 78.

national community deliver on the promises of its political and legal rhetoric; and the third by the need either to integrate with or disassociate from that community once its essentially illusory character had been recognised²¹.

In *The Souls*, Du Bois explains how the various impairments inherited from the country's traditional racial order had ended up giving blacks a 'second sight' and, through the sublimation of their own sufferings, had provided all humanity with more elaborate and profound conceptions of freedom and democracy than those hitherto known²².

The Black people were, according to Du Bois, a kind of 'seventh child' of humanity, born with a veil, endowed with a 'second sight' in the American world, a world that did not grant them a true self-consciousness, but allowed them to see themselves only through the revelation of their point of view: 'it is a peculiar feeling, this double consciousness, the feeling of always looking at oneself through the eyes of another, of measuring one's own spirit by the yardstick of a world that regards it with amused contempt and compassion'²³.

The resulting feeling was therefore that of an eternal duality, 'an American and a Black, two belligerent ideals within a dark body'. The whole story of the Black American was the story of his inner struggle to merge his split self to create a more authentic and better one. Trying not to lose either one or the other, he 'does not Africanise America, because it has too much to teach the world and Africa', and yet 'does not discolour his soul in a flood of white Americanism, because he knows that Negro blood has a message for the world'. He would like to simply be both, without having the doors of Opportunity brutally shut in his face any longer. Finding themselves half on both sides, America's Blacks remained perpetually weak because of the contradiction of their dual purpose²⁴.

This theme and this language no longer corresponded to the theme and language of Du Bois alone; it was not only the climate that had changed, the men had also changed. There had been a kind of changing of the guard between the old and the new generation, between those who had had to be content with theoretical formulations and those who felt committed to transferring these formulations and these demands to the terrain of execution and struggle.

In 1933, Du Bois wrote that he wished to publish a series of articles on the crisis understood as a 'rapprochement between black America and socialism' with topics such as 'The Class Struggle of the Black Proletariat and Bourgeoisie' and 'The Dictatorship of the Black Proletariat'.

²¹ P. Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*, op. cit., p. 37.

²² *Ibidem*.

²³ W.E.B. Du Bois *The Souls of Black Folk*, Bedford Books, Boston, 1997, p. 3.

²⁴ *Ibidem*.

Du Bois' masterpiece, however, was *Black Reconstruction* where the first chapter was entitled 'The Black Worker', the tenth chapter 'The Black Proletariat in South Carolina' and the eleventh chapter 'The Black Proletariat in Mississippi and Louisiana'²⁵.

In this work, Du Bois' theory of the 'general strike' of black labour - what he called in *Black Reconstruction* an 'experiment in Marxism' - was his attempt to 'bring black America closer to socialism'²⁶.

However, interpretations of the book often overlook the fact that *Black Reconstruction* was also a pan-African text. For Du Bois, the most important aspect of the anti-slavery revolt was that it showed that black American labour was what Marx had called a 'pivot' in the system of global capitalism.

The banner of Pan-Africanism, never lowered since the day of its creation, was passing into the hands of Du Bois's favourite pupil, George Padmore, and Africans who corresponded to the names of Kwame Nkrumah, T.R. Makonen, Peter Abrahams, Nnamdi.

George Padmore had joined the Communist Party of the United States in 1929 and, the following year, attended the Fourth Congress of the Profintern, or Red International of Labour Unions (Rilu). The following year, the Profintern passed a 'Special Resolution on Negro Labour in the United States and Colonies'.

However, by 1934 Padmore had broken with the Communist International and strongly criticised its decision to liquidate the Negro Trade Union Committee, a decision he saw as a response to pressure from the British Foreign Office, 'because of the tremendous outrage our work has aroused among the Negro masses in Africa, the West Indies and other colonies against British imperialism'²⁷.

Padmore had also accused the Soviet Union of failing to speak out against the impending Italian invasion of Ethiopia for fear of antagonising its would-be European allies, and later condemned Soviet oil shipments to Italy after the invasion had begun.

Padmore wrote to Du Bois asking for his support for a Congress for World Black Unity, an attempt to revive the dormant Pan-African movement. The invitation had set the two men on a collaborative path that crowned the wave of Pan-African socialism.

In London, Padmore founded the International African Services Bureau in 1937, an important organisational centre for Pan-African activity, and in 1944 organised the Pan-African

²⁵ W.E.B. Du Bois *The Souls of Black Folk*, op. cit., p. 6.

²⁶ *Ibidem*.

²⁷ G. Padmore, *The Gold Coast revolution*, Dennis Dobson, London., 1953; G Padmore, *PanAfricanism or communism?* Dennis Dobson, London, 1956.

Federation (Paf). The Paf planned to hold a fifth Pan-African Congress in Paris in conjunction with the Wftu conference, but eventually met in the English city of Manchester.

In April 1945 Padmore wrote to Du Bois, insisting that ‘workers and peasants should be the driving force behind any movement that middle-class intellectuals could establish’. This was a not-so-subtle suggestion that the Pan-African movement, which had hitherto been largely bourgeois in its membership, needed to be proletarianised.

World events seemed to answer Padmore’s call and in June 1945, more than one hundred and fifty thousand Nigerian workers from seventeen unions began a fifty-two-day strike. The new Paf organised a large demonstration in support of the strike at Conway Hall in London.

Meanwhile, Du Bois was organising a Pan-African seminar at the Schomburg Collection in Harlem. Among the participants was Fathia Nkrumah, wife of the future leader of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah.

The seminar ended with a demand for a democratic China, a free Korea, the independence of India and Burma, dominion status for the Gold Coast and Nigeria and an end to exclusive white rule in Kenya and Rhodesia.

Italy was to cede its North African conquests and territory taken from Ethiopia while Japan was to leave Formosa to China.

In October 1945, Du Bois and Padmore shook hands to lead the Pan-African Congress in Manchester where the delegates voted unanimously for Du Bois as president of the Congress on its first day and Padmore, in doing so, formally consecrated Du Bois as the ‘father of Pan-Africanism’.

Among the delegates and associations that attended the meeting were the Gold Coast Farmers Association, the Workers League of British Honduras, the Nigerian Trade Union Congress and the Saint Lucia Seamen, Waterfront and General Workers Union.

Numerous political organisations were also represented, from the African National Congress of South Africa to the People’s National Party of Jamaica, the Grenada Labour Party and the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP)²⁸.

The Congress passed numerous resolutions, including those condemning the ‘systematic exploitation of the economic resources of West African territories’, calling for the removal of British forces from Egypt and an end to French and Italian rule in North Africa. Perhaps most

²⁸ K. Nkrumah, *Africa Must Unite*, Londra, Heinemann, 1963, p. 101.

grandly, the Congress culminated with a 'Declaration to Colonial Workers, Farmers and Intellectuals' written by a young Kwame Nkrumah²⁹.

"The aim of the imperialist powers is to exploit. By granting the colonial peoples the right to govern themselves, that object is defeated ... the Fifth Pan-African Congress therefore calls on the workers and farmers of the Colonies to organise effectively. Colonial workers must be in the forefront of the battle against imperialism. Your weapons - the Strike and the Boycott - are invincible. Today there is only one road to effective action: the organisation of the masses. And in that organisation the educated colonials must unite. Colonial peoples and subjects of the world - Unite!"³⁰.

²⁹ K. Nkrumah, *Africa Must Unite*, op. cit., p. 102.

³⁰ *Ibidem*.

1.3 A new exponent of Pan-Africanism: Kwame Nkrumah

Kwame Nkrumah born in Nkroful, Ghana in 1909 significantly influenced the history and unity of Africa. He was the leading and fearless advocate for the liberation and unification of Africa against Western imperialism and for a series of actions aimed at total liberation and the consolidation of this freedom³¹. His thoughts took shape while studying in the United States and, in the early years of his political education, he wrote about the need for a West African Federation to enable Africans to govern themselves without external interference, as was the case in the colonial period³².

According to Asante³³, Nkrumah's vision was not only political but also cultural and philosophical and above all Afrocentric. The Pan-African vision of unity was underpinned by the concept of African personhood and a non-racial African identity³⁴.

In numerous speeches at home and abroad and in his writings, Nkrumah had a very clear idea about the nature of the African state based on stability, security and independence.

At the philosophical level, in his book *Consciencism*, Nkrumah asserted that Africa was capable of evolving its own ideology and philosophy in order to solve the crisis that plagued the African consciousness and affected society.

Also related to philosophical Pan-Africanism, Nkrumah suggested that it was necessary for Africa to harmonise the three cultural currents that existed within African societies: traditional African, Euro-Christian and Islamic. He believed that the cultural poles in Africa were capable of leading to freedom and respectability among people³⁵.

Nkrumah did not mince words when he pronounced that:

“If we do not formulate plans for unity and take active steps to form a political union, we will soon find ourselves fighting and warring with each other with the imperialists and colonialists who stand behind the screen and pull vicious strings, to make us slit each other's throats in the name of their diabolical purposes in Africa”³⁶.

³¹ K. Nkrumah, *Revolutionary path*, Panaf, London, 1973.

³² *Ibidem*.

³³ M. K. Asante, “The Character of Kwame Nkrumah's United Africa Vision.” *The Journal of Pan African Studies* 4, October 2012, pp.12-25.

³⁴ *Ibidem*.

³⁵ A. Biney, *The political and social thought of Kwame Nkrumah*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2011, pp. 119 – 135.

³⁶ K. Nkrumah, *Towards colonial freedom: Africa in the struggle against world imperialism*, Heinemann, London, 1962.

One cannot doubt from Nkrumah's extract that he wanted the political union of Africa because of the evil actions of European countries in Africa. He was aware of the consequences that would come with a divided continent and a divided people.

Already in 1960, the independent Democratic Republic of Congo fell into this trap. The British also held on to Southern Rhodesia much to the chagrin of the population and the unity of Nigeria was threatened by the civil war of 1967-1970.

A few decades after independence, several countries in Africa split apart, such as Somalia, Libya, Nigeria, Burundi, Central African Republic, South Sudan and Mali.

The Libyan example shows how in 2011 the West assassinated Colonel Muamar Gaddafi and threw the country into chaos. Besides the internal struggles between the various factions, the Islamic State had found a safe haven in Sirte and other surrounding cities.

Moreover, the migrant crisis was also a consequence of Gaddafi's assassination.

These scenarios in Libya, Mali and Somalia were proof of what Nkrumah had predicted several decades earlier but no one had listened to him. In another prophetic excerpt from his pan-African vision Nkrumah claimed that:

“We need the strength of our numbers and our resources to protect us from the very positive dangers of a return of colonialism in disguised forms. We need it to fight the entrenched forces that divide our continent and still hold back millions of our brothers. We need it to ensure total African liberation”³⁷.

Currently, most independent states are moving in directions that expose them to the dangers of imperialism and neo-colonialism.

Nkrumah's vision emphasised the importance of the power of unity and not division.

African countries were moving in different directions. Many francophone countries were tied to their former colonies, while other countries in East Africa, led by Julius Nyerere³⁸, were defending with all their might the need to achieve continental unity through regional blocs. All these and other divisive forces were exposing African countries to the avarice of their enemies. Nkrumah firmly believed that in unity African peoples would guarantee their total liberation from the pains of imperialism and neo-colonialism.

Despite his warnings against a return of colonialism in disguised forms to destroy Africa, this call went unheeded.

³⁷ N. Gatsheni, Power, Knowledge and Being: Decolonial Combative Discourse as a Survival Kit for Pan-Africanists in the 21st Century. *Alternation* 20 January, 2013, pp. 105-134.

³⁸ *Ibidem*.

Indeed, some countries, such as Nigeria, accused him of being looking for another solution in the struggle for pan-Africanism.

Faced with the overwhelming forces of gradualism and pessimism during the historic founding of the OAU in 1963, Nkrumah passionately expressed his thoughts for Pan-Africanism in these words:

“If we do not unite, we will all be thrown out, all of us, one by one and I will go too.... The OAU faces a choice now: can we advance towards progress through our effective African Union or do a step back towards stagnation, instability and instability, easy prey to foreign intervention, interference and subversion”³⁹.

Also on the occasion of this historic meeting in 1963, Nkrumah, speaking of the need for African unity, stated that:

“Just as our strength lies in united politics and action and development, so the strength of the imperialists lies in our disunity. We in Africa can only deal with them effectively by presenting a unified front and a continental purpose. Our freedom is in danger as long as the independent states of Africa remain separate”⁴⁰.

This was a clarion call from someone who was aware of the destabilizing influence of Western European countries; it underlined the need to come together, to move towards progress, for a united front if African leaders were to be prevented from being kicked out one by one. This clarion call went unheeded by Nkrumah’s contemporaries.

The inability to unite had slowed development and led to the abandonment of some African leaders, such as Gaddafi; furthermore, it had also led to the humiliation of former Ivorian president Laurent Gbagbo and Sudan, Omar El Bashir with threats of arrest by the International Criminal Court ⁴¹.

Already after the Second World War, the expression “African Personality”, used by Nkrumah, had pan-African rather than pan-Black connotations. With Ghana’s independence in 1957, Nkrumah became the most passionate leader of pan-Africanism. The new pan-Africanism, however, refers to a geo-political space in which the black ethnic component, even if predominant, coexists with the white, Arab component. The anti-imperialist action of Nasser’s Egypt and the Algerian revolution, in fact, only underline the Arab importance within the continent.

³⁹ N. Gatsheni, *Power, Knowledge and Being: Decolonial Combative Discourse as a Survival Kit for Pan-Africanists in the 21st Century*, op. cit. 135.

⁴⁰ M. Muchie, *Towards a Theory for Re-framing Pan-Africanism: An Idea whose time has Come*, Research Centre on Development and International Relations, Aalborg University Denmark, Working Paper No. 83.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*.

The more general expression of “African personality”, despite its initial affinities with “negritude”, was more easily integrated into an evolving concept, therefore less subject to criticism, especially from Arab Africa. However, the idea of belonging to the “black race”, in whatever language it was expressed, seemed to have had its day.

Post-World War II Pan-Africanism, that of Du Bois, Nkrumah, Padmore, and all the promoters of Pan-African Congresses, no longer revolves so much around the question of colour, but that of the oppression of the peoples of the world who are victims of the European colonizer.

We are in a period in which Africans, always divided by fratricidal wars and atavistic hatreds, had now found a common external enemy that united them in a feeling of common revolt. The colonial powers - forced, to pursue their own goals, to make Africa participate in the political institutions, customs and religious confessions of the West - unconsciously inoculated the native populations with the notions of democracy, homeland and freedom⁴².

The two world conflicts had penetrated materially and morally into the heart of Africa. The Atlantic Charter, the San Francisco Charter, the General Declaration of Human Rights (10 December 1948), the very action of the UN on the one hand and of the United States of America on the other, communist propaganda and in particular the offensive of the Soviet Union, the Afro-Asian Conference of Bandung (April 1955), the transfer to African soil of the Pan-African movement tenaciously pursued by Du Bois and validly supported by his younger followers, the birth of real parties politicians and a trade union conscience, all constituted convergent and decisive reasons for the awakening of Africa⁴³.

⁴² T. Filesi, *Comunismo e Nazionalismo in Africa*, Roma, Istituto Italiano per l’Africa, 1958, p. 54.

⁴³ T. Filesi, *Evoluzione Storico-Politica dell’Africa. Lineamenti Fondamentali*, P. Cairolì Editore, Como, 1966, p. 28.

Chapter II - Regional integration and the role of supranational organizations

2.1 Regional integration in Sub-Saharan Africa

The fundamental idea that has been guiding the process of regional integration in Africa for decades is Pan-Africanism, which, in its simplest and most essential notion, affirms the cooperation between all African political, social and cultural entities, regardless of, or rather, across geographical, ethnic, religious and linguistic boundaries⁴⁴.

The struggle for the liberation of African peoples from first colonial oppression and then the economic oppression of exploitation and underdevelopment constitutes the undisputed ideological foundation of Pan-Africanism. It is not easy for African peoples to achieve the goal of integration either through a process of political and socio-economic transformation of states or through the creation of supranational organisations capable of stimulating regulatory harmonisation and socio-economic progress. Undoubtedly, this second path has been widely explored, given the vibrancy of the processes of formation of supranational organisations of varying nature, membership, effectiveness.

Integration pathways cover all five regions of the continent: North, South, Central, East and West, in some cases overlapping, at other times in opposition to each other; they are born with great momentum and then lie dormant for decades or become empty vessels.

Frequently, the same state belongs to one or more organisations, so that ‘competition’ between organisations has not infrequently occurred, weakening the political coherence of the continent and macro-regions⁴⁵.

The polycentrism that characterises international organisations worldwide is very evident in Africa, where one can only speak of a ‘family’ of supranational organisations if one thinks of a disunited and dysfunctional family, certainly not the harmonious and united model that the metaphor would seem to suggest⁴⁶.

Over the years, Africa’s geopolitical importance is growing and it is increasing its global weight through regional integration and unified action.

Africa has developed important multilateral bodies for the promotion of peace and security. While at the forefront is the African Union, which is currently involved in numerous peace

⁴⁴ E. Aryeetey, *The prospects and Priorities of Regional Integration in Sub-Saharan Africa*. In *Regional Integration and Multilateral Cooperation in the Global Economy*, Edited by Teunissen, 1998, pp.137-154.

⁴⁵ Ibidem.

⁴⁶ Available on <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/fandd/issues/2018/09/sub-saharan-africa-regional-integration-arizala>

processes, African multilateral organisations, such as the African Development Bank, also play an important role⁴⁷.

The African Development Bank - Afdb is a multilateral financial institution founded in 1964 in Abidjan with the aim of promoting the economic development of the African continent by granting loans and assisting national governments in coordinating local policies; 53 African and 24 non-African countries are members.

Its bodies are the African Development Fund - ADF, which provides interest-free loans to the poorest countries, and the Nigeria Trust Fund - NTF⁴⁸.

Promoting regional integration in the economic sphere is the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), founded on 21 March 2018 and coming into effect in 2019, aims to establish the world's largest free trade area in Africa. The AfCFTA aims to become a major driver of economic growth and contribute to the diversification of African economies.

Secondly, Africa is increasingly the focus of world and regional powers. Many states have strengthened their presence in Africa and more than 320 embassies and consulates were opened between 2010 and 2020.

Sub-Saharan Africa's largest bilateral trading partner is China, with which it has entered into the BRI - Belt and Road Initiative⁴⁹.

Originally aimed at connecting China to Western European markets by land and sea, the BRI has now extended its ramifications as far as Africa and Latin America, and its objectives far beyond transport networks: the BRI pursues the increase of China's international connectivity and integration not only in terms of infrastructure, logistics and trade, but also in terms of culture, energy and finance, to the point of becoming a veritable instrument of foreign policy.

The North African states are closely linked, geographically and historically, to Sub-Saharan Africa. Conflicts in the two areas influence each other, as happens for example in Libya and Mali or around the waters of the Nile⁵⁰.

In the area of migration, the links between the Maghreb and the Sahel, where collaboration can be extended, are particularly evident.

Several long-term trends characterise the African continent as a whole and influence each other. Although it is not yet possible to assess this conclusively, it is necessary to consider the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Sub-Saharan Africa.

⁴⁷ Available on <https://www.afdb.org/en/news-and-events/press-releases/africa-resilience-forum-african-development-bank-head-says-peacebuilding-africa-must-be-core-investment-decisions-64790>

⁴⁸ Available on <https://www.oecd.org/derec/sweden/The-African-Development-Bank.pdf>

⁴⁹ Available on <https://cms.law/en/media/international/files/publications/publications/bri-view-from-africa?v=1>

⁵⁰ Available on https://ecfr.eu/publication/a_return_to_africa_why_north_african_states_are_looking_south/

Sub-Saharan Africa is home to some of the world's fastest growing economies, and over the past two decades, the subcontinent as a whole has also experienced high annual growth rates, some of them substantial (6.5 %) ⁵¹.

In recent years, however, average values have declined due to the weak development of the three main economies Nigeria, South Africa and Angola. According to the World Bank, due to the crisis caused by COVID-19 the subcontinent is facing a recession for the first time in 25 years ⁵².

One of the greatest challenges facing Africa remains the fact that economic growth has so far only succeeded in reducing inequality to a limited extent, and this in only about one third of the states. Due to high population growth, about one third of the population continues to live in extreme poverty. Currently, 70 per cent of the world's poor live in Africa and the progress made in recent years in reducing poverty is already partly undermined by the consequences of the COVID-19 crisis. The pandemic has also caused a temporary sharp drop in migrant remittances, which are indispensable for many people. In 2019, these remittances amounted to over USD 48 billion, an amount almost equal to the total amount of official development assistance allocated to the continent ⁵³.

Innovation is also an important growth engine in Africa with young and dynamic entrepreneurs investing in start-ups and incubators. With almost 50 per cent of all active mobile accounts in the world, Africa is at the forefront of the fintech sector.

Raw material wealth could also have a catalytic effect, although dependence on this sector entails certain risks due to vulnerability to external shocks, indebtedness and corruption. The contribution of raw materials to the prosperity of the population therefore remains limited.

Finally, commodity wealth can be an obstacle to economic diversification, which is essential for sustainable economic growth.

Sub-Saharan Africa continues to have great economic potential, but investment by the private sector requires good framework conditions, including macroeconomic stability. Although improved in many countries, the latter is today undermined by rising public debt.

This is why multilateral organisations such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund or the African Development Bank have an important role to play in ensuring macroeconomic

⁵¹ Available on <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/REO/SSA/Issues/2023/10/16/regional-economic-outlook-for-sub-saharan-africa-october-2023>

⁵² N. Ndung'u, A. Shimeles, Growing with Debt in African Economies through Improved Governance: Options, Challenges and Pitfalls, *Journal of African Economies*, Volume 30, Issue Supplement_1, November 2021, Pages 11–12.

⁵³ Available on <https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/migration/africa/pdf>

stability, bringing public debt down to a sustainable level and ensuring transparency⁵⁴. Legal certainty, a better infrastructure and a rigorous fight against the still widespread corruption are also needed to attract investors. Much will depend on how severe the socio-economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic will be. Most African countries struggle to sustain their population and economy with appropriate state measures.

In many places, declining production, consumption, investment and trade have led to rising prices. However, the crisis could also accelerate the transformation of African economies and offer new opportunities, especially in the field of digitisation⁵⁵.

In 2019, almost a third of the 61 multilateral peace operations involved Sub-Saharan Africa. More than two-thirds of the personnel involved in these operations, around 100 000 people, were deployed in Sub-Saharan Africa. Some of the most important blue helmet missions and several UN special political missions take place on the African subcontinent. The EU is also an important player and conducts various civil and military peacekeeping missions in the field. Sub-Saharan Africa occupies an important position on the permanent agenda of the UN Security Council. In 2019, more than half of the meetings dedicated to specific countries and regions and more than two-thirds of the resolutions and presidential statements concerned this region of Africa⁵⁶.

These figures can be interpreted as a sign of the continuing instability on the African continent, but also as an indication of the efforts made by the international community to address security and peace challenges.

⁵⁴ Available on https://www.afdb.org/sites/default/files/documents/policydocuments/bank_group_sustainable_borrowing_policy.pdf

⁵⁵ E. Aryeetey, *The prospects and Priorities of Regional Integration in Sub-Saharan Africa*. In *Regional Integration and Multilateral Cooperation in the Global Economy*, op. cit., p. 154.

⁵⁶ <https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/highlights-2022>

2.2 The role of the various African supranational organizations

The strategy adopted by Africa to transform itself from a developing continent into a strong united bloc of developed nations, enshrined in the plans and treaties of the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s, is that of regional integration. The need for integration is indisputable both as a strategy to promote economic development and as a means to protect African interests.

This is the reason why numerous Regional Economic Communities (RECs) have emerged, which serve as the basis for the realisation of the objectives of both the Abuja Treaty and the Constitutive Treaty of the African Union⁵⁷.

The Abuja Treaty in 1991 led to the creation of the African Economic Community, an organisation that promoted the development of free trade areas, customs unions, an African Central Bank and an African monetary union.

The first generation of regionalism began in the 1960s and lasted until the 1980s.

The perspective adopted in this first phase was based on the neoclassical model of economic integration as a solution to weak economic structures and restricted markets. Although these early attempts to create regional organisations had some successes, in most cases African leaders were unwilling to cede part of their newly acquired sovereignty to regional supranational structures.

The second generation of regionalism began, slowly, just after the Lagos Plan of Action and Final Act and then accelerated in the years following the Abuja Treaty. What made the scope of this new wave of regionalisation different was the increasing involvement of the political sphere in economic matters.

Although the dominant idea was still based on the neoclassical model founded on trade practices, development and security issues were making their way in, making the new entities less static than in the past⁵⁸.

With the Abuja Treaty supplemented by the Constitutive Act, the RECs became the pillars or ‘building blocks’ of the African Economic Community - AEC in an approach of gradual integration of the continent.

In 1998, the “Protocol on Relations between the Economic Regional Communities and the African Economic Community” was signed, which was renewed in 2007 with the Protocol on Relations between the African Union and the Economic Regional Communities⁵⁹.

⁵⁷ African Union Commission 2005, Commission Paper on General Framework of Rationalisation of RECs. African Union, AddisAbaba.

⁵⁸ Available on <https://romatrepress.uniroma3.it/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/econ-dfn.pdf>

⁵⁹ Available on https://wits.worldbank.org/GPTAD/PDF/annexes/AEC_protocols.pdf

The protocol sought to consolidate and promote close cooperation between the RECs and between them and the African Union through the coordination and harmonisation of their policies, measures, programmes and activities in all fields and sectors. Another objective of this protocol was to establish a framework for the coordination of the RECs' activities to contribute to the realisation of the Constitutive Act of the African Union and the AEC Treaty⁶⁰.

To ensure the realisation of these objectives, the African Union and the RECs were to commit to cooperate and coordinate the policies and programmes of the RECs with those of the African Union. To strengthen cooperation between the RECs, cooperation programmes and the possibility of participating in conferences between the respective RECs were envisaged. The RECs and the African Union were legitimised to attend each other's meetings, without voting rights⁶¹.

The RECs currently recognised by the African Union are:

- ✓ ECOWAS - Economic Community of West African States established in 1975;
- ✓ the COMESA - Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, established in 1993;
- ✓ the ECCAS - Economic Community of Central African States, established in 1983;
- ✓ the UMA - Arab Maghreb Union established in 1989;
- ✓ the IGAD - Intergovernmental Authority on Development established in 1996;
- ✓ the SADC - Southern African Development Community, established in 1992;
- ✓ the CEN-SAD - Community of Sahel and Saharan States established in 1998;
- ✓ the EAC - East African Community established in 1993.

When it was established in 1975, ECOWAS was a community of 15 states with very different political, linguistic and economic profiles. Its initial mandate was generally to promote and support regional economic integration. But since the early 1990s, its role has become increasingly political and its actions oriented towards the promotion of regional peace and security, a prerequisite for the stimulation of West African economies⁶².

Made up of fragile states that have not yet pursued political stabilisation programmes, ECOWAS has faced a series of crises. And while it can be credited with some successes in the security domain - as for example in Guinea Bissau - the organisation has also demonstrated glaring weaknesses that justify the need for profound institutional reform and cultural change.

⁶⁰ R. Tavares, *Unloving brothers: the african union and the regional economic communities*, *Studia Diplomatica* Vol. 62, No. 3, *Military crisis management: The challenge of inter-organizationalism* (2009), pp. 61-67.

⁶¹ *Ibidem*.

⁶² K. J. Alter, L. R. Helfer, J. R. Mcallister, "A New International Human Rights Court for West Africa: The ECOWAS Community Court of Justice", in *American Journal of International Law* 2013, p. 741.

Plagued by internal political and military crises - such as those that have unfolded in Liberia since December 1989 - ECOWAS is now faced with much more complex crises, which tend to transcend the borders of states and regions. This is the case with the crisis in the Sahel and the crisis in the Lake Chad basin, two hotbeds of conflict that go beyond its geographical scope and on which the organisation has difficulty maintaining its effectiveness. In the Sahel, ECOWAS does not have the right equipment to fight transnational crime, a major element of a multidimensional crisis. It will be difficult to pacify the area without the appropriate tools, one of which is the need for the rapid creation of a centre to fight organised crime, understood in the broad sense of the term and also including terrorist activities and the trafficking of drugs, people and weapons⁶³.

The Common Market of East and Southern Africa or COMESA was established by the treaty signed on 5 November 1993 in Kampala. The association is headquartered in Lusaka and includes Angola, Burundi, Comoros, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, Republic of South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

COMESA is the successor to the PTA - Preferential Trade Area for Eastern and Southern Africa States, established by the Treaty of Lusaka of 21 December 1981, with the aim of strengthening economic cooperation between the countries in the area, especially in the fields of agriculture, transport, communications and the training of specialised technicians.

The Community is based on the concept of 'multi-speed' development, which allows two or more members to accelerate the implementation of specific treaty provisions. Compared to the PTA, the 1993 Treaty introduces innovations such as the use of qualified majority voting when full consensus has not been reached⁶⁴.

COMESA aimed, following a step-by-step approach, at the creation of a free trade area consisting of full trade liberalisation, followed by the establishment of a customs union.

The ultimate objective was to ensure the free movement of goods, services, persons and capital and thus create a common market⁶⁵.

The Economic Community of Central African States - ECCAS was established on 18 October 1983 with the signing in Libreville of its founding treaty, which was subject to a revision adopted on 18 December 2019 and entered into force on 28 August 2020. ECCAS is composed

⁶³ R. F. Opong, "The African Union, the African Economic Community, and Africa's Regional Economic Communities: Untangling a Complex Web", *African Journal of International and Comparative Law* 18, no. 1, 2010, pp. 92–10.

⁶⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁶⁵ P. Khandelwal, *COMESA and SADC: Prospects and Challenges for Regional Trade Integration*, International Monetary Fund, 2004, p. 12.

of eleven member states: Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe and Chad. It is one of the eight RECs recognised as pillars of regional integration in Africa and therefore fully engaged in multiple dynamics related to the construction of the African Economic Community envisaged by the Abuja Treaty.

“The main executive body of ECCAS acquired the status of a Commission in December 2019, following an institutional reform. The vision of the institution is to promote: ‘A common future, in an environment of peace, security and stability, secured by sustainable development, good governance, increasing improvement of living conditions of citizens, freedom and justice’⁶⁶.

On 17 February 1989, the Agreement establishing the AMU - the Union du Maghreb Arabe by Morocco, Algeria, Libya, Mauritania and Tunisia was signed in Marrakesh. Its main objective was to strengthen these ties in order to ensure regional stability, enhance coordination policies and continue the integration process. The AMU aims to follow a common policy in all areas in order to ensure the free movement of goods, services, capital and people, with the creation of a common market. In terms of trade, the member countries of the AMU have preferred to act individually with bilateral Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements within the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area⁶⁷.

The birth of IGAD dates back to 1986 when Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan (it withdrew in 2024), South Sudan (it was suspended in 2021) and Uganda signed the agreement to establish the Inter-governmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGAD). In 1993, Eritrea, after gaining independence, joined the Authority, then withdrew in 1997 and rejoined in 2023.

IGAD’s objective was to promote cooperation between these countries on issues related to desertification, drought and environmental disasters. In the mid-1990s, the member states decided to revitalise and transform the organisation into an entity for regional integration.

The main reason why the leaders of these countries decided to renew IGAD was the existence of numerous structural and organisational problems that increasingly impeded the effective realisation of the organisation’s objectives⁶⁸.

In 1994, IGAD began working towards the end of the civil war in Sudan, facilitating negotiations between the Sudanese government and rebel forces in the south. Sudan’s peace process created the need for an organisation that would not only deal with environmental issues,

⁶⁶ Available on <https://ceeac-eccas.org/en/2023/05/28/eccas-in-brief/>

⁶⁷ Available on <https://www.econstor.eu/bitstream/10419/199175/1/die-study-50.pdf>

⁶⁸ Ibidem.

but also be able to intervene in conflict situations that plagued the area, preserving peace, security and stability⁶⁹.

On the trade side, IGAD did not initiate any integration programme, so much so that the African Union Commission in 2010 recommended that IGAD take appropriate measures for the removal of tariff and non-tariff barriers and technical obstacles to trade in order to implement trade integration policies.

SADC represents the historical evolution of the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) formed by Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia, Lesotho, Malawi, Swaziland and Zimbabwe. SADC was established in 1980 with the Lusaka Declaration, whose main objective was to reduce economic dependence not only, but in particular, on South Africa⁷⁰. Most of the products exported by these countries were destined for South Africa, on which they also depended for energy, currency and finance. Furthermore, the organisation aimed to build ties for regional integration and to cooperate for regional security. SADC reflected the spirit of Pan-Africanism, which conceived regional integration as a fundamental step towards continental unity, which would allow Africa to regain its dignity and its role in the world and in the international economic system⁷¹.

SADC, despite the difficulties, has reached the stage of a free trade zone and had planned to create a customs union by 2010, but this was postponed to 2016 due to disputes over benefit-sharing, which, it is feared, will be enjoyed more by South Africa.

CEN-SAD was created in February 1998 by Sudan, Libya, Chad, Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso, but in the following years twenty-two more countries joined. In the preamble of the treaty establishing the Community, the member states expressed their willingness and determination to fulfil the ambitions of economic, cultural, political and social integration.

The realisation of economic union was to take place through the implementation of a common development plan that would include investments in the agricultural, industrial, social, cultural and energy sectors. The member states undertook to eliminate all restrictions that hindered integration through the adoption of measures to ensure the free movement of persons and capital, the right of establishment and to conduct business, free trade for the free movement of manufactured and unmanufactured goods and services, the promotion of transport and communication infrastructure, and the harmonisation of cultural and educational systems⁷².

⁶⁹ Available on <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/sudan-igad-peace-process-signposts-way-forward-feb-2004>

⁷⁰ P. Khandelwal, COMESA and SADC: Prospects and Challenges for Regional Trade Integration, op. cit., p. 16.

⁷¹ Ibidem.

⁷² A. Mayer, Regional Integration and Security in Central Africa: assessment and perspectives 10 years after the revival, Brussels, Academia Press, 2008, p. 9.

The CEN-SAD consists of a Council of Heads of State, which makes general policy decisions to pursue the treaty objectives; the Executive Council, which formulates programmes and plans to implement the decisions of the Council of Heads of State; and the Secretariat, which oversees the progress of the programmes. In addition, a Development Bank and an Economic, Social and Cultural Council were created. Since the end of Gaddafi's regime the organization is not operational. The origins of the East African Community date back to the 1960s, when Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania began the journey towards greater cooperation, facilitated by shared administrative and economic patterns resulting from subjection to the same colonial power (the United Kingdom). The drive towards integration culminated in 1993 with the creation, on the initiative of the heads of state of the three countries concerned, of the East African Cooperation. This cooperative model then developed into what is now the EAC, officially established in 2000, with its headquarters in the Tanzanian city of Arusha. As in the case of other regional organisations, especially in Africa, the primary objective of the EAC is to create a free trade area that is able to foster faster development of the countries concerned, also from a political and social point of view. In this sense, already in 2004, the three founding countries decided to abolish customs duties on goods circulating between their respective borders, based on an agreement that would then become effective on 1 January 2005.

Each of the three member countries had a vested interest at the time in establishing a more open economic and trade environment: Kenya in exporting its capital, Uganda in moving some of its labour force outside its borders that it could not absorb at home, and Tanzania in pursuing its own pan-Africanist vision. In this regard, in addition to the plan to create a single currency, called the East African Shilling, the original intentions were also more purely political and aimed at creating a true federation among the founding members⁷³. All members of the EAC, joined in 2007 by Burundi and Rwanda, not only commit themselves to cooperation to eradicate the scourge of poverty, but also share, according to the Community's founding charter, the principles of democracy, social justice and equal opportunities between genders, and respect for human rights⁷⁴. In 2010, President Mwai Kibaki of Kenya launched the East African Common Market Protocol, which would extend the economic agreements that came into force in 2005 to Burundi and Rwanda. As such, each member state is called upon to amend its national laws to comply with the principles established by the organisation regarding the free movement of persons, goods and capital.

⁷³ A. Mayer, *Regional Integration and Security in Central Africa: assessment and perspectives 10 years after the revival*, op. cit., p. 23.

⁷⁴ *Ibidem*.

2.3 African legal systems: complex and fragmented

African legal systems have always been characterised by a pronounced complexity. Regardless of the country's geographic and cultural location, which substantially determines their belonging to different legal traditions, they are all built on the encounter between one or more Western and/or Arab legal traditions and indigenous traditions, each of which is not internally homogeneous.

African legal systems are legal systems characterised by the coexistence of 'national law' and individual-personal legal statuses that apply on the basis of the individual's membership in a community that recognises itself in a particular legal tradition⁷⁵.

Paradigmatic is the South African case, where the current legal system is the product of the consolidation of the stratification of three different legal systems the traditional African one, based on orality and custom; the Roman Dutch Law, a civil law system brought by the Dutch colonists that combines Roman Justinian sources with Germanic customs, fused by the Dutch glossators and Renaissance jurists; and the British common law, which does not inform the entire pre-existing legal system but superimposes on it a British-style judicial system characterised by the principle of stare decisis. The same reasoning applies to the Nigerian legal system, which is substantially based on what the doctrine calls English law, that is, that legal system imported from the motherland during colonisation, which has imposed itself on traditional law, which obviously changes from people to people in the complex mosaic of the current Nigerian population⁷⁶.

To these two different systems of sources has been added Islamic matrix law, which in some regions has progressively supplanted traditional law so as to appear today as traditional Islamic matrix law, which differs, however, from its predecessor because it is based on written sources and is therefore not characterised by the orality and flexibility typical of chthonic law.

In other regions, on the other hand, traditional law and Islamic law continue to coexist, and in still others, and in particular in the northern states, Sharia is recognised as the source of positive law⁷⁷.

The African continent is therefore marked by an intrinsic legal pluralism, that is, by the simultaneous existence, within the same system, of different legal rules that apply to the same phenomenon, depending, for example, on the status of the individual. Over the last decades, the apex courts have, on the one hand, recognized the peculiar nature of African legal systems,

⁷⁵ V. Federico, *Sudafrica, Il Mulino*, Bologna, 2004, p. 45.

⁷⁶ A.O. Obilade, *The Nigerian Legal System*, Londra, 1979.

⁷⁷ *Ibidem*.

contributing to the process of legitimation of legal pluralism sometimes recognised, and therefore constitutionalised, by the constitution itself and, on the other, progressively tried to integrate the system of sources, acting in such a way as to permeate traditional law and Islamic law, for example, with the founding values of contemporary constitutionalism, such as human dignity, equality, non-discrimination⁷⁸.

That is, the courts found themselves operating a constant dialogue between values, institutions and legal traditions in search of a relevant interpretation of the African way to the rule of law. The second contextual element, which must necessarily be taken into account when reflecting on the ability of regional economic organizations to implement important factors in the effectiveness of African law, is the particular nature of the State on the continent.

It goes without saying that the analysis of the nature of the State in Sub-Saharan Africa would require an effort of historical, political, institutional, cultural and social contextualization and a case-by-case approach, in order to do justice to the different experiences.

In fact, on the one hand, there is an obvious importance of continuity between the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial eras and, on the other, the importance of each individual state event in understanding the crisis of the current state.

The State in the modern sense in Sub-Saharan Africa essentially coincides with the post-colonial State; it is a State that appears “fragmented” and remains, over the decades, lacking in terms of political-administrative capacity, social cohesion, and the possibility of mobilizing economic resources. In many of its manifestations in Sub-Saharan African countries, the state is “incapable [...] of intercepting and controlling its constituent elements, and this makes it vulnerable”⁷⁹.

As observed in all regions of the continent, at the time of independence the process of establishing the state-apparatus was not accompanied by that of creating and consolidating the state-community.

A key factor in all the debates and reflections that cross the elements of weakness in Africa is the ethnic factor which remains a key element in determining the success or failure of the various attempts at democratization and democratic consolidation that have followed one another, in periods different, in all Sub-Saharan countries⁸⁰.

Ethnic communities represent dynamic social phenomena and it is the interrelationship between ethnic groups and the State that determines a large part of the critical issues that afflict the State

⁷⁸ A. Pizzorusso, *Sistemi giuridici comparati*, Seconda edizione, Milano, 1998, p. 106.

⁷⁹ *Ibidem*.

⁸⁰ O.C. Okafor, *Re-defining Legitimate Statehood: International Law and State Fragmentation in Africa*, Leiden, 2000, pp. 7-11.

in Africa. In fact, the legitimacy and effectiveness of institutional mechanisms aimed at responding to the diversity of the social fabric and finding viable solutions to the contrast between individual rights and freedoms and collective rights and freedoms are played on this interrelation.

These elements of weakness such as the ineffectiveness of government action, the lack of competence of the political class, of public administrators and officials, the structural lack of resources remain, in the vast majority of countries, still unresolved today and take on importance in the reflection on relationships between the different formants in the source system.

And yet, African states have developed “in a functional way a system of complex and interdependent relationships between the institutions of the modern state and the traditional systems of governance that explain the resilience of political communities”.

The third important element is grafted onto the fragility of the State, that is, the fragility of Parliament as a place of political representation, legislative power and the function of control over the executive⁸¹.

When Africa began, still under colonial rule, to experiment with the first forms of political participation through bodies of a generally representative nature with consultative powers, the model was univocal: there was a desire to adopt and practice instruments specific to liberal democracies of Western Europe.

Legislative bodies, as national institutions of elective origin, therefore, are the result of the process of juridical-institutional transplants as regards the elective origin of the body, the powers recognized by the constitutions, the rules that defined the relationships between legislative and executive power, and even internal regulations⁸².

The opening to multi-party politics and the start of democratization processes at the end of the 20th century gave rise to the development of a much more differentiated typology of legislative bodies.

Some have played the role of ratifiers of the executive’s legislative proposals, while others have moved more decisively towards a full implementation of their functions and prerogatives. All this means that in the process of applying, directly or indirectly, the supranational law, the relationship between government institutions and citizens can take on a particular character, not necessarily hostile or adverse to regional integration processes, but not necessarily favorable either. Rather, a complex relationship seems to take shape, in which the political will of the

⁸¹ Available on <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01436597.2023.2213636>

⁸² Ibidem.

government forces to participate or not in the elaboration of the supranational norm first and then to comply or not comply with the supranational norm, must then be confronted with a series of limitations of structural and institutional character that distort the result.

Furthermore, the weakness of parliaments flattens any internal debate on integration processes and reduces or cancels the possibility of sanctions and internal political costs for non-compliance with the obligations deriving from regional organizations and their formators. Finally, it is not irrelevant to remember that, when for the first time African countries dealt with the processes of drawing up their own constitutional charters in a relatively autonomous manner and therefore with the consequent composite problems of institutional and political engineering, at the time of independence, the result in the vast majority of cases was anything but a success. *The Constitutions without constitutionalism*⁸³, in fact, were constitutions often unsuitable for responding to the needs of the African societies that they were supposed to govern and which, while formally recognizing the fundamental principles of contemporary constitutionalism, were substantially incapable of ensuring it.

According to the scholar V. Perju in an essay on legal treaties, he defines them as “constitutional texts that lack driving force from both a political and cultural point of view”. In continuity with Perju⁸⁴, Oloka-Onyango states that “the first constitutional instruments in Africa had little to do with either creating a democratic space or promoting notions of active participation and inclusion”⁸⁵.

Rather, they were tools that the new African political elites used as a symbol of national sovereignty and the capacity for modern and efficient governance.

In recent years, history has shown the failure of that exercise, contributing, on the one hand to the exasperation of the typical characteristics of the African legal systems discussed previously and, on the other, to a process of delegitimization of the legal norm which remains, not only in the imagination of the people, but also of the political actors themselves, a formal manifestation of a political will incapable of having an impact on the social, political and cultural fabric of the country⁸⁶.

⁸³ H.W.O. Okoth-Ogendo, *Constitutions without Constitutionalism: an African Political Paradox*” in D. Greenberg, S.N. Kartz, B. Oliviero, S.C. Wheatley (eds), *Constitutionalism and Democracy: Transitions in the Contemporary World*, Oxford, 1993.

⁸⁴ V. Perju, *Constitutional transplants*, in M. Rosenfeld, A. Sajo (cur), *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Constitutional Law*, Oxford, 2012, p. 1317.

⁸⁵ J. Oloka-Onyango, *Constitutionalism in Africa: Creating Opportunities, Facing Challenges*, Kampala, 2001, p. 15.

⁸⁶ J. Meierhenrich, *The Legacies of Law: Long-run Consequences of Legal Development in South Africa, 1652-2000*, Cambridge, 2008, p. 27.

The distance, which always exists between the legal norm as written by the legislator and its concrete implementation, widens in Sub-Saharan Africa by a further element which exacerbates this distance: the intrinsic capacity of the norm as such and for what it ontologically it is to impose itself on the social reality or social realities to which it refers.

In this panorama, characterized by a multiplicity of different state experiences in which these common elements take on different values, variable intensities and are combined according to non-univocal logics, at this point all that remains is to concretely question the capacity of the values and norms developed by the organizations economic regions to become a substantial source of the law entered into the legal systems either directly, as provided for example by the South African constitution, or indirectly through national transposition laws, or through the permeability of the national legal systems with respect to the supranational ones to lead the different legal systems to a progressive regulatory harmonization in some areas.

Chapter III – The birth of the Organization of African Unity (OAU)

3.1 The birth and development of the Organization of African Unity

The idea of an African unity of continental scope crystallized in the creation, in May 1963 in Addis Ababa, of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), an intergovernmental organization that brought together the then 32 independent African states with the aim of freeing the continent from colonization, to promote solidarity between African States, to coordinate and intensify development cooperation and to safeguard the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Member States⁸⁷.

The OAU was born, however, on a fundamental contradiction: reconciling the aforementioned objectives with the principle of non-interference in internal affairs, which entailed, on the one hand, the preservation of the territorial status quo and, on the other, the maintenance of stability politics within individual states, preventing external interference, even in the case of coups d'état. In the political climate of the 1960s and 1970s, characterized throughout the continent by very high political volatility and by a succession of coups d'état linked to intrinsically African phenomena, but in which logics of power from a global horizon were inserted into the growing opposition between the West and the Soviet Bloc, the governments' concern in attempting to safeguard the principle of non-interference seems more than justified⁸⁸.

At the same time, however, this very principle marks one of the main limits of the OAU: the structural inability to intervene to safeguard its fundamental values when this involves, as happens in the majority of cases, interfering in the internal affairs of a state. Here we see the emergence of the first of the many lines of tension inherent in African regional organizations, which define their essence and shape, limiting, their sphere of activity and effectiveness⁸⁹.

The transition from the OAU to the African Union (AU) also plays on this aspect and marks a radical transformation of the relationship between the organization and the member states. Article 4(h) of the founding Treaty, in fact, explicitly recognizes the Union's right to intervene in each member state to re-establish peace and stability, to prevent genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity⁹⁰.

⁸⁷ M. Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*, Princeton, 1996.

⁸⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁸⁹ W. Logan Rayford, *Breve Storia dei Negri d'America*, Editoriale Opere Nuove, Roma, 1962, p. 44.

⁹⁰ *Ibidem*.

A fortiori, Article 3 (1)(e) underlines the commitment to promoting the guarantee and respect of fundamental rights.

Even more interesting is the innovation introduced by the combined provisions of articles 4(p) and art. 30, which condemn and establish suspension from the activities of the Union for member states whose governments have come to power through unconstitutional mechanisms⁹¹.

To clarify, quite precisely, what is meant by unconstitutional change of government, to make, at least de iure, more stringent what is established by the art. 30, the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance was introduced, adopted by the Union assembly in 2007 and entered into force in 2012, which also defines the suspension procedure, the activation of which rests on the Council for Peace and the security.

These provisions have given rise to an interesting application practice, which in the second half of 2021 led to the suspension of Mali, Guinea and Sudan following military coups, but not without, as underlined by the doctrine, an inconsistent application over time and of a fundamental contradiction between the formal intransigence of the art. 4(p) and 30 and the Union's propensity towards "the use of power-sharing agreements as tools for the negotiated resolution of conflicts, even if such agreements do not respect the prevailing constitutional order".

And yet, for the purposes of our discussion, it is urgent to underline that this has not had a major impact at the level of the system of internal sources, as the Union remains a typical intergovernmental organisation, whose normative instruments are the Conventions between the Member States which, after long negotiation processes, require ratification by the States for entry into force, and finally transposition acts in order to be effective in domestic law⁹².

For many reasons, including the volatility of many of the African political systems, the substantial lack of accountability of the rulers, the scarcity of economic and human resources, the political will, even, frequently, of the States signatories of the conventions is not transformed into implementation of the same.

Obviously, this does not mean a priori diminishing the scope of conventional law, also because it often plays a very important role as a parameter of constitutionality in the internal jurisprudence of states, in the processes of mobilization of civil society and in

⁹¹ V. Federico, *Pluralismo e integrazione regionale in Africa sub-sahariana: il ruolo controverso dei formanti sovranazionali*, op. cit., p. 484.

⁹² *Ibidem*.

political debate, but it is certainly not possible do not underline its limits, if we are thinking about the effectiveness of integration processes⁹³.

Thanks to the mediation of the Emperor of Ethiopia, Haile Salassie, the historic Addis Ababa Conference was held with great enthusiasm from 22 to 25 May 1963 in which thirty-two African states, belonging to both the Monrovia Bloc and the Casablanca Bloc, participated. Africans managed to overcome the polarizations and ideological differences of the past and, with great expectations, the Charter establishing the Organization of African Unity was adopted⁹⁴.

Haile Selassie, in his speech fully expressed the air of optimism that animated the conference:

“We welcome to Ethiopia, in the name of the Ethiopian people and government, the heads of state and government of the independent African nations who today solemnly gathered in the capital of Ethiopia. This conference, unprecedented in history, is the great testimony of the devotion with which we dedicate ourselves to our land and its sons and daughters. It is a historic day for Africa and all Africans. [...] Today, Africa is emerging from a dark age. Our battles are a thing of the past. Africa is resurrecting as a free continent and Africans are resurrecting as free men. The blood that was shed and the suffering that was endured are today the stimulus for a united and free Africa[.]”⁹⁵.

The birth of the OAU represented a crucial step towards cooperation between African states, achieved however not through real innovation, but with a compromise between the various positions that allowed African leaders to shift attention from ideological and political questions to economic, social, cultural and technical, i.e. sectors of common interest to all States. The discussion about what form the organization should take revolved around two diametrically different visions⁹⁶.

On the one hand, the Casablanca Group, represented by the leader of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah, aspired to a political union, considering it a necessary condition for building a prosperous community and maintaining world peace. This was the perspective adopted in 1958, when Ghana, Guinea and Mali formed the Union of African States.

Relations and cooperation between member states were primarily political, diplomatic and defensive. Nkrumah had stated that “Africa’s future lies in a political union, in which

⁹³ J.F. Bayart, *L’Etat en Afrique: la politique du ventre*, Paris, 1989, op. cit., p. 23.

⁹⁴ Ibidem.

⁹⁵ V. Federico, *Pluralismo e integrazione regionale in Africa sub-sahariana: il ruolo controverso dei formanti sovranazionali*, op. cit., p. 485.

⁹⁶ Ibidem.

economic, military and cultural activities must be coordinated for the security of our continent”.

This idea was opposed by the states of the Monrovia Group, who proposed cooperation at a regional level based on a functional approach which only subsequently aimed to create a more organic union.

In fact, the UAM, created by the Brazzaville Group, was established precisely on this approach. Although national security remained the priority, cooperation was established especially in the economic, transport, social and research fields. Nkrumah’s calls for a political union had no effect on the other heads of state, who rejected the possibility of establishing a supranational body. However, a broad consensus was reached on the functionalist approach: integration between African states should have been a non-political form of association, based on the principles of economic, cultural, scientific and technical cooperation⁹⁷.

In the words of Prime Minister Balewa: “There were only a few members who expressed the desire for political union. Most discussions indicate that the preferred approach is the functional one”. The Conference of Heads of State and Government, held in Addis Ababa, had as its objective the search for an agreement based on the Lagos Charter, the Casablanca Bloc Charter and on a draft prepared by the Ethiopian government, which set itself as the first mediator between the two blocks.

From these three charters emerged the Organization of African Unity (OAU), whose charter was signed on 25 May 1963 and entered into force three months later. The Charter therefore tried to reconcile all positions. On the one hand, he enshrined the principle of non-interference and created a confederal structure that placed a strong emphasis on socio-economic cooperation. The request of the states belonging to the Casablanca Group to create a political union was firmly rejected by the assembly⁹⁸.

On the other hand, the request to create a coordination commission was accepted, following up «the urgent and imperative need to coordinate and intensify their efforts in order to accelerate the acquisition of independence for the territories still under foreign domination». Furthermore, the States promised to commit themselves to “receiving nationalists from the liberation movements into their territories to offer them training in all sectors and to facilitate the transit of material aid”⁹⁹.

⁹⁷ F. M. Deng, I. W. Zartman, *Conflict Resolution in Africa*, Washington D.C., Brooking Istitution Press, 1991, p. 22

⁹⁸ *Ibidem*

⁹⁹ J. Woronoff, *Organizing African Unity*, Metuchen, N.J., The Scarecrow Press, 1970, p. 37

The Charter was drafted and adopted in record time, so that it seemed like a real miracle. If the principles and goals were clearly defined, the competences and duties of the institutions to achieve them were only partially elaborated. In the years following Addis Ababa, various resolutions were adopted to fill the gaps in the Constitutional Charter. The reasons that led to the creation of the Organization are set out in the preamble of the Charter of the Organization of African Unity:

Article 1 paragraph 2 of the OAU Charter specified the territorial borders of the OAU, which included the states of the African continent, Madagascar and the other islands surrounding Africa. It was important to specify the geographical limits of the OAU to distinguish them from the Pan-African movement, which extended to all black peoples throughout the world. With the creation of the OAU we moved from a universal vision to a regional one¹⁰⁰.

The aims and objectives were listed in Article 2 and were: to promote unity and solidarity among African States, coordinate and strengthen their cooperation to offer better living conditions to the people of Africa; defend its sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence; eliminate, in all its forms, colonialism in Africa. To this end, the Charter called on member states to harmonize their general policies by identifying priority areas: political, diplomatic, educational, healthcare, defence, transport and communications. The principles and norms, to which the members of the OAU bound themselves by committing themselves to scrupulously observe them, were listed in article 3 and can be classified into three categories¹⁰¹.

The first category includes principles aimed at safeguarding the sovereignty and territorial integrity of member states. The principle of equality “in terms of sovereignty” was established: all member states enjoyed equal rights and duties, without taking into account the number of inhabitants or economic resources. Therefore each State had the right to be represented in every body of the organization and each State had one vote⁸¹. The principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of the member states and respect for the sovereignty of each state, its territorial integrity, the inalienable right to its independent existence was forcefully affirmed.

This meant accepting the political borders existing between the African States at the time of the signing of the Charter, hoping for the stability of the African States, although

¹⁰⁰ F. M. Deng, I. W. Zartman (eds), *Conflict Resolution in Africa*, op. cit., p. 23.

¹⁰¹ *Ibidem*.

colonialism had created artificial borders that did not correspond to the economic, social and national expressions, which it had not delimited without no judgement.

If conflicts arose between States, they should have respected the principle of nonviolent conflict resolution by implementing negotiation, mediation, conciliation and arbitration. The second category includes principles that revolve around decolonization and the emancipation of territories still under colonial rule. To this end “States dedicate themselves with absolute commitment to the total emancipation of African territories and to providing support to non-independent African regions”¹⁰².

The third category concerns foreign policy, aimed at seeking a common policy in external relations with non-member states. It is the policy of non-alignment which is based on distance from both international blocs and on political, economic and military disengagement. Political assassination and subversive activities by neighboring states are then condemned, seen as a security measure for national political institutions. This principle, however, could also be seen as a way to protect and perpetuate the personalities who occupied the highest offices¹⁰³.

¹⁰² V. Federico, *Pluralismo e integrazione regionale in Africa sub-sahariana: il ruolo controverso dei formanti sovranazionali*, op. cit., p. 487.

¹⁰³ *Ibidem*.

3.2 The relationship between the EEC and Africa

The rush towards regionalism in Africa in the early 1960s was partly favored by economic integration in Europe, advocated as early as 1950 by Robert Schuman, French foreign minister.

The experiment began with the Economic Community of Coal and Steel (CECA), which came into force on 23 July 1952, whose objective was the creation of a common market for products of the strategic coal and steel sector. The participating countries were: Germany, France, Italy and Benelux¹⁰⁴.

The evolution of this led to the signing of the Treaty of Rome on 25 March 1957, which established the European Economic Community (EEC). France had made the inclusion of the territories with which it had special relations within this system of preferential trade as a *conditio sine qua non* for its participation in the EEC. These territories of particular interest to the European powers were: Upper Volta, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Congo (B), Congo (L), Ivory Coast, Dahomey, Gabon, Malagasy Republic, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Central African Republic, Rwanda, Senegal, Somalia and Togo¹⁰⁵.

The territories were included in an associative system of mutual benefits, in compliance with the Treaty of Rome which stated that «the objective of the association is the promotion of the economic and social development of the countries and territories, creating close relationships between them and the community»¹⁰⁶.

In Article 132 of the Treaty of Rome it was stated that «the six States of the EEC will apply to trade with the Associated States and the territories the same treatment that they accord among themselves according to the criteria dictated by the Treaty of Rome».

This means that the EEC ensured free access to products coming from these territories, abolishing any form of restriction. In the opposite direction, «the associated countries and territories will apply to the six EEC countries and to the countries included in the associative system the same treatment that has been established with the European State with which they maintain special relations»¹⁰⁷.

The territories concerned would gradually reduce their customs duties until they reached the quota applied towards the motherland.

¹⁰⁴ V. Federico, *Pluralismo e integrazione regionale in Africa sub-sahariana: il ruolo controverso dei formanti sovranazionali*, op. cit., p. 488.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibidem*.

¹⁰⁶ J. Woronoff, *Organizing African Unity*, Metuchen, N.J., The Scarecrow Press, 1970, p. 39

¹⁰⁷ *Ibidem*.

However, in Article 133 paragraph 2 it was established that «overseas countries and territories could collect customs duties that responded to the needs of their development and the needs of their industrialization or duties of a fiscal nature that had the aim of fuelling their balance»¹⁰⁸.

The principle of reciprocity was established which allowed the colonizing countries to maintain a strategic link with the territories, but, at the same time, the so-called safeguard clause was introduced, i.e. an exception to this principle so that the associated states could derive benefits with which finance their development. Furthermore, a common external tariff was adopted for products of interest to the members, such as coffee, cocoa and bananas, creating significant disadvantages for Nigeria, Uganda and Ghana. The countries of the association would then benefit from the European Development Fund (EDF), into which 581.25 million dollars were paid over the five years of the agreement. The EDF aimed to support public investments, in particular schools and hospitals, and economic investments. Most of the funds were spent on social institutions and only 18% went towards agricultural production. With the Association of Overseas Countries and Territories, the Community secured many of the raw materials essential to its industry and made it possible to expand the markets where its products could be sold. At the same time, these advantages were counterbalanced with the provision of aid for the growth of the poorest countries, opening the way to development cooperation policies.

The Association of Overseas Countries and Territories came into force in 1958 and, having a duration of five years, ended in 1963. During the course of these five years most of the Associated States became independent and, with the exception of Guinea, all requested that their association with the EEC continue. The new agreement, known as the «Yaoundé Convention», was signed in 1963¹⁰⁹.

The Yaoundé Convention did not differ much from the provisions of the fourth part of the Treaty of Rome: the differences were largely only institutional.

Negotiations for the agreement that followed the Yaoundé Conventions began in 1973 and were strongly influenced by the addition of 21 states belonging to the British Commonwealth. The participation of these countries in the association with the EEC was a direct consequence of the entry of the United Kingdom into the Community¹¹⁰.

¹⁰⁸ J. Woronoff, *Organizing African Unity*, Metuchen, op. cit., p. 40.

¹⁰⁹ R. Lima Sakr, *From colonialism to regionalism: the yaoundé conventions (1963–1974)*, Cambridge University Press, 18 February 2021, p. 18.

¹¹⁰ *Ibidem*.

Furthermore, six other countries were added: Ethiopia, Liberia, Sudan, Guinea and Guinea Bissau. Despite the enormous differences that existed between their economic, political and cultural systems, the nine EEC states agreed to negotiate with the group called «ACP» since they were African, Caribbean and Pacific states¹¹¹.

The African group, after the experiences of the trade agreements of previous years, was much more compact and its ability to influence the decision-making process clearly increased. The Lomé Convention was completed on 1 February 1975 after 18 months of negotiations. Lomé I came into force in April 1976 and would end in December 1980.

The alignment of the northern countries on conservative positions after 1980 created less favourable conditions for the Lomé III negotiations. The perspective of many Northern states in the 1980s was that the resolution of the global economic crisis could only be achieved with national reforms and not with North-South cooperation strategies and initiatives¹¹². Negotiations for the third Lomé Convention began in 1983, following the push given by the so-called «Pisani Memorandum». On 29 February 2000, the Lomé IV Convention came to an end and it became clear that it needed to be revised or, at least, this was the unilateral decision of the European Community. The “post Lomé” should have taken into account the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT) and the creation of the World Trade Organization (WTO), which occurred in 1995, which implied the end of the preferential trade policies underlying the agreements achieved up to that point between the ACP and the Community.

¹¹¹ M. M. Sissoko, L.O. Osuji, W.I. Cheng (eds), Impacts of the Yaoundé and Lomé Conventions on EC-ACP trade, in “The african Economic & Business Review”, Vol.1, N. 1, 1998, pp. 1-19.

¹¹² Ibidem.

3.3 The transition from the OAU to the African Union: regulatory integration and harmonization

Thanks to the mediation of the Emperor of Ethiopia, Haile Salassie, the historic Addis Ababa Conference was held with great enthusiasm from 22 to 25 May 1963 in which thirty-two African states, belonging to both the Monrovia Bloc and the Casablanca Bloc, participated. Africans managed to overcome the polarizations and ideological differences of the past and, with great expectations, the Charter establishing the Organization of African Unity (OAU) was adopted¹¹³.

The birth of the OAU represented a crucial step towards cooperation between African states, achieved however not through real innovation but with a compromise between the various positions that allowed African leaders to shift attention from ideological and political issues to economic issues, social, cultural and technical, i.e. sectors of common interest to all States. The discussion about what form the organization should take revolved around two diametrically different visions¹¹⁴.

On the one hand, the Casablanca Group, represented by the leader of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah, aspired to a political union, considering it a necessary condition for building a prosperous community and maintaining world peace.

This was the perspective adopted in 1958, when Ghana, Guinea and Mali formed the Union of African States. Relations and cooperation between member states were primarily political, diplomatic and defensive. Nkrumah had stated that «the future of Africa lies on a political union, in which economic, military and cultural activities will have to be coordinated for the security of our continent». This idea was opposed by the states of the Monrovia Group, who proposed cooperation at a regional level based on a functional approach which only subsequently aimed to create a more organic union. In fact, the UAM, created by the Brazzaville Group, was established precisely on this approach. Although national security remained the priority, cooperation was established especially in the economic, transport, social and research fields¹¹⁵.

Nkrumah's calls for a political union had no effect on the other heads of state, who rejected the possibility of establishing a supranational body. However, a broad consensus was reached on the functionalist approach: integration between African states should have

¹¹³ L. Mazzoni, Haile Selassie. Discorsi scelti 1930 - 1973, Stampa Alternativa / Nuovi Equilibri, 2011, p. 22.

¹¹⁴ Ibidem.

¹¹⁵ K. Nkrumah, Africa Must Unite, op. cit. p. 45.

been a non-political form of association, based on the principles of economic, cultural, scientific and technical cooperation.

In the words of Prime Minister Balewa: «there were only a few members who expressed the desire for political union. Most discourse indicates that the preferred approach is the functional one»¹¹⁶.

The Conference of Heads of State and Government, held in Addis Ababa, had as its objective the search for an agreement based on the Lagos Charter, the Casablanca Bloc Charter and on a draft prepared by the Ethiopian government, which set itself as the first mediator between the two blocks. From these three charters emerged the Organization of African Unity (OAU), whose charter was signed on 25 May 1963 and entered into force three months later. The Charter therefore tried to reconcile all positions. On the one hand, he enshrined the principle of non-interference and created a confederal structure that placed a strong emphasis on socio-economic cooperation¹¹⁷.

The request of the states belonging to the Casablanca Group to create a political union was firmly rejected by the assembly. On the other hand, the request to create a coordination commission was accepted, following up «the urgent and imperative need to coordinate and intensify their efforts in order to accelerate the acquisition of independence for the territories still under foreign domination».

Furthermore, the States promised to commit themselves to «receiving nationalists from the liberation movements into their territories to offer them training in all sectors and to facilitate the transit of material aid»¹¹⁸.

The charter of the Organization of African Unity was drawn up and adopted in record time, so that it seemed like a true miracle. If the principles and goals were clearly defined, the competences and duties of the institutions to achieve them were only partially elaborated. In the years following Addis Ababa, various resolutions were adopted to fill the gaps in the Constitutional Charter.

The reasons that led to the creation of the Organization are set out in the preamble of the Charter of the Organization of African Unity.

Starting from this structure, initially conceived as an organism dedicated to completing the decolonization process, during the 1990s a debate developed regarding the need to face new challenges and global changes.

¹¹⁶ M. K. Asante, “The Character of Kwame Nkrumah’s United Africa Vision.” *The Journal of Pan African Studies* 4, October 2012, pp.12-25.

¹¹⁷ *Ibidem*.

¹¹⁸ T. Filesi, *Evoluzione Storico-Politica dell’Africa. Lineamenti Fondamentali*, op. cit., p. 34.

This debate led to the Sirte Declaration (1999) for the creation of the African Union (AU), which will be officially launched in 2002 at the Summit of Heads of State and Government in Durban. The African Union was established with the aim of accelerating the process of African integration, supporting African states in the context of the global economy and addressing the social, economic and political problems of the continent¹¹⁹. Furthermore, the objectives of the AU (art. 3 founding act) include respect for the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the promotion of democratic principles, peace, security and stability on the continent, the promotion and protection of human and peoples' rights, as set out in the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and other relevant human rights instruments.

At the time of the establishment of the AU there were 53 member states while with the addition of South Sudan (2011) they reached 54.

Article 4 of the Constitution incorporates new principles which can be classified into two categories. The first category relates to the principles relating to the prohibition of the use of force between Member States, peaceful coexistence between States and their right to live in a context of peace and security. Respect for democratic principles and human rights belong to this category¹²⁰.

The main bodies of the AU regional system that will be considered are the Assembly, the Executive Council, the Commission, the Pan-African Parliament, the Economic, Social and Cultural Committee. The Assembly is the supreme body of the African Union and includes the Heads of State or Government of the member states and succeeds the previous Assembly of the Organization of the African Union established in 1963.

As regards organizational aspects, the Assembly, following the 2004 Summit, decided to hold two ordinary sessions a year (in January and July). Decisions are taken by consensus or, where this is not possible, by a two-thirds majority of member states. The President of the Assembly remains in office for one year and is chosen on rotation from the 5 regions of the continent¹²¹.

The AU Executive Council works to support the Assembly. All member states take part in the Executive Council, normally through the Foreign Minister.

The mandate of the Executive Council includes: coordinating and making decisions on policies that fall within the scope of the common interests of member states, considering

¹¹⁹ Available on https://www.justice.gov.za/policy/african%20charter/1981_AFRICAN.pdf

¹²⁰ Ibidem.

¹²¹ G. Carbone, *L'Africa. Gli stati, la politica, i conflitti*, Bologna 2005, p. 67.

matters submitted to it by other bodies or by states, and monitoring the implementation of the policies of the Assembly.

The Commission is the secretariat of the AU and is made up of a president, a vice president and 8 commissioners. The president and his deputy are elected by the Assembly for a renewable period of four years, the Assembly also appoints the Commissioners, who are subsequently elected by the Executive Council. The President of the Commission is the highest authority and legal representative of the AU¹²².

The Pan-African Parliament has the task of ensuring the full participation of African peoples in the development and economic integration of the continent. It is therefore intended as a forum for people from all African States and the African diaspora around the world to be involved in discussion and decision-making on the problems and challenges facing the continent.

Its conception is linked to the Treaty of Abuja (1991) which establishes the creation of the African Economic Community and of a parliament for the involvement of African peoples in the economic development of the continent, while its institution is regulated by a specific protocol of 2001, while the functions and objectives were revised in the protocol to the AU's 2014 charter¹²³.

The Economic, Social and Cultural Committee (ECOSOCC) was established in 2004 as a consultative body to the AU and is made up of civil society organisations. ECOSOCC is made up of 150 civil society organisations, including: social groups representing women, children, elderly, young people and vulnerable groups; trade associations (artists, social workers, teachers, legal professionals) and non-governmental organizations.

The AU structure is designed according to a holistic approach to security, which links peace, security and development. The tools with which the African Union is equipped are contained in the APSA - African Architecture for Peace and Security¹²⁴.

The APSA is provided for by art. 2 of the PSC Protocol (Protocol relating to the Security and Peace Council) as a collective security and early warning agreement to facilitate timely and effective intervention in the event of conflict or crisis situations. In essence, this set of devices responds to the AU's desire to prepare permanent instruments, instead of intervening in crises with structures created ad hoc as happened with the OAU.

¹²² J.L. Touadi, *L'Africa in pista. Storia, economia e società*, Torino, 2006, p. 44.

¹²³ *Ibidem*.

¹²⁴ Available on <https://www.geopolitica.info/ue-unione-africana/>

The APSA is in fact an institutional process that strengthens the AU in a decidedly more interventionist sense. The APSA is made up of various bodies whose activation is conditional on the approval of the Peace and Security Council: the Council of the Wise (PoW), which is a sort of consultative body made up of external experts; a Continental Early Warning System (CEWS), which operates as a centre for data analysis and collection; two military structures: the African Standby Force (i.e. a semi-permanent armed force - ASF) and the Military Staff Committee (a consultative body dedicated to purely military issues - MSC); a special fund for financing operations (Special Fund - Sf)¹²⁵.

In August 2013 the AU announced the start of the establishment of the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crisis (AIRC), a device that has operational modules of 1500 units. The birth of the African Union was the major historical event of the 21st century for Africa, resulting from the climate profoundly changed thanks to the end of the Cold War. The new era of globalization was opening and, consequently, a profound change in the OAU was necessary to respond to the new international economic system¹²⁶.

¹²⁵ Available on

<https://www.parlamento.it/application/xmanager/projects/parlamento/file/repository/affariinternazionali/osservatorio/approfondimenti/PI0089-bis.pdf>

¹²⁶ Ibidem.

3.4 Agenda 2063: “The Africa We Want”

In May 2013, during the Golden Jubilee for the 50th anniversary of the Foundation of the African Union, the AU, the evolution of the Organization for United Africa, the heads of state and governors of all African countries signed the Document as an affirmation of their commitment to the Africa of the future¹²⁷.

The desire is to lead the continent on a new growth path and support its economic and sustainable development. Agenda 2063 is an official document signed in 2013 by the Heads of State of African governments which proposes a broad strategic project to transform Africa into the global power of the future.

The contents of the change plan aim to lead the continent to achieve its inclusive and sustainable development objectives and constitute a real push towards unity, freedom, self-determination, collective progress and prosperity of the African people.

At its basis lies a strong idea of Pan-Africanism - according to which - the people of Africa, including both people who have African origins and who have moved away over time due to colonization and diaspora, and those who still live on the continent, they do not simply share a common history, but also a common destiny that can unite them and give them more strength. Agenda 2063 aims to lay the foundations for a new and supportive African Renaissance. Its genesis was due to the realization by the leaders of African countries that it was necessary to reorient and redefine Africa's priorities for the coming years.

The Organization of African Unity (OAU), forerunner of the African Union (AU), had in the past set itself some fundamental objectives for Africa which can be considered achieved. After having fought to defeat apartheid and to achieve political independence for African countries, the priorities for Africa have now changed¹²⁸.

The Africa Union has thus established new objectives for the future growth of the continent. For Africa to become an important player in the global arena, priority must be given to inclusive social and economic development, continental and regional integration, democratic governments, peace and security.

The main objectives of Agenda 2063 are:

- increasing peace and reducing conflicts;
- renewed economic growth and constant social progress;
- the need for development in which people are at the centre;
- gender equality and youth empowerment;

¹²⁷ Available on <https://addis.unfpa.org/en/publications/agenda-2063-africa-we-want>

¹²⁸ Ibidem

- adaptation to new global contexts brought by globalization and the information revolution;
- greater unity such as to make Africa a global power no longer to be underestimated and capable of gathering consensus around its objectives;
- the push for growth towards new emerging development opportunities and investment in sectors such as agribusiness, infrastructure, health, education and raw materials of which Africa is rich¹²⁹.

The goal is to create an Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development, eradicating poverty in a generation and creating widespread prosperity with its own means and resources. What Africa aspires to by 2063 is to have high standards of well-being, with an adequate quality of life and health for its inhabitants, which will also include good education and advanced training, especially in scientific and technological subjects, also for the benefit of the less well-off. Cities will have to be economic and cultural hubs, with modern infrastructure and an adequate housing plan, where everyone has access to basic services, such as running water, sanitation, energy, public transport and information and communication technologies. Economies will need to be transformed through structural reforms to create shared growth, quality jobs and greater economic opportunities for all. The declaration also talks about what Africa has received from nature, such as its environment and its ecosystems, including the wildest ones, which will need to be made healthier, protected and valorised, also thanks to work on the resilience of economies and community to climate change. For 2063, Africa is committed, in addition to inclusive growth, to the creation of jobs by improving agricultural production, investing in research and innovation, gender equality, young people, remember that 70% of the African population has less 30 years old. Great importance was also given to the commitment to mitigating the effects of climate change; in fact, the document states the desire to continue with a single voice and in unity of intent to advance one's positions and interests on climate change and resource management¹³⁰.

The fundamental point of the Agenda is the integration of the continent, a process started with the birth first of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1963 and then with the formalization of the African Union (AU) in 2002 which includes all the states Africans.

The integration will have the aim of promoting pan-Africanism, but above all of guaranteeing the free circulation of people, goods, capital and services, so as to increase and facilitate trade and investments, which are currently made difficult, both for those who operate internally and for foreign companies, also due to regulatory differences between the various countries.

¹²⁹ Available on <https://au.int/en/agenda2016/overview>

¹³⁰ Ibidem

Another objective also refers to the fundamental freedoms at the basis of our societies: Africa in 2063 will be guided by good governance, by democratic values and respect for human values, by gender equality, justice and legality, principles to be applied to every level and in every field, so that corruption and impunity no longer find a place.

The desire to work on the prevention and peaceful resolution of conflicts is declared within Agenda 2063. This is a central aspect, since Africa hosts a very high cultural and ethnic diversity and the management of this diversity must be positive, a enrichment for all, not an instrument of conflict for economic-political ends, as has happened, and happens, rejecting any form of terrorism and extremism. Maintaining peace is in fact functional to development, both from the point of view of the economic and social environment, and for security and the reduction of people's vulnerability¹³¹.

Agenda 2063 not only contains aspirations for the future of Africa, but also identifies the main guiding programmes capable of stimulating economic growth and development in Africa, to lead to a rapid transformation of the continent.

¹³¹ Available on <https://au.int/en/agenda2016/overview>

Conclusions

The creation of the African Union expresses the will of the member states to equip themselves with more suitable mechanisms to increase the cohesion, capacity and operation of the pan-African organisation, in order to consolidate action in which real priority is given to “African solutions to African problems”.

By introducing the possibility that inter-African collective bodies intervene, when the autonomy of individual governments puts regional and continental balances at risk and by emphasizing the component of the promotion of human rights and democratic freedoms, the AU has renounced the prohibition of interference for a more current ban on indifference.

However, the interventions of the AU bodies in recent crises have highlighted the inadequacy of an organization which, in the absence of defined practices and weakened by regulatory gaps, struggles to clarify and consolidate its mandate, and therefore also to coordinate itself in effectively with African regional organizations and to give real sustainability to their decisions. Given the excessive slowness in responding to crises, the difficulty in reaching shared positions and the limited economic autonomy, regional powers, and in particular South Africa and Nigeria, influence the decisions of the AU, often preceding the intervention of the AU organization and effectively replacing collective bodies. In this sense, strengthening multilateral cooperation with the AU, in terms of training and making funds available, could be a first step to improve the fortunes of an organization in search of autonomy, credibility and truly viable directions.

Referring to the AU as the single voice of the African continent is a way of acknowledging the process of unity or at least coordination underway in Africa, respecting equal treatment with similar organizations, such as the European Union (EU).

On the other hand, it is a strategy which, although institutionally correct, risks discounting the divisions that still exist within the AU and its objective shortcomings. While waiting for the organization to be able to fill the gaps in terms of self-financing, sustainability and cohesion, it could prove more functional in interpreting the African Union as a forum that connects on the one hand to the powers with hegemonic ambitions and on the other another to the regional organizations of the continent, ECOWAS and SADC in the lead, where among other things the decision-making processes are less cumbersome.

The colonial or postcolonial model no longer has a monopoly on institutions, aid or even investments in Africa. Africa’s traditional partners - former colonial powers and the United States - have more than ever to deal with the low-rate “conditionality” strategies

of Brazil, China, India, Turkey and Russia itself, which is making its reappearance in Africa after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

For its part, the African Union, rather than aiming at the undoubtedly useful but expensive strengthening of intervention structures, should reclaim the more congenial role of political mediation, intervening preventively and concretely cooperating with regional organisations. Meanwhile, although the possibilities exist for the African Union, while increasing its political weight and exploiting the positive trend of economic growth, to be able to acquire the ability to negotiate with the West and with the emerging powers themselves, the terms of globalization are still far away.

Although the African Union has achieved indisputable successes during its still short existence, it is impossible not to underline its fragilities due primarily to the lack of suitable tools to counter most of the continent's complex crises.

When the African Union was created in 2002, the main innovation was cantered on a "supranational" turning point that had to break with the purely intergovernmental past of the Organization of African Unity, despite the fact that the African Union included in the Agenda 2063 the prospect of achieving ambitious results in this sense, such as the implementation of a free trade area or a common citizenship, however supranational regionalism seems to be the most suitable system to address the complex crises of the continent, since it allows the States to overcome political, economic, ethnic and religious boundaries.

The development of an integration project that draws inspiration from Nkrumah's thought and that transcends and surpasses the most important examples in this sense, such as the European Union, going further especially from the point of view of political integration, of overcoming of national borders and security, could lead to the development of an original African solution to African problems.

It therefore remains to be seen whether African leaders will be able to implement a more radical pan-Africanism, necessary to fuel such a reformist project, taking into account Nkrumah's assumptions and his foresight in identifying the critical issues of the imposition of European-derived paradigms in Africa, opting for a process towards greater integration aimed at responding to the needs of a continent torn by political, ethnic and religious conflicts. The re-interpretation of the African Union on the basis of such reformism according to a radically pan-Africanist perspective could help illuminate the path towards overcoming the limits of the organization itself and the heavy colonial legacy.

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Summary

Il panafricanismo è un movimento che promuove lo spirito di solidarietà e cooperazione tra i leader e le società africane e mira all'unità politica del continente africano, centrata sul sentimento di identità comune.

Capitolo I

Il primo capitolo esplora l'origine del panafricanismo e il pensiero dei suoi maggiori esponenti. I rappresentanti più significativi del panafricanismo nel XX secolo sono W.E.B. Du Bois, George Padmore, Kwame Nkrumah.

W. E. B. Du Bois, definito il padre del panafricanismo per il suo lavoro a favore delle nazioni africane emergenti, dedicò la sua vita alla lotta per l'uguaglianza degli afroamericani e di tutte le persone di colore. È uno dei più grandi storici americani e il suo impegno e la sua profondità intellettuale lo hanno reso uno dei principali riformatori del XX secolo.

Nel 1885, Du Bois venne introdotto al razzismo quando andò a sud per entrare alla Fisk University di Nashville, nel Tennessee, un'istituzione afroamericana con, a quel tempo, una facoltà bianca. Ha incontrato anche il mondo afroamericano del sud. Le sue esperienze spesso umilianti lo hanno portato a comprendere la doppia coscienza dell'afroamericano. A Fisk, Du Bois scrisse la sua tesi di laurea sullo statista tedesco Otto von Bismarck, che aveva unificato la sua nazione. Du Bois vedeva l'unificazione sotto una leadership qualificata come il modello per gli afroamericani.

A Londra partecipò al primo Congresso panafricano nel luglio del 1900 dove affermò che fu proprio durante l'incontro londinese a Westminster Hall che fu usata per la prima volta la parola panafricanismo. L'incontro fu organizzato principalmente da Henry Sylvester Williams, un avvocato di Trinidad che aveva coniato il termine Pan-Africa come risposta politica alla Conferenza di Berlino del 1884 in cui l'Europa aveva diviso il continente africano in segmenti coloniali.

Nel 1921, il Congresso si riunì a Londra e pubblicò un manifesto che chiedeva una "sezione internazionale nell'Ufficio del Lavoro della Società delle Nazioni, incaricata della protezione del lavoro indigeno". Nel 1923, un terzo Congresso a Lisbona approvò una risoluzione simile. Dopo la guerra, prese l'iniziativa di organizzare diversi congressi panafricani cercando di influenzare l'amministrazione delle colonie, anche se con scarso effetto. Du Bois detestava Marcus Garvey e il suo movimento nazionalista "Ritorno in Africa". Du Bois incoraggiò la fioritura letteraria e artistica negli anni '20 conosciuta come il Rinascimento di Harlem, sebbene

criticasse il lavoro di alcune delle sue figure perché eccessivamente libero e mettesse in guardia i giovani scrittori afroamericani dalla dipendenza dai mecenati bianchi.

Per Du Bois, l'aspetto più importante della rivolta contro la schiavitù è il lavoro nero americano che Marx aveva definito un "perno" nel sistema del capitalismo globale.

La bandiera del panafricanismo passò, negli anni seguenti, nelle mani dell'allievo prediletto di Du Bois, George Padmore, e di africani come Kwame Nkrumah.

Il pensiero di George Padmore si basava sul fatto che operai e contadini dovrebbero essere la forza trainante dietro qualsiasi movimento che gli intellettuali della classe media potessero fondare. Si trattava di un suggerimento non così sottile che il movimento panafricano, che fino a quel momento era stato in gran parte borghese nel numero dei suoi membri, avesse bisogno di essere proletarizzato.

Insieme a Nkrumah, Padmore organizzò nel 1945 il Congresso panafricano di Manchester che segnò una demarcazione fra due epoche. Emerse infatti chiaramente come l'epoca colonialista stava volgendo al termine; era venuto il tempo dell'autodeterminazione dei popoli.

Nkrumah credeva fermamente che con l'unità i popoli africani avrebbero assicurato la loro totale liberazione dalle sofferenze dell'imperialismo e del neocolonialismo.

La sua politica era orientata alla realizzazione degli Stati Uniti d'Africa, ma fu sfidato dalla volontà dei nuovi leader degli stati appena formati di mantenere la loro sovranità.

Kwame Nkrumah, dopo aver combattuto per l'indipendenza del Ghana, era diventato presidente e, come sostenitore del panafricanismo, cercava la liberazione dell'intero continente dalla dominazione coloniale, offrendo sostegno finanziario ad altre nazioni africane.

Capitolo II

Il secondo capitolo esamina come il panafricanismo sia radicato nella continuità delle forze nazionali e globali che ne hanno favorito l'emergere quasi due secoli fa.

La strategia adottata dall'Africa per trasformarsi da continente in via di sviluppo in un forte blocco unito di nazioni sviluppate è quella dell'integrazione regionale. La necessità di integrazione è indiscutibile sia come strategia per promuovere lo sviluppo economico sia come mezzo per proteggere gli interessi africani. Questo è il motivo per cui sono emerse numerose Comunità Economiche Regionali (REC), che fungono da base per la realizzazione degli obiettivi sia del Trattato di Abuja che del Trattato Costitutivo dell'Unione Africana.

Il Trattato di Abuja del 1991 portò alla creazione della Comunità economica africana, un'organizzazione che promosse lo sviluppo di aree di libero scambio, unioni doganali, una Banca centrale africana e un'unione monetaria africana.

La prima generazione di regionalismo iniziò negli anni '60 e durò fino agli anni '80.

La prospettiva adottata in questa prima fase si basava sul modello neoclassico di integrazione economica come soluzione alle strutture economiche deboli e ai mercati ristretti. Sebbene questi primi tentativi di creare organizzazioni regionali abbiano avuto qualche successo, nella maggior parte dei casi i leader africani non erano disposti a cedere parte della sovranità appena acquisita a strutture regionali sovranazionali.

La seconda generazione del regionalismo è iniziata, lentamente, subito dopo il Piano d'azione di Lagos e l'Atto finale e ha poi subito un'accelerazione negli anni successivi al Trattato di Abuja. Ciò che rese diversa la portata di questa nuova ondata di regionalizzazione fu il crescente coinvolgimento della sfera politica nelle questioni economiche.

Sebbene l'idea dominante fosse ancora basata sul modello neoclassico fondato sulle pratiche commerciali, si facevano strada questioni di sviluppo e di sicurezza, rendendo le nuove entità meno statiche rispetto al passato. Con il Trattato di Abuja integrato dall'Atto Costitutivo, le REC sono diventate i pilastri o gli "elementi costitutivi" della Comunità Economica Africana - AEC in un approccio di graduale integrazione del continente.

Nel 1998 è stato firmato il "Protocollo sulle relazioni tra le Comunità economiche regionali e la Comunità economica africana", rinnovato nel 2007 con il Protocollo sulle relazioni tra l'Unione africana e le Comunità economiche regionali.

Il protocollo ha cercato di consolidare e promuovere una stretta cooperazione tra le REC e tra queste e l'Unione africana attraverso il coordinamento e l'armonizzazione delle loro politiche, misure, programmi e attività in tutti i campi e settori. Un altro obiettivo di questo protocollo era quello di stabilire un quadro per il coordinamento delle attività dei REC per contribuire alla realizzazione dell'Atto Costitutivo dell'Unione Africana e del Trattato AEC.

Per garantire la realizzazione di questi obiettivi, l'Unione Africana e le REC dovevano impegnarsi a cooperare e coordinare le politiche e i programmi delle REC con quelli dell'Unione Africana.

Capitolo III

Il terzo capitolo evidenzia la nascita e lo sviluppo dell'Organizzazione dell'Unità Africana (OUA) e poi dell'Unione Africana (UA) e il suo ruolo fondamentale nella realizzazione di un'Africa unita e libera.

Grazie alla mediazione dell'Imperatore d'Etiopia, Haile Salassie, dal 22 al 25 maggio 1963 si tenne con grande entusiasmo la storica Conferenza di Addis Abeba alla quale parteciparono trentadue Stati africani, appartenenti sia al Blocco Monrovia che al Blocco Casablanca. Gli

africani sono riusciti a superare le polarizzazioni e le differenze ideologiche del passato e, con grandi aspettative, è stata adottata la Carta che istituisce l'Organizzazione dell'Unità Africana (OUA).

La nascita dell'OUA ha rappresentato un passo cruciale verso la cooperazione tra gli Stati africani, ottenuta però non attraverso una vera innovazione ma con un compromesso tra le diverse posizioni che ha consentito ai leader africani di spostare l'attenzione dalle questioni ideologiche e politiche alle questioni economiche, sociali, culturali e tecniche, ossia settori di interesse comune a tutti gli Stati.

A partire da questa struttura, inizialmente concepita come un organismo deputato al completamento del processo di decolonizzazione, nel corso degli anni Novanta si è sviluppato un dibattito riguardante la necessità di affrontare le nuove sfide e i cambiamenti globali.

Questo dibattito ha portato alla Dichiarazione di Sirte (1999) per la creazione dell'Unione Africana (UA), che sarà lanciata ufficialmente nel 2002 in occasione del Summit dei Capi di Stato e di Governo a Durban. L'Unione Africana è stata istituita con l'obiettivo di accelerare il processo di integrazione africana, sostenere gli Stati africani nel contesto dell'economia globale e affrontare i problemi sociali, economici e politici del continente.

Inoltre, tra gli obiettivi dell'UA (art. 3 atto istitutivo) figurano il rispetto della Carta delle Nazioni Unite e della Dichiarazione Universale dei Diritti dell'Uomo, la promozione dei principi democratici, della pace, della sicurezza e della stabilità nel continente, la promozione e la tutela della salute umana e i diritti dei popoli, come stabilito nella Carta africana dei diritti umani e dei popoli e in altri strumenti pertinenti in materia di diritti umani.

Al momento della costituzione dell'UA gli Stati membri erano 53 mentre con l'aggiunta del Sud Sudan (2011) sono arrivati a 54.