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Political Clientelism and Ethnicity in Tropical Africa:* Competing Solidarities in Nation-Building

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The analysis presented here is an attempt to follow up, qualify, and elaborate upon, some earlier hypotheses about the role of political clientelism in the light of empirical data from West and Central Africa.¹ More specifically, the aim is, first, to use the concept of clientelism as an auxiliary tool to elucidate some of the ambiguities surrounding the relationship between ethnicity and nation-building in contemporary Africa; and, second, to provide what appears to be a "missing link" between the micro- and macrosociological or system-centered theories that have dominated the field of developmental politics since the last decade. Succinctly stated, this "missing link" is to be found in the varieties of personal and institutional linkages and reciprocities which, depending on the circumstances, have bridged or accentuated ethnic and other discontinuities within traditional and modernizing pluralistic polities.

Because it cuts across both "traditional" and "modern" referents, political clientelism, as a concept, has a heuristic value generally missing from the conceptual arsenal of either "modern" or "traditional" polities; it directs attention to processes of adjustment between traditional and modern patterns of behavior, expectations, and normative orientations to politics which might otherwise go unnoticed. As an analytical concept, clientelism brings into focus units of analysis, political actors, and relationships which have thus far received scant attention from political scientists.² As a developmental construct,

* For their searching comments and criticisms on an earlier version of this paper I should like to express my gratitude to the participants in the MIT-Harvard Joint Faculty Seminar on Political Development, as well as to Professor Norman Uphoff, Crawford Young, and Herbert Bergmann. For their assistance in proffering specific information on the countries discussed in this paper, I owe a similar debt to Yves Person, Pierre Verger, Alfred Gersteyn, and Richard Sklar. I alone, however, am responsible for the views expressed in this article.

¹ See René Lemarchand & Keith Legg, "Political Clientelism and Development: A Preliminary Analysis," *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (Jan. 1972), 149-178.

² A notable exception is William J. Foltz, "Social Structure and Political Behavior of Senegalese Elites," *Yale Papers in Political Science* No. 33; see also C. S. Whitaker's illuminating discussion of "clientage" phenomena in Northern Nigeria in *The Politics of Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), pp. 373-375. Nor is this neglect typical of political

it suggests new perspectives from which to look at processes of nation-building in Africa: Viewed from the micropolitical perspective of traditional patterns of interaction among groups and individuals, nation-building becomes not so much an architectonic, voluntaristic model divorced from the environmental materials available; it becomes, rather, a matter of how best to extend to the national level the discrete vertical solidarities in existence at the local or regional levels. Seen through the prism of traditional forms of clientelism, the processes of integration and disintegration that have attended the growth and decline of historic African polities may give us additional clues to similar processes in contemporary Africa. Finally, looked at from the standpoint of the exchange processes involved in clientelism, patterns of resource allocation and distribution may yet emerge as among the most meaningful indicators of political development; at least they may provide a useful corrective to the current bias toward power accumulation as a presumed prerequisite of political modernization.

This said, two cautionary remarks are in order: One is that the empirical data available are still far too limited and unreliable to permit anything like a full-fledged theory of political development; although an attempt has been made in the latter part of this discussion to relate clientelism to current theories of development, the accent here is primarily on "national integration." What follows, then, is better seen as a series of tentative and piecemeal hypotheses awaiting further testing and systematization. Moreover, if many of the observable patterns of behavior in contemporary Africa are indeed reminiscent or expressive of traditional client-patron relationships, it does not follow that *all* such patterns are reducible to clientelism.³ This kind of naive reductionism

scientists alone, as can readily be inferred from a content analysis of a recent issue of the *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 1 (Winter, 1969) devoted to "Rural Africa." Clientelism is conspicuously absent from the list of research priorities assigned to various cross-disciplinary subfields (Political Anthropology, Local Politics and Development Administration, Agricultural Economics, Rural Sociology and Communications, and Rural Geography).

³ Even where the evidence suggests the presence of clientelistic networks, these may in fact be so fluid and

would make unduly short shrift of the emergent integrative mechanisms, norms, and symbols attendant upon the rise of nationalist sentiment and activity, and hence ascribe to clientelism more credit than it actually deserves.

Clientelism, Ethnicity, and Integration

Although it would be too much to expect universal agreement on any single definition, for the purpose of this discussion political clientelism can be viewed as "a more or less personalized relationship between actors (i.e., patrons and clients), or sets of actors, commanding unequal wealth, status or influence, based on conditional loyalties and involving mutually beneficial transactions."⁴ However vague, this definition has a dual advantage. First, it is broad enough to encompass synchronic and diachronic variations (i.e., the various kinds of microlevel solidarities associated with the operation of traditional forms of clientelism, as well as the broader, overarching solidarities characteristic of the machine pattern). Second, it suggests alternative means for integration where coercive power is not sufficiently coercive to command widespread compliance and where conceptions of legitimacy are as yet too weak or circumscribed to produce consensus.

This type of situation is clearly the rule rather than the exception in most of Africa. Equally plain is that, whatever virtues clientelism may have in bringing people together, a more prevalent type of integration is that which has taken place at the local or regional level through horizontal solidarities associated with kinship or ethnic ties, or the extension of such solidarities on a more inclusive scale—in short, through ethnicity.⁵ It is less obvious, however,

unstable as to defy analysis. Especially pertinent in this connection is Professor Young's query (in a personal communication): "Clientelism (in the Congo) is certainly crucial, but how can one deal with it when all is fluidity, when the networks are far more ephemeral, when mutual costs and benefits of maintenance of particular patron-client sets are apparently recalculated very frequently, and on the basis of very short-run contingencies?" In such a spasmodic environment the analysis of clientelism is evidently a far more risky endeavor than in settings where client-patron relationships are more clearly institutionalized and offer a basis for relatively stable interactions among actors. If for no other reason, our analysis is restricted to the latter type of situation, as illustrated by Senegal, Mali, the Ivory Coast, Northern Nigeria, Rwanda, Burundi and Liberia. Among other states that might fit into this category but which are not specifically dealt with in this paper one might mention the Sudan, Chad, Upper Volta, Niger, Dahomey, Sierra Leone and Mauretania.

⁴ Lemarchand & Legg.

⁵ The case for ethnicity as a source of national integration is stated in Immanuel Wallerstein, "Ethnicity

and National Integration in West Africa," *Cahiers d'Études Africaines*, 1 (October, 1960), 129-139; using "tribalism" in a very different sense from that which Wallerstein ascribes to the term, Richard Sklar makes a similar case in "The Contribution of Tribalism to Nationalism in Western Nigeria," *Journal of Human Relations*, 8 (Spring-Summer, 1960), 407-415. Unless otherwise specified, our use of the term ethnicity incorporates Wallerstein's notions of "tribe" (a reference group defined by its loyalty to a tribal government, in a rural setting) and "ethnicity" (denoting loyalty to a community detached from its traditional government, in an urban setting). Our assumption here is that the boundaries of ethnicity are inevitably self-ascriptive, regardless of the setting—a point persuasively argued by Paul Mercier, ("On the Meaning of Tribalism in Black Africa") in P. Van der Berghe, ed., *Africa: Social Problems of Change and Conflict* (San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Co., 1965), pp. 483-501.

that clientelism and ethnicity have seldom operated independently of each other, particularly in recent times. Just as ethnicity has sometimes been credited with integrative properties that really belong to the realm of clientelism, so clientelism as an integrative mechanism has often developed out of the exigencies of ethnic fragmentation. Aside from the conceptual vagueness attached to each term, analysis of the relationship between clientelism and ethnicity is rendered peculiarly arduous by the similarity of the processes to which they refer. For if ethnicity is a matter of self-definition, and if "its ultimate referent is necessarily subjective,"⁶ the same can be said of patron-client relationships. Thus what from one standpoint might be regarded as an example of ethnicity in the sense in which Wallerstein uses the term—a redefinition of one's cultural identity through membership in a wider community, usually in the context of an urban situation⁷—might, from another angle, be viewed as a redefinition of rural clientelistic ties in an urban setting. Moreover, clientelism and ethnicity may have overlapping memberships, with some individuals solidly anchored in the ethnic substructure, and others acting as intermediary links between this substructure and the higher reaches of the clientelistic pyramid. What may be taken for a clear example of ethnicity at one level may be nothing more than the lower reticulations of a more extensive clientelistic network. A third source of confusion lies in the reciprocal processes of interaction which normally enter into the ethnicity-clientelism relationship. Rarely has this relationship been unidirectional or fixed. Just as

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⁶ See Aristide Zolberg, "Ethnicity and National Integration," a paper prepared for delivery at the 1966 Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, Bloomington, Indiana, p. 2.

⁷ Wallerstein.

clientelism may in some cases weaken the strength of ethnic identification, the latter may in turn affect the shape and stability of clientelistic networks.

If their contours are often blurred by the complexity of their interrelationships, clientelism and ethnicity are nonetheless analytically separable—and so are their relative contributions to national integration. The first thing to note in this connection is that although clientelism and ethnicity are both relational concepts, involving a subjective definition of the position of an individual or group in relation to another, clientelism incorporates a potentially wider range of social referents and thus offers *wider scope for integration*. Clientelism in M. G. Smith's terms, "incorporates such differentiating factors as ethnicity, occupational status, lineage, and rural-urban distinctions, and defines the boundaries of the political society . . . in functional terms"⁸ or, one might add, if not always in the functional terms associated with traditional forms of clientelism, at least in terms of mutual interest. In the case of ethnicity, perceptions of mutual interest are dependent upon, and limited by, perceptions of cultural affinities; clientelism, on the other hand, extends these perceptions beyond the realm of primordial loyalties and establishes vertical links of reciprocity between ethnically or socially discrete entities.

This is not to argue that perceptions of mutual interest will necessarily prevail over ethnic loyalties and cause their extinction—though this possibility is by no means excluded. The mutations of ethnic loyalties entailed by the play of clientelism may range from extinction to dilution and accommodation, depending on the nature of the reciprocities involved and the level at which they operate.

Three possible types of situations suggest themselves: First, there may be a substitution of the client's original ethnic identity for that of his patron: A case in point is Gallais's description of the Bobo tribesman who, upon settling in Mopti (Mali), looks for a protector and having found one, becomes his client and through a kind of mimetic process, acquires not only the external behavioral patterns of his patron but his ethnic identity.⁹

Second, clientelism may cause a redefinition of one's original tribal identity by reference to a wider cultural focus. Though often conceptu-

alized in terms of "super-tribalization"¹⁰ or "ethnicity," much of this phenomenon is reducible to a quest for an alternative focus of security, in the form of clientelism, to that provided through clan or lineage affiliations. Thus, speaking of "associations founded by the urban tribal population" of Monrovia, Frankel notes that these associations "gain respectability from (the widespread custom of patronage), and the patrons, for their part, expect to be able to count on the support of their members for personal and political ends."¹¹

Third, clientelism may provide the cement by which ethnic identities are amalgamated within the boundaries of a more inclusive political system. This phenomenon calls to mind two different types of situations: (1) those in which clientelism acts as the major "social adhesive"¹² of the traditional political system, in effect extending to the traditional political arena the principle of reciprocity operative at the level of interpersonal relations (as in the emirate system of Northern Nigeria), and (2) those in which clientelism operates within the context of a nationwide political party and takes on the qualities of machine politics (as in the case of the *Parti Démocratique de la Côte d'Ivoire* [PDCI] in the Ivory Coast). However different the processes and reciprocities involved, in each case the result has been to accommodate ethnic discontinuities to the requirements of a more or less integrated political community.

As the foregoing suggests, although clientelism and ethnicity—like integration—are relative concepts, implying varying degrees of cohesiveness and identification, clientelism denotes a *greater variety of possible types and levels of integration*.

In the perspective of the modern African state system, such integrative potentialities as

¹⁰ The term "super-tribalization." suggested by Jean Rouch in "Migrations au Ghana," *Journal de la Société des Africanistes* 26, Nos. 1-2 (1956), 163-164, has more restrictive implications than Wallerstein's use of the concept of ethnicity as it suggests common cultural affinities between the group from which an individual is detached and that in which he is incorporated. For Wallerstein, ethnicity does not presuppose preexisting cultural bonds. Regardless of this distinction, the process to which these terms refer occurs on a far wider scale than that involved in ethnic mutation through the identification of a client with his patron; one might say that the latter is an individual mutation and the former a collective one usually taking place within the context of ethnic associations.

¹¹ Merran Fraenkel, *Tribe and Class in Monrovia* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 187.

¹² The expression is borrowed from C. S. Whitaker, *Politics of Tradition*, p. 373.

⁸ Michael G. Smith, *Government in Zazzau* (London: Oxford University Press, 1960), p. 260.

⁹ Jean Gallais, "Signification du Groupe Ethnique au Mali," *L'Homme* 2 (May-August 1962), p. 122.

may exist in clientelism operate essentially at two levels: Clientelism can be evaluated for its contribution to processes of unification among all or some of the parts of the ethnic subsystem, or to the adaptation of these parts to the central governmental and bureaucratic structures. In either case integration stems from the exchange of valued and presumably scarce resources, which in turn permits the attainment of individual or collective goals. Yet the kinds of resources, exchanges, and normative expectations involved are liable to differ significantly from one level to another, and so also will the implications for national integration.

By way of illustration one might compare the operation of traditional clientelism in Northern Nigeria with the machine form operative in Senegal. In his discussion of *bara*-ship in Nupe, Nadel calls attention to three different types of integrative responses elicited through the inducements of clientelism:¹³ first, the type of personal identification that originates from the desire of an inferior to obtain the political protection of a superior; second, that which results from the efforts of "impecunious craftsmen to obtain a prosperous customer"; third, that which, "over and above securing material assistance, stems from attachment to a man of rank and influence," thereby offering the client a chance "of becoming somebody," "of being lifted from the ignominy of a commoner's life into the sphere of rank and importance." Whether the motive happens to be a quest for protection, for material assistance, or for social mobility, integration at this level stems from an exchange of psychological and material rewards between a *superior and a subordinate*; extended to the emirate system the relationship remains basically the same: "The crux of the clientage relationship in all the emirates," writes C. S. Whitaker, "is that patronage, economic security, and protection can be exchanged for personal loyalty and obedience."¹⁴

Rather different is the type of clientelism through which the interests of maraboutic elites of Senegal are aggregated within the *Union Progressiste Sénégalaise* (UPS). What W. Foltz describes as "a pyramiding of clan alliances in super patron-client relationships" involves, in addition to personal bonds of friendships between the national elites and the maraboutic notables, certain calculated reciprocities, in the form of policy outputs and votes, between the party leadership and the leaders of the Muslim

brotherhoods. "The prerequisite of political action," according to Foltz, is "not that it be progressive, nationalist, or such, but that the spoils be fairly distributed. The parallels with American ethnic and urban politics are fairly close; as in American cities, long range planning is often sacrificed to short-run expediency."¹⁵ Clientelism, in short, becomes an adaptive device through which the demands of the maraboutic patrons are channeled into the political system and converted into policy outputs in return for electoral support.

In one case, integration depends on reciprocities between superiors and subordinates; its scope is limited to and at the same time delineates boundaries of the subsystem; the payments include predominantly affective rewards, in the form of identifying with a superior or receiving deference from an inferior. In the other case, integration hinges on reciprocities between equals; its scope transcends the boundaries of the ethnic or cultural subsystem; and the transactions are invested with a high degree of instrumental rationality.

If the first of our examples retrospectively suggests the nature of the obstacles placed in the way of national integration through the operation of microlevel clientelistic solidarities, the second indicates a far greater area of compatibility among the different levels at which clientelism operates. In the case of Senegal, the contribution of clientelism to nation-building would seem to involve several different types of integrative mechanisms: First, insofar as it implies a normative commitment to certain "instrumentalities and procedures for the achievement of goals and resolving conflicts,"¹⁶ clientelism may provide at least some of the ingredients which enter into processes of consensus formation at the national level. Second, to the extent that it creates functional reciprocities among otherwise unrelated ethnic groupings, it may also generate feelings of interdependence among them and help reduce the saliency of primordial loyalties. Third, through the vertical bonds it creates among hierarchically distinct groups and communities, clientelism may sup-

¹⁵ Foltz, "Social Structure and Political Behavior . . ." p. 153.

¹⁶ Myron Weiner, "Political Integration and Political Development," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 358 (March, 1965). 53. The distinctions drawn in this paragraph lean heavily on Weiner's classification. For a somewhat different approach, see John N. Paden, "Conceptual Dimensions of National Integration Theory, with Special Reference to Inter-Ethnic (Horizontal) Integration," Internal Working Paper No. 2, Instability/Integration Project, Council for Intersocietal Studies, Northwestern University (January, 1968).

¹³ Siegfried F. Nadel, *A Black Byzantium* (London: Oxford University Press, 1951), p. 123.

¹⁴ Whitaker, p. 374.

ply the critical links between rulers and ruled, and through the intervention of "brokers" help bridge the proverbial gap between the elites and the masses. These three types of integration can be referred to, respectively, as "subjective," "transactional," and "structural."

To emphasize the integrative potential of clientelism is not to deny the divisive tendencies inherent in the formation of factions and personal followings. Nadel's comments on the effects of factionalism in Nupe might apply to other contexts as well: "Rivalry and feuds between the leaders of local factions may throw the whole town, indeed the whole country, into a civil war. . . ."¹⁷ In specific situations, however, the mere existence of factionalism may reinforce rather than diminish popular allegiances to the system, and hence positively aid subjective integration at the national level. This is the core of the argument advanced by Gluckman in his discussion of "rebellion" (as distinct from "revolution") in a traditional monarchical context:

All sections struggle for the kingship and this unifies them. They seek to place their own prince on the throne; they do not try to become independent from the kingship. . . . It is a historical fact that these struggles kept component sections of the nation united in [a] conflicting allegiance about the sacred kingship.¹⁸

Gluckman's hypothesis cannot be accepted unreservedly, if only because much of the outcome would seem to depend on the character and composition of the factions involved, and the environmental conditions under which competition takes place. Nevertheless, it does not suggest that competition among patrons could encourage the cohesiveness of different ethnic segments in the lower reaches of the clientelistic pyramid.

Finally, although clientelism and ethnicity both provide opportunities for manipulation and adaptation, clientelism offers a significantly broader range of strategies for the achievement of national integration. For purposes of analysis these strategies may be conceptualized in terms of (1) a pyramiding of patron-client ties, (2) a spillover of reciprocities, and (3) changing partnerships, each involving specific changes in the character and structure of clientelistic relationships. What these changes consist of, and how they may affect national integration, will be discussed at greater length in a subsequent section. Suffice it to note here that

although these processes are induced and not spontaneously occurring, their viability depends in part on the environmental transformations arising from colonial rule and on the limitations imposed by the character of the ethnic and clientelistic subsystem.

Since political integration is often a function of the limitations and opportunities inherent in traditional clientelistic networks, it will be useful at this stage to take a brief look at some of the varieties of traditional dependency relationships encountered in Tropical Africa.

Varieties of Traditional Dependency Relationships

For most anthropologists, clientelism—or "clientage"—refers to a specific type of interpersonal relationship, more often than not institutionalized in the form of a contractual agreement between a superior and an inferior.¹⁹ Examples are the *bara*-ship of Nupe, the *buhake* in Rwanda, the *bugabire* in Burundi, the *oku-toisha* in Ankole. Our concern here, however, is with the generic and the recurrent rather than the idiosyncratic or the unique. Taking as our criteria of differentiation (1) the occupancy of role sets, (2) the normative orientations of patrons and clients, (3) the types of transactions involved, and (4) the base values of differential control over resources, we find that at least four different types of political clientelism may be said to have guided social and political relationships in traditional Africa—the patrimonial, the feudal, the mercantile, and the "saintly" type (see typological chart).

Patrimonial clientelism is explicitly political in character. Historically associated with the emergence of archaic state systems in the Sudanic and Interlacustrine areas, it suggests a significant expansion in scale of the original community, along with an increasing differentiation of governmental structures. In Weber's terminology, it implies "[the transformation of the original community] into a stratum of aids to the ruler [and its dependence upon him] for maintenance through the usufruct of land, office fees, income in kind, salaries and hence through prebends."²⁰ A basic feature of this transformation is the recruitment of client-chiefs who stand in relation to the sovereign not unlike bureaucrats in relation to their superior, in the sense that "they [do] not claim their

¹⁹ For a further elaboration of this definition, see Georges Balandier, "Les Relations de Dépendance Personnelle: Présentation du Thème," in *Cahiers d'Études Africaines*, 9, 35 (1969), 345-349.

²⁰ Cited in Hans H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, eds., *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 297.

¹⁷ Nadel, *Black Byzantium*, p. 126.

¹⁸ Max Gluckman, *Custom and Conflict in Africa* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1963), pp. 45-47.

Typology of Dependency Relationships in Traditional Africa

Type of Clientelism	Occupancy of Role Sets	Normative Orientation	Type of Transaction	Base Values of Differential Control Over Resources
1. <i>Patrimonial</i> Example: Sudanic States; Interlacustrine States (Rwanda, Burundi, Ankole, Buganda)	King-chief; chief-subchief	Mutual trust and loyalty	Office (political or administrative)—service and support	Power
2. <i>Feudal</i> Example: Buhake (Rwanda) Bugabire (Burundi) Okutoisha (Ankole) Bara-ship (Nupe)	Notable or freeborn noble-serf or commoner	Deference-Affection	Protection—service and prestige	Status
3. <i>Mercantile</i> Example: Diula-Diatigi; diulaba-diulade; dillali-mai gida	Trader (or middleman)-associate or customer	Economic self-interest and mutual trust	Commercial exchange	Wealth
4. <i>"Sainly"</i> Example: Sheikh-talibé Murabit-tlamith	Religious leader (marabout)-follower (talibe)	Benevolence-Devotion	Salvation—Obedience and Service	Sanctity

NOTE: The categories included in the above typology are adapted from the process-model developed in Lemarchand and Legg, "Political Clientelism and Development: A Preliminary Analysis," *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (January, 1972); although the terms "patrimonial" and "feudal" are used in this article to denote a possible evolutionary sequence from one type of clientelism to another, in the present context they are merely intended to provide an analytic framework for distinguishing among types. This, however, is not meant as a counterargument to the evolutionary scheme formulated by Maquet in "Institutionalisation féodale des relations de dépendance dans quatre cultures interlacustres," *Cahiers d'Études Africaines* (1969), 402-414, in which the author suggests the possibility of an historical movement from "patrimonial" to "feudal" clientelism.

position by right of inheritance or by virtue of any prior connexion with the area to which they were appointed."²¹ The underlying values, however, are those of mutual trust and loyalty. The basic transaction consists in the doling out of offices in return for administrative and political benefits. The base value through which initial control over scarce resources is obtained is political power defined in terms of the ruler's capacity to make effective use of a coercive apparatus, but as status differences emerge in consequence of differential success in military skills, exchange relations become increasingly differentiated from military ones, at which point, in Weber's terms, "princely prerogatives become patrimonial in character."

Unlike the foregoing, *feudal clientelism*, in the sense in which the term is here used, is not necessarily coextensive with the formal political hierarchy; it refers to the anthropologist's more circumscribed definition of "clientage"—i.e., to

an interpersonal bond between a superior and a subordinate, as between a freeborn noble and a commoner, involving "an exchange of protection, economic security and a position in the society in return for loyalty, obedience and service from the subordinate."²² Often institutionalized in the form of a ceremonial gift by the patron (as in traditional Nupe, where "the offering of a turban and a sword by the patron to his henchman sealed the pact"),²³ and involving contractual elements, it partakes of the qualities of the feudal homage. Yet, as a departure from what some might consider the hall-

²² Ronald Cohen, "The Dynamics of Feudalism in Bornu," *Boston University Papers on Africa*, Vol. II (Boston: Boston University Press, 1966), p. 91. For further characterizations of "feudal" clientelism, see Lucy Mair, "Clientship in East Africa," *Cahiers d'Études Africaines*, 2, 6 (1961), 315-326; Edward I. Steinhart, "Vassal and Fief in Three Interlacustrine Kingdoms," *Cahier d'Études Africaines*, 7, 25 (1967), 606-624; Jacques J. Maquet, *The Premise of Inequality in Ruanda* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961).

²³ S. F. Nadel, *Black Byzantium*, p. 126.

²¹ Lucy Mair, *Primitive Government* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1962), p. 153.

mark of feudalism,²⁴ the base value through which a patron lays claim to the allegiance of his client lies in the differential social prestige and influence which goes along with one's membership in a "dominant" ethnic or status group.

Mercantile clientelism, traceable to the inception of the long-distance trans-Saharan trade, in the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries, has persisted in one form or another throughout and indeed long after the Malinke diaspora. Although in this case the participants are essentially concerned with the buying, storing, transport, and selling of marketable goods, out of these commercial transactions have developed more or less personalized relationships not only between buyers and sellers but *within the trading community*. The reciprocities which exist between the *diula* traders of Mali, Guinea, or Senegal and their hosts, the *diatigi*, are duplicated by similar relationships between the long-distance Hausa traders from up-country and their "landlords" in places like Kumasi, Freetown and Ibadan, and, in Ibadan between landlords (*mai gida*) and middlemen (*dillali*).²⁵ These reciprocities involve, besides material benefits, a sense of mutual trust between the parties. A landlord or a *diatigi* is one who not only has material resources at his disposal but

²⁴ For Fallers and Lombard, a feudal relationship can only obtain among equals (i.e., among nobles); a clientele relationship, on the other hand, establishes reciprocities between nobles and commoners. See Lloyd A. Fallers, *Bantu Bureaucracy* (London: Oxford University Press, 1956), and Jacques Lombard, "La Vie Politique dans une ancienne société de type féodal: Les Bariba du Dahomey," *Cahiers d'Études Africaines*, 1,3 (1960), 5-45.

²⁵ On the sociopolitical role of the *diula* in contemporary Bamako, see Claude Meillassoux, *Urbanization of an African Community* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1968), and his article on "The Social Structure of Modern Bamako," in *Africa*, 35, 2 (1965), 125-142. Cf. Majhemout Diop, *Histoire des classes sociales dans l'Afrique de l'Ouest* (Paris: 1971), pp. 148-152. For an excellent account of the *mai gida-dillali* relationship in contemporary West Africa, see Polly Hill, "Landlords and Brokers: A West African Trading System," *Cahiers d'Études Africaines*, 6, 23 (1966), 349-367; and her "Markets in Africa," *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 1, 4 (1963), 441-455. See also, V. R. Dorjahn and C. Fyfe, "Landlord and Stranger: Change in Tenancy Relations in Sierra Leone," *Journal of African History*, 3, 3 (1962), 391-399. Perhaps the most illuminating discussion of this type of clientelism, from the standpoint of the political scientist, is Abner Cohen, "The Social Organization of Credit in a West African Cattle Market," *Africa*, 35, 1 (1965), 8-20. For an interesting discussion of the role of the *diatigi* in traditional African society, see in particular the contributions of J. L. Boutiller and J. L. Amselle in C. Meillassoux, ed., *The Development of Indigenous Trade and Markets in West Africa* (Oxford: 1971), pp. 240-252, 253-265.

who also enjoys a certain "credit rating" from his reputation of trustworthiness and reliability. Although the anthropological literature dealing with this type of clientelism is scarce and the political science literature virtually nonexistent, the basic principle of social interaction in this case is unquestionably that of patron-client relationships defined in terms of reciprocal economic benefits and mutual loyalties.

The fourth type, here labeled somewhat uncritically "*saintly*" *clientelism*, expresses itself most conspicuously within the context of the Sufi brotherhoods (*tariqas*) of Senegal but is also found in Mauretania, Mali, Niger, and Northern Nigeria.²⁶ Sometimes referred to as "maraboutism," this type of relationship emphasizes the blind submission of the *talibé* to his *sheikh* or *muqaddam*. At the root of this dependence lies the disciple's conviction that his salvation depends on the intercession of his marabout, and the latter's realization that his status in society depends on the personal devotion of his followers, as well as their contributions in kind or cash. The *sheikh-talibé* relationship among the Mourides of Senegal represent the most striking example of this type of reciprocity; but one might also cite as an example the nexus of mutual obligations which to this day links the maraboutic elites of Mauretania and their followers. Whether it expresses itself in a secular or religious context, this type of clientelism still provides the basic articulation of social and political processes among individuals and groups in the predominantly Islamicized areas of West Africa.

Like all classifications, the foregoing is unabashedly arbitrary. None of the above categories can be treated in isolation. As the case of prerevolutionary Rwanda suggests, the patrimonial and feudal types may coexist with and indeed reinforce each other, as seems to have happened in the case of the mercantile and patrimonial variants at particular junctures of the evolution of the Sudanic states.²⁷

²⁶ For a detailed analysis of the sociopolitical role of the Mouride brotherhoods of Senegal, see Donal B. Cruise O'Brien, *The Murids of Senegal: The Socio-Economic Structure of an Islamic Order* (Ph.D. Thesis, University of London, 1969). See also Lucy Behrman, "The Political Influence of Muslim Brotherhoods in Senegal" (unpublished ms.), and "The Political Significance of the Wolof Adherence to Muslim Brotherhoods in the 19th Century," in *African Historical Studies* 1 (1968), pp. 60-78. For a broader perspective, see J. Spencer Trimingham, *The Influence of Islam upon Africa* (New York: Praeger, 1968).

²⁷ Under what conditions a particular form of clientelism brings another into being is a question that lies beyond the scope of this paper. What seems clear, how-

Moreover, although client-patron relations are here conceptualized in terms of dyadic relationships for purposes of clarity, this is not meant to exclude the possibility of middlemen or brokers. In prerevolutionary Rwanda, the chief was not only a client of the sovereign but also a broker between the sovereign and the subchief; in Senegal the *sheikh-talibé* relationship was and still is mediated by regional officers (*fode*) and assistants (*tamsirs*) who might also qualify as middlemen; in Mali the *diatigi* were almost by definition ("the stranger's master") cast in the role of brokers between the *diulas* and the host community, a function they still perform in many of the trading centers of West Africa.²⁸ Client-patron ties, in short, are not necessarily dyadic and unidirectional, but may involve networks of reciprocities which in turn produce reversible relationships among the parties. Depending upon their position in the society, one man's patron may act as another

man's client. Finally, because of its somewhat static qualities, the above typology underplays possibilities of conflicting clientelistic solidarities, as well as the potential for conflict that may arise from the juxtaposition of vertical and horizontal solidarities. While suggesting too much in the way of an integrative potential, it may also suggest the wrong kind of potential for integration.²⁹

Aside from illustrating the variety of traditional dependency relationships that might conceivably be subsumed under the rubric of political clientelism, this classification sketches out how one type of relationship can be distinguished from another, and how their projections into the political space of contemporary Africa can be analyzed. Presumably, before one can infer a set of causal relationships between traditional and modern forms of clientelism, one must ask certain preliminary questions about the variables determining each type: Who are the patrons, and who are the clients? How compatible are their status position, normative orientations, and transactional roles with conditions of rapid social change? In what ways do various types of differential control over resources "fit" with the conditions of the colonial and postcolonial situations? The answers to these questions are likely to vary not only with the heritage of specific colonial policies but with the characteristics of each type of clientelism.

Along with these differences, however, we find certain basic uniformities about how, in Africa as elsewhere, power is organized and generated. Power is not so much a commodity

ever, is that there is no logical relationship between forms of government and types of clientelism (except where governmental and clientelistic structure merely duplicate each other, as in the case of patrimonialism). If there is any common denominator to these forms of clientelism, it is to be found, in Ronald Cohen's words, "in conditions of personal insecurity, a lack of widespread use of payment for specific purposes, lack of adequate social control outside such (clientelistic) relationships, and the inability of the kinship units to perform all the required and desired services for individuals." See Cohen, "The Dynamics of Feudalism in Bornu," p. 91. Given our ignorance, the most that can be said at this point is that the emergence of mercantile clientelism, as a historical phenomenon, has been dependent upon, as well as limited by, the growth of centralized state structures; conversely, the expansion of state structures has itself been conditioned by the economic and political resources made available through the development of regional trade circuits. For further evidence on this point, see J. Vansina, "Long-distance Trade Routes in Central Africa," *Journal of African History*, 3, 3 (1962), 375-388.

²⁸ The brokerage function traditionally performed by the *diatigi* is described by Charles Monteil in the following terms: "*Dans les centres soudanais les étrangers sont parqués dans un quartier spécial. Les simples passagers doivent se présenter au chef de la localité et ce chef leur assigne un hôte ou diatigi ('le maître de l'étranger'). Cet hôte est, à proprement parler, le répondant de l'étranger et celui-ci ne doit agir que par son intermédiaire. . . . Souvent par leur nombre et leur richesse, non moins que par l'importance du personnel qu'ils emploient, les étrangers sont assez puissants pour jouir d'une indépendance relative, moyennant paiement de redevances. Voire même ils arrivent à constituer un état dans l'état, et dominer les pouvoirs locaux.*" Charles Monteil, "Les Empires du Mali," *Bulletin du Comité d'Etudes Historiques et Scientifiques de PAOF*, 12, 3-4 (1929), 326. See also Félix Dubois, *Tombouctou la mystérieuse* (Paris, 1897), p. 295.

²⁹ A further qualifier is that the above typology only deals with highly institutionalized forms of clientelism and thus excludes societies in which clientelism, though never firmly institutionalized, did in fact play a major role in the definition of traditional power relationships. Traditional Ibo society is a case in point:

"As in the urban communities of Boston, New Haven, and New York, political survival in an Ibo community hinged fundamentally on the leader's ability to mould and maintain a personal following. . . . In the Ibo context, as in the American, the politician acted as a broker of conflicting interests and personalities and as a provider of personal favors. His political success, in short, was a function both of his ability to resolve disputes and his generosity." (Howard E. Wolpe, "Port Harcourt: Ibo Politics in Microcosm," *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 7 [1969], 475.)

Such noninstitutionalized forms of clientelism are obviously relevant to our discussion; their omission from our typology is only justified by the lack of relevant anthropological and historical data and the consequent difficulties involved in the task of classification and comparison.

that some just happen to possess by virtue of their privileged membership in any particular group as a relational phenomenon. Inherent in each of the clientelistic patterns noted above is a relationship of reciprocity between an individual (or group of individuals) whose influence stems from his ability to provide services, goods or values that are so desired by others as to induce them to reciprocate these gratifications in the form of alternative services, goods, and values.³⁰ And since the norm of reciprocity is by nature malleable and indeterminate in terms of the obligations it implies—being, in Gouldner's terms "like a kind of plastic filler, capable of being poured into the shifting crevices of social structures, serving as a kind of all-purpose moral cement"³¹—one can see why, as a role model, clientelism should have persisted over time, through adjustment and adaptation. Although social mobilization may lead to different partnerships, the role model may remain basically unaffected. The evidence on this score is indeed abundant. Far from evident, however, are the types of adjustment that have taken place over the years and the conditions that have caused one type of adjustment to occur rather than another.

Irrespective of the types of clientelism operative in the traditional society, three distinctive patterns of adjustment can be discerned: First and most prevalent has been the *spillover of clientelistic reciprocities* from one field of activity to another. Reciprocities that were once restricted to a specific type of exchange have thus led to cumulative or alternative exchanges among parties. A case in point in the transformation of "feudal" into "saintly" patron-client ties within the framework of the Muslim brotherhoods of Senegal, and the projection of both into the context of "clan politics."³² Similarly, the patrimonial ties that once existed among the ruling aristocracy of Rwanda provided the foundation for the establishment of patron-client ties of a feudal variety between Hutu and Tutsi and for the extension of dependency relationships based on the appropriation of land to a

dependency relationship based on the ownership of cattle.³³ A more recent example is the "spillover" of mercantile clientelism into the realm of local politics in Ibadan: "Of all the patrons," writes Abner Cohen, "the cattle landlords are the most powerful as they have dominated the [Hausa] Quarter politically ever since its foundation in 1916. The Chief of the Quarter has always been a cattle landlord and, since 1930, he has also been the chief of the cattle market."³⁴ In each of these cases a new type of relationship has been added to or substituted for a preexisting one, leading to a transactional integration at the national or regional level.

Second, clientelism can lead to a *pyramiding of client-patron ties*, and, through the recruitment of new brokers, to an expansion of local or regional reciprocities on a more inclusive scale. The appropriation of landed fiefs under the hegemony of a royal clan, accompanied by the appointment of client-chiefs, was indeed a critical feature of the twin processes of state-building and territorial aggrandizement that took place throughout the Interlacustrine zone.³⁵ Similarly, much of the structural integration conducted under the auspices of colonial powers can be viewed in terms of a pyramiding of patron-client ties.

Third, there may be a *substitution rather than an extension of patron-client relationships*, leading to a continuation of reciprocal exchanges but in a totally different partnership. Here again the evidence, both historical and contemporary, is considerable, though not always as conclusive as one might hope. Perhaps the most striking example of the phenomenon is offered by the Rwandese revolution of 1959–62, leading to the eviction of the Tutsi patrons and a redefinition of clientelistic partnerships within the Hutu stratum.³⁶

Empirically, these types of adjustments are neither self-sustaining nor mutually reinforcing. Although the building-up of dominant parties sharing the qualities of political machines is in part traceable to the selective use of one or

³⁰ See Claudine Vidal, "Le Rwanda des Anthropologues ou le Fétichisme de la Vache," *Cahiers d'Études Africaines*, 9, 35 (1969), 384–401.

³¹ Abner Cohen, "The Social Organization of Credit . . .," p. 12.

³² A very similar process appears to have taken place in Northern Nigeria; see, for example, M. G. Smith, *Government in Zazzau*, pp. 6–8.

³³ See René Lemarchand, *Rwanda and Burundi* (London: The Pall Mall Press, 1970), and "Les relations de clientèle comme agent de contestation: Le cas du Rwanda," *Civilisations*, 18, 4 (1968), 553–573; see also Yves Person, *Samori: Une Révolution Diula, Mémoires de l'IFAN*, No. 80 (Dakar, 1968); for another historical example of the same phenomenon, see Moussa Oumar Sy, "Le Dahomey: Le Coup d'Etat de 1818," *Folia Orientalia*, 6 (1965), 205–238.

³⁰ The basic theoretical work on this theme is Peter M. Blau, *Exchange and Power in Social Life* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1967). The relevance of Blau's insights to an understanding of traditional African political structures is suggested by Polanyi's description of reciprocity patterns in precolonial Dahomey; see Karl Polanyi, *Dahomey and the Slave Trade: An Analysis of an Archaic Economy* (Seattle & London: University of Washington Press, 1966), especially pp. 33–95.

³¹ Alvin W. Gouldner, "The Norm of Reciprocity: A Preliminary Statement," *American Sociological Review*, 15 (1960), 175.

³² Foltz, "Social Structure & Political Behavior of Senegalese Elites."

more of these adjustive mechanisms, their mere occurrence is no guarantee that the end result will be the creation of a nationwide political machine. Whether operating individually or in conjunction with each other, these processes may lead to widely different types of relationships between the clientelistic substructures and the center, as well as between the constituent segments of each substructure. Just as one may conceive of different types of machines operating alongside each other, one may also envisage the possibility of the party machine being superimposed upon, and in some ways tributary of, microlevel solidarities of a traditional type. Similarly, one may conceive of a machine being wholly centered upon the party structure (as in the Ivory Coast), or, on the contrary, revolving almost exclusively around bureaucratic structures of a traditional or neotraditional type (as in Ethiopia, or in Burundi until 1967). In short, before one can generalize about the effects of these internal adjustments on the political systems of contemporary Africa, it may be useful to consider the conditions which in recent times have reinforced, hampered, or altered the operation of traditional forms of clientelism.

These conditions can best be understood by looking at (1) the processes of incorporation achieved through the imposition of colonial controls; (2) the alternative structures of opportunity made available through the introduction of new resources; and (3) the new competitive processes arising from the conjunction of (1) and (2). Only by taking each of these variables into account is it possible to gain a clear picture of the fourth and most crucial variable—ethnicity.

Patterns of Incorporation, Allocation, and Competitiveness

Difficult though it may be to generalize about the effects of colonial rule upon traditional forms of clientelism, the weight of evidence suggests important areas of compatibility between the two. At the broadest level of generalization one might argue, first, that the colonial situation has created a psychological climate eminently congenial to the maintenance of a "dependence complex"³⁷ among Africans.

³⁷ The expression, borrowed from Dominique O. Mannoni, *Psychologie de la Colonisation* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1950), carries unfortunate connotations as it suggests a cultural "hang up" of some sort or another, evenly distributed among all Africans, regardless of rank or status. I substantially agree with Professor Uphoff's objection (in a personal communication), to the effect that one is here dealing not so much with a "dependency complex" as with "more or less fruitful role relationships" (resource-exchange relationships) which a person having few resources

Whether or not Mannoni's depiction of the personality structure of the Malagasy can be applied across the board to Africans in general, a convincing case can be made for the view that the homage of dependence sought by European colonizers through the projection of their own "Prospero complex" onto the African scene must have fostered similar dispositions on the part of traditional patrons toward their clients.³⁸ Second, the conditions of rapid social change generated through various transformative influences—economic, social, and political—probably intensified the clients' need for something or somebody to depend on; the heightened feelings of insecurity released by social change, along with the resultant quest for anxiety-reducing mechanisms, have operated to reinforce the strength of client-patron relationships. Third, for reasons of practicality or opportunism, European administrators have often been very tolerant toward existing forms of clientelism, and sometimes equally receptive to the creation of new ones. Where these expressed the structure of political relations—as in the case of patrimonial clientelism—and where their suppression would have entailed greater costs than seemed justifiable or tolerable, the tendency of European officials has been to use traditional clientelistic structures as instruments for mediating and legitimizing their rule.

seeks to establish. Creating a client-patron relationship is often the most fruitful. Has anybody found a "dependency complex" in a wealthy market-woman, or a powerful chief, or even a clan head? I suggest that what Europeans have observed is a function of power (or powerlessness) rather than of "Africanness." What should be emphasized here is the persistence of certain psychological orientations to politics, which often tend to outlive the specific power relationships from which they originally stemmed. Externalization of the super-ego, leading to its identification with an outside authority or "patron" figure, is certainly a key characteristic of clientelistic orientations, a point persuasively argued by James Scott in *Political Ideology in Malaysia* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1968), p. 80 ff. For a discussion of the affective component which enters into the patron-client nexus, see Abner Cohen, *Custom and Politics in Urban Africa* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1969), p. 91.

³⁸ See Dominique O. Mannoni, *Psychologie de la Colonisation*; for further insights into the influence of the colonial framework upon the behavior and orientation of indigenous actors see J. P. Nettl and Roland Robertson, *International Systems and the Modernization of Societies* (New York: Basic Books, 1968), esp. pp. 63–127. The notion of "inheritance situation" discussed by the authors provides a useful analytic framework for an understanding of the persistence of clientelistic norms after independence; see in particular their discussion of "Benefactor and Beneficiary as Their Reference Groups," pp. 72–81. Their analysis of the process of the "role-taking of the benefactor by the beneficiary" evokes some of the familiar dimensions explored by Mannoni in the work cited above.

Yet if there are excellent reasons for viewing "the pyramiding of patron-client ties" as a by-product of European rule, one can easily exaggerate the extent to which traditional African societies really lent themselves to this kind of manipulation. Not only can one discern major discontinuities in the overall distribution and extensiveness of clientelistic networks in any given territory (suggesting corresponding variations in the serviceability of the incorporated units); one can also perceive fundamental differences in the degree to which European policies proved compatible with the preservation of traditional forms of clientelism.

If the first type of discontinuity may clearly be attributed to the different patterns of incorporation achieved through the more or less erratic tracing of colonial boundaries, there are several possible explanations for the differential impact of colonial policies on traditional forms of clientelism.

One such explanation lies in the hypothesis advanced by Ronald Cohen that "given a similar incorporative experience differences in traditional African political structures will create significant differences in the way these systems and the people within them adapt to the modern nation-state."³⁹ Another possible explanation has to do with the official policies and practices of European powers, and in particular the extent to which the effective practice of indirect rule presupposed the retention of clientelism of a feudal variety. Where the preservation of "feudal clientelism" was more or less consistently regarded as a necessary adjunct of indirect rule (as in Northern Nigeria), feudal and patrimonial forms of clientelism have evidently reinforced each other, structurally or normatively.⁴⁰ But one must also note the persistence of clientelistic patterns where indirect rule was neither regarded as legitimate nor sys-

tematically pursued, and where the social system made no allowance for the operation of feudal clientelism. Thus, drawing upon his personal experience as a former colonial administrator, Pierre Alexandre notes that in those parts of French-speaking West Africa that had a high rate of turnover among European officials, "African officials, shop clerks or cocoa brokers and catechists were, on the whole, permanent;" African "middlemen" were thus cast in the role of patrons in relation to the masses, with "clientelism cutting across tribal divisions, or, more widely, across traditional jural relationships."⁴¹

A third explanatory factor, operating independently of the formal assumptions underlying colonial policies, involves the variable assessments of the economic implications of client-patron relationships made by European administrators. Where traditional clientelism was found incompatible with the immediate or long-range economic objectives of the colonial authorities and accordingly done away with, as in Rwanda in the early 1950s, its suppression had profoundly destabilizing consequences for the internal cohesion of the community at large.

Economic motives may have precisely the opposite results, however, perpetuating or even accentuating the patron-client nexus at the community level. Here two different types of situations may be distinguished: One, most clearly suggested by the case of the Mouride brotherhoods of Senegal, involved a deliberate attempt by the European colonizer to draw maximum benefits from the manipulation of clientelistic relations. Although this may not have been the sole motive, the prospects of economic development offered by the marabouts' control over most of the peanut producing areas, and indeed their control of the labor force needed for agricultural development, were certainly instrumental in prompting the French to preserve by all possible means the "saintly" relationship which to this day links the *talibés* to their *sheikhs*—and in trying to establish a similar, though far less "saintly," relationship between themselves and the *sheikhs*.⁴²

Recognition or reinforcement of clientelistic patterns may also occur in response to the economic demands of indigenous local communities. Meillassoux's discussion of the role of *dila* in the Ivory Coast provides a good illustra-

³⁹ Ronald Cohen, "Research Directions in Political Anthropology," *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 3, 1 (1969), p. 27.

⁴⁰ In Bornu, according to Cohen, "patron-client relationships continue to be of great importance . . . and people still utilize their associations with important superiors in the emirate, not the Nigerian, social system"—a statement that might also apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to contemporary Rwanda society within the context of an all-Hutu social system, and to Burundi within what threatens to become an all-Tutsi social system. (The above quotation is from Ronald Cohen's comments (p. 105) on Elizabeth Colson's article, "Competence and Incompetence in the context of Independence," *Current Anthropology*, 8, 1-2 (1967), 92-100. For a discussion of the transformations that have affected the operation of patron-client ties in contemporary Rwanda, see René Lemarchand, "Political Instability in Africa: The Case of Rwanda and Burundi," *Civilisations* 16, 3 (1966), 319, and Lemarchand, *Rwanda and Burundi*.

⁴¹ From Alexandre's comments on Colson's article, p. 100.

⁴² Behrman, "The Political Influence of Muslim Brotherhoods in Senegal."

tion.⁴³ Although they were initially denied access to their original trading areas by the French army, supposedly because of the need to set up a "commercial blockade" to facilitate the subjugation of the local communities, the *diula* traders were subsequently allowed to resume their commercial activities after their former trading partners, the Gouro, repeatedly demanded that right for them. Writing in the early sixties, Meillassoux noted:

Diula relations with the Gouro compared to the precolonial period are apparently the same: In addition to kola—of which they largely control the trade to-day—they buy coffee and cocoa. They even improved their position in regard to their geographical extension. . . . They are the only intermediaries at the first level in the coffee-buying process.⁴⁴

In each of these two instances, then, economic considerations have tended not only to encourage existing clientelistic networks but also to facilitate the forging of new links between the center and the periphery. Thus, through their economic base in the Gouro milieu, the *diula* were able to capitalize upon the new opportunities opened by European commerce, and to establish themselves as intermediaries between local producers and European firms; similarly, through their economic and religious influence in the countryside, the maraboutic elites of Senegal were able to provide the crucial connecting links between the rural communities and the central governmental-bureaucratic structures.

As the foregoing makes plain, the new allocative centers set up under the colonial powers have generated new resources and linkages. How these in turn have affected African societies can best be understood by reference to (1) the type of resources generated by the colonial environment, (2) the channels through which these resources have been allocated, and (3) the transaction flows attendant upon the emergence of new reciprocities.

Taking the term "resources" in its broadest sense, as Dahl does, to describe "anything that can be used to sway the specific choices or the strategies of another individual," we discover that each of the patterns of adjustment noted earlier are reducible to the adaptation of clientelistic strategies to different resources—or, if one takes the view that clientelism is itself a resource, to different combinations of resources.

⁴³ Claude Meillassoux, *Anthropologie Economique des Gouro de Côte d'Ivoire* (Paris: Mouton & Co., 1964), and "The Gouro-Peripheral Markets between the Forest and the Sudan," in Paul Bohannan and George Dalton, eds., *Markets in Africa* (Garden City: Anchor Books, 1965), pp. 67–92.

⁴⁴ Bohannan and Dalton, p. 86.

"Political resources," writes Dahl, "can be pyramided in much the same way that a man who starts out in business sometimes pyramids a small investment into a large corporate empire."⁴⁵ Just as the building up of corporate and African empires can be seen as one example of pyramiding of clientelistic and other resources, the fashioning of new political entities under imperial rule may be viewed in basically the same terms.

In the latter case, however, allowance has to be made for the introduction of new resources—in the form of wealth, education, technological skills, and the like—and new types of reciprocities. The result has been a shift of emphasis away from symbolic or affective rewards to expectations of material benefits, in turn leading to a sloughing off of the "mechanical" solidarities characteristic of feudal clientelism for a type of relationship, if not always based on "organic" solidarities in Durkheim's sense, at least much closer to those associated with "machine politics." Conceptualizing this transformation in terms of different perceptions of a patron's competence, one might argue with Colson⁴⁶ that the trend in recent times has been to dissociate political competence from traditional status distinctions and to identify it with the ability to manipulate technical and political resources effectively. European patrons were sought after not only because of their political "pull" but because they controlled the technical resources and know-how through which the demands of their clients could be met; by the time African "bosses" stepped into the shoes of the European patrons, however, political competence meant in essence the ability to keep in tow a reliable clientele through the dispensation of prebends. Political parties in many instances took on the qualities of political machines.

Thus, another way of looking at political change in colonial and independent Africa is from the standpoint of the new partnerships established at the center, first between Europeans and Africans, and later among Africans. But these new partnerships did not always exclude the maintenance of traditional clientelistic solidarities at the local level, or indeed, the reinforcement of such solidarities through a "spillover" effect.

Therefore the weakness of African political machines may be due not, as some have suggested,⁴⁷ to their operating at the national

⁴⁵ Robert A. Dahl, *Who Governs?* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1961), p. 226, 227.

⁴⁶ Colson, "Competence and Incompetence in the Context of Independence."

⁴⁷ See James C. Scott, "Corruption, Machine Politics, and Political Change," *American Political Science Review*, 63, 4 (1969), 1142–1158.

rather than the local level, but to their operating at cross-purposes with local machines rendered all the more powerful by their control of traditional and modern political resources.

For an example of how the "spillover" of reciprocities at the local or regional level may inhibit national integration one can do no better than quote C. S. Whitaker on the organization of the NPC in Northern Nigeria:⁴⁸

The structure of the NPC fits conveniently into this structure of traditional [clientage] relationships in at least two important respects. First, by virtue of powers it exercised through control of the government, the party was a principal agency of patronage offices, loans, scholarships, contracts, and other opportunities sought by the upwardly mobile. This could be accomplished either directly and formally or indirectly and informally through the medium of the party or ex-party men who dominated the public boards, corporations, and commissions. Second (and of greater consequence in terms of winning mass support), the interlocking directorate of local administrative and party personnel inescapably bound humble persons to traditionally august figures in their capacity as party men. The dependency that derived from the vast network of clientage relationships inherent in the traditional society were transferred to the party. Loyalty to the NPC became a way of defraying traditional political obligations.

In the national context of Nigeria, the "traditionally august figures" of the Northern Region played the role of brokers or middlemen; poised between the national and regional cultures and communities, they became the manipulators of first- and second-order resources—i.e., of patronage offices, loans, scholarships, and contracts on the one hand, and of contacts and connections on the other.⁴⁹ Similar roles have been played, with greater or lesser degrees of success by the *ganwa* in Burundi, the *sheikhs* in Senegal, the *hassan* and *zawya* in Mauretania, the *saza* chiefs in Buganda, and some traditional chiefs in the Ivory Coast, Ghana, Niger, and Upper Volta.

The relative importance of traditional patrons in the mediating process, both before and

after independence, must be seen in the light of the brokerage functions they once performed at the juncture of external and internal clientelistic channels, the latter operating within the African society and the former through the sponsorship of the European oligarchy. As brokers they were all in some degree concerned with the transmission of the same resource, namely to maintain and facilitate strategic contacts and communication with individuals holding direct access to political resources. They became, in Boissevain's words, "professional manipulators of people and information to bring about communication."⁵⁰ Following up Boissevain's thesis that "brokerage is a business [in which] a broker's *capital* consists of his personal network of relations with people, and his *credit* of what others think his capital to be," one could regard the passage from colonial to independent status as representing successive transfers to capital and credit from one set of brokers to another—presumably from "traditional" to "modern" brokers. Yet in many instances, traditional patrons (chiefs, subchiefs, landlords, etc.) managed to retain a high credit rating among their people even when their capital at the national level was low or nonexistent. Thus, in the early sixties, the traditional Tutsi chiefs of Rwanda had lost virtually all contacts with the Belgian administration; but in spite of their loss of capital, certain segments of the peasantry persisted in believing that they still enjoyed considerable influence in administrative spheres. Conversely, a transfer of political credit from the traditional patrons to the new recipients of wealth and influence did not necessarily imply a commensurate transfer of capital from one category to the other. Thus instead of speaking of "patron" and "mass" parties to characterize African political groups, it might be more useful to distinguish between different patron parties enjoying different credit ratings and capital assets in different circumstances and environments.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Boissevain, "Patrons and Brokers."

⁴⁸ C. S. Whitaker, *The Politics of Tradition*, p. 375.

⁴⁹ The distinction between first and second order resources is drawn from Jeremy Boissevain, "Patrons and Brokers," (unpublished ms.). According to Boissevain a broker differs from a patron in that the former has control over second resources (i.e., contacts and connections) and the latter over first order resources; although the distinction between types of resources holds important implications in the context of colonial and independent Africa, it has relatively little utility for distinguishing between patrons and brokers. A more useful discussion of brokerage functions will be found in Marc J. Swartz, "The Political Middleman," in *Local-Level Politics: Social and Cultural Perspectives*, ed. Marc J. Swartz (Chicago: Aldine, 1968), pp. 199–204.

⁵¹ One might, for example, compare the different ways in which recruitment and patronage have affected the fortunes of the NCNC and the NPC in Nigeria. As Wolpe's study of Port Harcourt politics so plainly indicates, the growth of the NCNC has tended to reflect "profound alterations in the structures and criteria of political recruitment." With the opening of new resources at each stage of the NCNC's historical development, a new category of elites emerged, displacing the old, and assuring that wealth and numbers became the most significant political resources. At this stage "the wealthy businessmen and traders became party 'patrons,' the petty traders and contractors, party workers (or town councillors). . . . Simultaneously, the proportion of administrators and clerical functionaries on the one hand, and of professionals, educators and journalists, on the other, declined" (Wolpe, "Port Harcourt . . ." pp. 482–483). In the

That some traditional patron parties managed to keep relatively high credit ratings in times of high demand-inflation (as in Northern Nigeria, Burundi, and even Ghana), while others did not, invites consideration of the different transaction flows generated through clientelistic structures.⁵² The analysis of transaction flows between traditional patrons and clients can easily be distorted by the normative idiom in which these relationships are phrased. Where the notion of an opposition is ruled out by the nature of the relationship (as in Northern Nigeria),⁵³ one might all too easily assume the existence of mutually indulging transactions when in fact there is little more than grudging acquiescence on the part of clients. Yet transactions of a mutually rewarding type clearly did occur during and after the colonial period between, say, the *diula* traders of the Ivory Coast and their traditional "clients" (the Gouro); the "saintly" patrons of Senegal and their *talibés*; the traditional Emirs of Northern Nigeria and some of their subordinates. In exchange for salt, cattle and *sombe*, the Gouro gave the *diula* the kola, coffee and cocoa which enabled them to become wealthy middlemen; in exchange for a promise of salvation, marabouts received from the *talibés* the labor they needed to cultivate their fields; in return for the dispensation of psychological and material gratifications, the Fulani Emirs received deference, prestige, and services from their clients, and in time, they received the political support they needed to retain control over the provincial legislature. Because of the Emirs' control over the recruitment process, and because such control was regarded as the "natural" expression of their traditional prerogatives, "those elected became, by the same logic, the clients of the Emirs."⁵⁴

case of the NPC, by contrast, control over the party apparatus remained firmly in the hands of the emirs throughout the preindependence period and for some time thereafter; moreover, neither wealth nor numbers played a significant part in recruitment processes or patronage. Status, rather, was the key factor. Thus if the picture conveyed by Port Harcourt politics in the fifties reminds one of contemporary New Haven or New York, this could hardly be said of Kano or Zaria. In one case power belonged to what Dahl called the "ex-plebes," in the other to the "patricians." See Robert Dahl, *Who Governs*, pp. 11-24 and pp. 32-51.

⁵² The concept of transaction flow is here used to refer to the movement of commodities, persons, or messages within and between communities. See Karl Deutsch, "Transaction Flows as Indicators of Political Cohesion" in Philip E. Jacob & James V. Toscano, eds., *The Integration of Political Communities* (Philadelphia & New York: Lippincott & Co., 1964), pp. 75-97.

⁵³ See B. J. O. Dudley, "Traditionalism and Politics: A Case Study of Northern Nigeria," *Government and Opposition*, 2, 4 (1967), 516.

⁵⁴ Dudley, p. 518.

In the case of Nigeria, restriction of the scope of mutually advantageous transactions to the northern region, coupled with the cultural differences between North and South, has undoubtedly stimulated feelings of regional particularism and even secessionist aspirations in the North. In both the Ivory Coast and Senegal, however, the expansion of reciprocities on a broad geographical and socioeconomic scale has tended to favor a similar extension of integrative bonds. The profits accumulated by the Ivoirien planters were also shared by the *diula* intermediaries and even by the chiefs as "some profited directly from the new crops and most benefited at least from the increased wealth of their kinsmen;"⁵⁵ similarly, while some of the marabouts of Senegal proved eminently useful in aggregating support for the UPS elites (in particular through the sale and distribution of party cards),⁵⁶ they also received substantial rewards from the party leadership, in hard cash as well as in the form of policy outputs. In each country national integration was achieved through a widening of clientelistic ties accompanied by mutually rewarding transactions.

Clearly, mutually rewarding exchanges at one level can create basic incompatibilities at another; but one can also conceive of mutually rewarding exchanges deteriorating over time into mutually depriving ones, with similarly dysfunctional consequences for national integration. Consider the case of Mali: Initially the *diula* community shared a close identity of interest with the Union Soudanaise (US) elites, largely because of their "opposition to European commercial policies and interests."⁵⁷ They provided the US elites with strategic contacts along the Niger, among both rural and urbanized Africans, and in turn expected their contribution to the cause of Malian nationalism to be repaid in the form of new economic opportunities for themselves and their clientele.⁵⁸ Yet by the mid-

⁵⁵ Ruth Schachter Morgenthau, *Political Parties in West Africa* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1964), p. 171.

⁵⁶ Donal Cruise O'Brien, "The Murids of Senegal . . .".

⁵⁷ Thomas Hodgkin & Ruth Schachter Morgenthau, "Mali," in James S. Coleman and Carl G. Rosberg, *Political Parties and National Integration in Tropical Africa* (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1964), p. 223.

⁵⁸ These expectations were natural considering the tenor of the economic policies contemplated by the US leaders: "At its extraordinary congress of 1960, the *Union Soudanaise* confirmed publicly some of its leaders' long-held economic views: The party resolved to launch 'immediately and vigorously' a program of economic decolonization; to create a new economic structures . . . to develop communications, intensify agricultural production, launch new industries, stress mineral exploration. . . ." Aristide Zolberg, "Political Revival in Mali," *Africa Report*, 10, 7 (1965), 18.

'sixties, the socialist options of the Keita regime had alienated a substantial number of *diula*, and the events of 1967 further intensified their sense of disaffection toward the regime.⁵⁹ The recent history of Guinea tells a somewhat similar story: The *diula* played a crucial role in the diffusion of the PDG ideology in the late 'fifties, but as in Mali, and for much the same reasons, their opposition has since become a source of major concern for the regime.

Implicit in the foregoing is that with the opening or closing off of political resources and the proliferation of new brokerage roles, competition is likely to set in among different clientelistic networks. Although the shape of competitive patterns and their implications for national integration can only be ascertained empirically, at least two generalizations suggest themselves: one is that competition is likely to take place at different levels depending on the time period considered; another is that the rate and character of clientelistic competition tends to vary with the nature of the resources made available at any given time.

A major consequence of the opening, and subsequent exhaustion, of the political resources released through the manipulation of nationalist ideology and propaganda has been to intensify clientelistic competition between African and European patrons and in time between different sets of African patrons. Each type of competition has tended to interact with and affect the outcome of the other. The history of Rwanda, for example, clearly shows the destabilizing consequences of competitive strivings between African and European patrons upon preexisting clientelistic networks. Already in the 'twenties, as a result of "their involvement in ever-widening spheres of African life, [the White Fathers] assumed more and more the character of patrons within the existing system. . . . The Hutu accepted these new patrons, seeing in them an additional source of security."⁶⁰ The increments of security gained by Hutu clients inevitably meant a loss of social prestige for the Tutsi patrons; the adverse consequences which this implied for the applica-

tion of indirect rule caused the administration to intervene and reverse the trend. By the late 'fifties and early 'sixties, however, the approach of independence raised the prospects of new political opportunities for the Hutu; and the ever-expanding involvement of the Church and the administration in the process of institutional transfer, while adding significantly to the rate of competition between Hutu and Tutsi elites, provided the Hutu elite with the resources which made possible the disengagement of the Hutu masses from the hold of their traditional patrons.

If the case of Rwanda shows an intensification of inter-African rivalries through European involvement, the history of the Ivory Coast in the late forties illustrates precisely the opposite. In Rwanda the conflict of interest between Hutu and Tutsi elites (which might be conceptualized in terms of competition between a presumptive and an incumbent set of brokers) was too fundamental not to supersede their common grievances against their European patrons; in the Ivory Coast the conflict of interest between African and European planters (also reducible to a competition between different sets of brokers) was too deep, and the economic deprivations it entailed for the Africans too widespread, not to supersede inter-African rivalries. Moreover, the concurrence of economic interests between traditional chiefs and African planters further diminished the possibilities of such rivalries.⁶¹ This situation played directly into the hands of the nationalist elites, converting the indigenous Ivoirien planters into fervent PDCI militants, and providing at the same time the economic resources through which further support could be generated from below and new networks of clientelism activated. The significance of the contribution (economic and political) made by African planters to the cause of Ivoirien nationalism becomes all the more apparent when compared with the very different situation then confronting African planters in Ghana: "In Ghana there

⁵⁹ For an excellent discussion of Mali's socialist options under Modibo Keita, see John N. Hazard, "Marxian Socialism in Africa: The Case of Mali," *Comparative Politics*, 2, 1 (1969), 1-16. The political implications of Mali's decisions to reenter the franc zone, in 1967, are analyzed in Francis Snyder, "An Era ends in Mali," *Africa Report*, 14; 3, 4 (1969), 16-23.

⁶⁰ Alison Des Forges, "Kings without Crowns: The White Fathers in Rwanda," in Daniel McCall, Norman R. Bennett, and Jeffrey Butler, eds., *Eastern African History*, Boston University Papers on Africa, Vol. III (New York: Praeger, 1969), p. 181.

⁶¹ Ruth Schachter Morgenthau, *Political Parties in French-Speaking West Africa*, p. 171. Equally worth emphasizing are the patron-client relationships which in many cases prevailed between migrant Mossi workers and Ivoirien planters; these relationships help explain why the Mossi minority resident in the Ivory Coast never (at least until recently) became the source of acute intergroup tensions. According to M. Dupire, "l'attitude des immigrants Mossi envers les autochtones est faite de respect, de soumission et de crainte. Ils conservent souvent d'excellentes relations avec leurs anciens patrons, qu'ils assistent en reconnaissance des chances qu'ils leur ont offertes." See M. Dupire, "Planteurs Autochtones et Etrangers en Basse Côte d'Ivoire," *Etudes Eburnéennes*, 8 (1960), 50.

were no European planters and the African farmers were much less involved in nationalist activities."⁶²

That the rate and character of clientelistic competition have tended to reflect the nature of the resources available is again nowhere better illustrated than in Rwanda:⁶³ Only with the opening of new political resources, through elections and constitutional reforms, did the conflict of interest between Hutu and Tutsi elites assert itself in any structured fashion; only when they realized the futility of attaining their political goals through electoral processes did the Hutu elites actively court the support of European patrons; and it was largely through the manipulation of violence that the Hutu elites were able to aggregate a solid political clientele. If violence made security a scarce resource, clientelism in turn provided the means by which security could be obtained.

In this case, the conjunction of electoral processes and violence provided the key resources through which a traditional form of clientelism reasserted itself—albeit in somewhat modified fashion—within an ethnically homogeneous stratum. Elsewhere, however, elections, with or without violence, provided the conditions for the emergence of a different type of clientelism, identified with dominant parties often sharing the characteristics of political machines. The irony is that the same forces that encouraged the birth of political machines also helped activate the ethnic solidarities which in many instances destroyed the machine as a form of political organization.

Ethnicity as an Independent Variable

This brings us to a consideration of ethnicity as an independent variable: How does ethnicity—whether taken to refer to the “givens” or “as-

⁶² Morgenthau, p. 170. This is why the CPP in Ghana never developed the characteristics of a “machine” in the sense in which the term might apply to the PDCI in the Ivory Coast. Feith’s description of the CPP as a machine which “exists almost exclusively to stay in power” conveys an oversimplified view of both the CPP and machine politics and thus fails to bring out the essential differences between the CPP and the PDCI: the latter’s original clientele was not made up of “verandah boys” but of rural workers; its resource base is still overwhelmingly dependent upon a plantation economy; and its “bosses” are themselves closely connected with the rural sector, most of them still owning large plantations. As of 1969, the *Bureau Politique* and *Comité Directeur* of the PDCI comprised, respectively, five and eight planters, and at least five of the members of the High Court of Justice and the State Security Court were planters. Cf. Edward Feith, “Military Coups and Political Development: Some lessons from Ghana and Nigeria,” *World Politics*, 20, 2 (1968), 179–194.

⁶³ Further evidence of this phenomenon may also be

sumed givens of social existence”⁶⁴—affect the scope, stability, and functioning of clientelistic networks? The answer is anything but clear. At least three possible types of situation suggest themselves, each in some way contradicting the other: The activation of ethnic solidarities may lead to a rupture of client-patron ties (as in Rwanda); or it may set sharp cultural or geographical limitations (or both) on the scope of clientelistic networks (as in Nigeria); or it may coexist with or indeed foster clientelistic ties on a nationwide basis (as in the Ivory Coast, Liberia, and, in a qualified sense, Senegal).

What might otherwise seem like a thoroughly confusing situation becomes somewhat more comprehensible in the light of the following caveats: (1) Although clientelism and ethnicity are in many ways interrelated, they refer to basically different levels of solidarity; whereas clientelism describes a personalized relationship, ethnicity is fundamentally a group phenomenon;⁶⁵ hence, there is no compelling reason to expect concomitant variations between ethnic and client-patron solidarities. (2) Just as group solidarities can be activated at many different levels and with varying degrees of intensity, one must also expect wide variations in the extent to which ethnic solidarities can be said to conflict with or reinforce patron-client solidarities. Whether or not the activation of solidarities in one sphere leads to a weakening of such solidarities in the other is an empirical question that can only be answered in the light of specific situations. (3) Seldom has there been a direct relationship between ethnicity and clientelism; as our previous discussion makes clear, the relationship between the two can best be seen in the light of certain intervening variables, structural and conjunctural.

These intervening variables may conveniently be analyzed under the following three major headings: (1) the nature of the structural “fit” between ethnic or cultural boundaries on the one hand, and status differences between patron and clients on the other; (2) the actor’s perceptions of the relative costs and benefits involved in the maintenance of particular patron-client sets; (3) the pattern of resource allocation prevailing at any given time.

“By itself,” writes M. G. Smith, “clientage is

found in Wolpe, “Port Harcourt: Ibo Politics in Microcosm,” esp. pp. 478–485.

⁶⁴ Clifford Geertz, “The Integrative Revolution,” in Clifford Geertz, ed., *Old Societies and New States* (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1963), p. 109.

⁶⁵ I am grateful to Professor Crawford Young for forcefully reminding me of this fact.

unlikely to dissolve sectional boundaries wherever differences of culture, religion or race are prominent."⁶⁶ By the same token, where cultural cleavages not only are prominent but tend to coincide with patrons and clients, these cleavages may help break up the patron-client nexus. Thus, the greater the cultural differences between patrons and clients, and the more conspicuous the social distance between them, the greater the likelihood of violent ethnic strife in conditions of rapid social mobilization.⁶⁷ Rwanda is an obvious example: Just as the spread of egalitarian ideas among Westernized Hutu elements threatened the "premise of inequality" which underlay the traditional order, the emergence of this presumptive elite, together with the support they received from the European administration and the Church, provided the conditions through which a new category of patrons was able to displace the old, and a "new" and ethnically homogenized society substituted for the old pluralistic order. Although Burundi has tended toward a similar polarization of ethnic loyalties, the greater flexibility of its stratification system and the absence of a rigorous coincidence of ethnic and status distinctions have significantly delayed ethnic conflict.

Yet, even where cultural or ethnic differences between patrons and clients might otherwise spell a lack of cohesiveness, preexistent clientelistic activities may reorient the actors' perceptions of their mutual interest so as to promote transactional integration among different ethnic segments, whether at the local or national levels. This phenomenon is perhaps best illustrated by the solidarities that have developed between the Hausa landlords of Ibadan and the predominantly Yoruba Action Group leaders of the Western Region of Nigeria; what initially began as a mutually advantageous economic transaction between cattle landlords and Yoruba butchers developed into similarly advantageous reciprocities between the Action Group leadership and the Hausa landlords:

When during the 1950's the butchers affiliated themselves within . . . the Action Group, which was until 1962 in power in the Western Region,

⁶⁶ M. G. Smith, "Institutional and Political Conditions of Pluralism," in L. Kuper and M. G. Smith, *Pluralism in Africa* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1969), p. 56.

⁶⁷ This tends to confirm the more general hypothesis developed by Dahrendorf in his theory of social conflict: The more consistent the criteria of differentiation between groups—i.e., the more they tend to define and isolate groups from each other through cumulative cleavages—the greater the likelihood of violence among them. See Ralf Dahrendorf, *Essays in the Theory of Society* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1968).

the Hausa landlords reacted not only by joining the same party themselves, but also by dragging almost the whole Hausa Quarter with them in joining it, and in successive elections the Ibadan Hausa gave their votes to it . . . [In return for their votes], the party not only prevented hostile action being taken against the cattle landlords, but even tried to prevent individual butchers from defaulting, by exerting pressure on these to honor their obligations, and sometimes by granting loans to those among them who did not have the cash to pay.⁶⁸

Although integration in this case occurred partly because mercantile clientelism had spilled over into the political sphere, economic interests will not everywhere and inevitably assert their primacy and lead to political compromise. Moreover, compromise may also be due to several other contributory factors. It may be due to perceptions of external threats that may submerge perceptions of local antagonism, or—as in the case discussed above—to the relative smallness of the migrant community and its consequently weak political leverage regionally or nationally.

Where no prior transactional integration exists among groups, how does the allocation of new resources affect interethnic or intercommunal relations? The answer depends in part on the character of the resources available at any given time, and on the sources of control over these resources. Where politically significant resources tend to become the monopoly of a particular ethnic or communal group, the clientelistic solidarities arising from the exploitation of these sources may possibly reinforce ethnic or communal solidarities. Take the example of the Eastern Region of Nigeria: The displacement of "strangers" (Sierra Leonians, Yoruba, etc.) in favor, first, of Onitsha Ibo, and then Owerri Ibo, has reflected basic changes in the political significance attached to specific resources (first education, then wealth, and finally "numbers"). But it has also tended to accentuate the communal bases of clientelistic politics among Ibo. Moreover, in time the preeminence of "numbers" at the national level has tended to relegate the Ibo as a group to a comparatively minor position in the federal superstructure, and hence has dissipated communal differences within the Ibo community while at the same time exacerbating ethnic and regional tensions between Ibo and non-Ibo.

But this is by no means the only conceivable pattern. Where ultimate control over financial and economic resources is vested in nationally

⁶⁸ Abner Cohen, "The Social Organization of Credit . . ." pp. 16–17; see also his *Custom and Politics in Urban Africa*.

oriented politicians, the distributive capacities of the system can be used to foster new patterns of reciprocity among groups, associated with the techniques of machine politics. What is involved here is the creation of new solidarities based on expectations of concrete, short-run benefits. Although the men in charge of running the machine may occasionally bolster their authority by charisma or by coercion, they can best be thought of as political entrepreneurs. Their job is to weld together disparate ethnic segments through the allocation of prebends.

Nowhere is this type of clientelism better illustrated than by the development of the PDCI in the Ivory Coast between 1952 and 1959. According to Zolberg,

the PDCI secured support by co-opting ethnic leaders into the organization by means of a major distributive effort, itself made possible by the sheer accident of prosperity stemming from high prices for tropical commodities during and immediately after the Korean war, a prosperity which was later bolstered by protectionist props extended by France toward its showcase colony. . . . The entire system of communications between the center and the localities took the form of ethnic channels, through official representatives such as members of the Territorial (later National) Assembly, or other forms of ethnic clientship.⁶⁹

Although the PDCI must certainly be regarded as the prototype of the African machine, elements of the machine pattern can also be detected in the UPS of Senegal, the True Whig party of Liberia, and, to a lesser extent, the Parmehutu of Rwanda. Several other parties shared at one time or another machine characteristics—the CPP in Ghana (at least until 1960), the SLPP in Sierra Leone, and each of the three major Nigerian parties in existence until 1959. That few of these “machines” were able to maintain themselves in power raises the question of the part played by ethnicity in hastening or precipitating their demise.

Two general answers have been suggested—one related to the character of the ethnic balance in any given state, and the other to the conditions affecting the enlistment of ethnic support. Arguing from a somewhat broader perspective, James Scott hypothesizes that where a single ethnic group held a dominant position, and provided the basis for the construction of a political machine, “the excluded ethnic groups . . . demanded at the very least more regional autonomy and launched secessionist revolts in some areas. The resulting threat to the territorial integrity of the state was

commonly the occasion for military takeovers”⁷⁰ Moreover, the elimination of electoral processes, according to Scott, deprives the machine of the incentives it needs to hold its clientele. In the absence of electoral pressures, expectations of payoffs are bound to decline. The bonds of cohesion which initially tied ethnic segments to the machine are thus gradually loosened, introducing possibilities of ethnic strife or secession.

Formulated in these terms, neither hypothesis is entirely convincing. Can one really visualize (as Scott does) the ethnic map of Nigeria as being characterized by a “dominant ethnic group”? Could not the Baule of the Ivory Coast just as well qualify as a dominant ethnic group—or for that matter the Wolof of Senegal? And if one associates ethnic dominance not with numbers but with social status and power, would it not be legitimate to regard the Americo-Liberians of Liberia as “dominant”? Moreover, granting that in the American context electoral processes were instrumental in keeping political machines going, in Africa these processes have usually released those very centrifugal forces that spelled the defeat of the machine as a form of political organization. Pushing the logic of the argument a step further, one is entitled to wonder why American machines declined while electoral pressures did not. Much more relevant is Scott’s contention that “the durability of the machine as a political form is maximized . . . where it is part of a larger growing economy that can afford its expensive habits, and where its bosses do not have a monopoly of coercive authority.”⁷¹ The crucial factor, however, lies in the pattern of resource allocation, in the extent to which resources (economic and political) are allowed either to move evenly from the center to the periphery, or to accrue exclusively to a particular region or ethnic group. The Ivory Coast provides the clearest example of the first pattern: except for the Agni of Sanwi, and, to a lesser extent, the Bete (two of the least favored groups), resources, whether in the form of jobs, material payoffs, sinecures of one kind or another, or social overhead capital, are fairly evenly distributed among the representatives of the various ethnic segments. This is not to deny the existence of gross disparities of income between the Ivoirien bureaucratic-planter oligarchy on the one hand and ordinary peasants on the other;⁷² the only point here is that the

⁷⁰ Scott, “Corruption, Machine Politics and Political Change,” *American Political Science Review*, 63, 4 (1969), p. 1157.

⁷¹ Scott, p. 1158

⁷² The point is persuasively argued in Basil Davidson, “The Outlook for Africa,” *The Socialist Register 1966* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1966).

⁶⁹ Zolberg, “Ethnicity and National Integration,” p. 7.

oligarchy represents a fairly wide cross-section of the ethnic interests at stake.

In Nigeria, by contrast, resource allocation has tended to reflect and reinforce the fragmented pattern of cultural loyalties.

The parties themselves were part of rival business and financial structures which existed to make money for the individuals concerned and provide financial backing for the parties. . . . Each regional government has gradually acquired a number of public boards by 1959 which could be used as means of dispensing patronage to party worthies.⁷³

Not only did the machines reinforce the ethnic loyalties of their clientele; electoral processes offered new opportunities for the creation of satellite machines in regions other than those in which the parent organization operated. The effect has been to exacerbate communal tensions so that the stability of the entire federal structure is threatened.

In short, the higher the distributive capacity of the system, the more congenial the environment to the operation of machine-like clientelism; a high distributive capacity alone, however, is not a sufficient condition to ensure the stability of the system. Even more important is the capacity of the machine to strike an adequate balance of patronage along the vertical axis of class stratification and the horizontal dimension of ethnic cleavages. An exceedingly lopsided distribution of spoils on each of these dimensions may bring disaffection, revolt, or ethnic strife.

There is yet another factor to consider, perhaps the most elusive: the social context of machine politics. Drawing upon Kilson's insight that "the principle of reciprocity refers to a fundamental aspect of the traditional or neo-traditional patterns of political action [and hence] is the most effective way (for Africans) to maximize material and prestige benefits derived from politics, as well as to minimize the losses," one might look upon African machines as the embodiment of at least one aspect of African tradition.⁷⁴ Not all African machines, however, exhibit the characteristics of traditional reciprocity patterns; even where the lat-

ter prevail there is still considerable room for variation in the way in which tradition and modernity combine and coalesce. Leaving aside those rare instances where the machine operates in the context of a no-party state and becomes synonymous with palace politics (as in Ethiopia or Burundi between 1962 and 1968), at least two different types of machines can be distinguished: the more orthodox, PDCI-type of machine, in which patronage becomes the essential source of cohesion; and the "neo-traditional machine," such as the UPS, in which exchange processes between the center and the periphery are mediated by, and contingent upon, the operation of traditional forms of clientelism at the local level. In the latter case, traditional micro-level solidarities provide the essential linkages between the party and the masses; the machine is superimposed upon, and in some ways tributary to, the clientelistic subsystem.

Furthermore, in the more orthodox type machine, ethnic segments are incorporated through a mixture of patronage and co-optation; vertical solidarities are maintained through material inducements; the party structure defines the organization of the machine, and is coextensive with its field of operation. The neo-traditional machine, on the other hand, seeks to enlist the support of micro-level clientelistic structures through bargaining with traditional patrons who act as brokers between the party elites and the masses; vertical solidarities are maintained in part through material inducements but mainly through perpetuation of deference patterns between the brokers and their traditional clientele; moreover, the party structure is not synonymous with the traditional clientelistic substructures but adjacent to it. The party structure in Senegal, for example, "remains separate from the brotherhoods"; and if the marabouts are in no position to control the party, there are, likewise, limits to how far the party can impose its policies upon the marabouts.⁷⁵

The integrative action patterns (what Bailey refers to as "bridge-actions")⁷⁶ through which links are established between the subsystem and

⁷³ Kenneth W. J. Post, *The Nigerian Federal Elections of 1959* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 58. The prime example of a machine-type clientelism is offered by the NCNC, between 1955 and 1959. The political fortunes of the NCNC were heavily (if not exclusively) dependent on the direct or indirect financial support it received from Marketing Board and Eastern Region Finance Corporation, (via the African Continental Bank). See Post, p. 56-58.

⁷⁴ Martin Kilson, *Political Change in a West African State* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966), p. 268.

⁷⁵ See Lucy Behrman, "The Political Influence of Muslim Brotherhoods in Senegal."

⁷⁶ Frederick G. Bailey, *Tribe, Caste and Nation: A Study of Political Activity and Political Change in Highland Orissa* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1960), p. 248. In contrast with the types of strategy described earlier, usually originating from the center, a "bridge-action," in the context of this discussion, refers to the motives which cause the actors in the subsystem (whether patrons or clients) to establish a new type of relationship with another system.

the macropolitical structure are likely to vary substantially from one type of machine-clientelism to the other. In each case subordinate political actors cast their lot with the central authorities because they expect certain rewards to accrue from this relationship. In the context of the more orthodox type of political machine (like the PDCI) expectations of patronage are paramount; the securing of material benefits becomes an end in itself. For traditional brokers operating in the context of a "neo-traditional" machine, however, expectations of material payoffs are only part of a larger complex of motivations. Material incentives may only serve the purely instrumental purpose, of maximizing the symbolic or affective rewards to which the brokers consider themselves entitled. Commenting on the motives which actuate "aspiring *samba linguers*" in Senegal, Foltz notes that "money is a major goal, but primarily because it can bring with it a greater following and thus increased prestige." This characterization applies equally well to the behavior of maraboutic elites. For some the resources of the political kingdom may yield handsome dividends in cash as well as other tangible rewards; but this merely strengthens their prestige as religious leaders since, as Foltz points out, "it is popularly felt that a marabout's potential for conferring grace and ultimate salvation is reflected in his personal wealth and magnificence."⁷⁷ Here the bridge-action by which the client-patron relationship is connected to the political system is really an attempt by traditional patrons to use the resources of modern politics to reaffirm a traditional relationship.

Not all African machines, therefore, are equally dependent upon the allocation of material resources. Whereas the PDCI and the TANU, for example, are both potentially vulnerable to what Bienen calls the "vicious circle of underdevelopment" (that is, "limited resources—weak organization—limited resources"),⁷⁸ this would seem less of a danger for a neo-traditional party machine such as the UPS, in which traditional reciprocity patterns provide alternative resources for the consolidation and manipulation of grass-roots support.

To return to the question raised earlier: the incorporation of ethnic loyalties into the framework of a political machine does not necessarily do away with the brokers' loyalty to their group of origin; it merely enlarges the scope of their loyalties at the same time that it redefines

their conceptions of self-interest. In other words, the relationship between ethnicity and clientelism cannot be reduced to a zero-sum game, in which increments of clientelism augment a person's sense of self-interest in the same proportion that they diminish his loyalty to the tribe. Just as the building of modern states on the debris of the old often tends to require the adjustment of tradition to modernity, rather than the substitution of one for the other, integrative processes in Africa are more often than not dependent on a redefinition of individual conceptions of self-interest in the context of multiple group loyalties.

Political Clientelism and Development

In trying to clarify the relationship between political clientelism and ethnicity, and the relationship of both to national integration, I have only touched upon one dimension of the developmental process. It may be useful, therefore, in conclusion, to shift to certain broader aspects of political development. Since there are almost as many definitions of political development as there are of clientelism, assessments of how one relates to the other will necessarily depend on one's conceptualization of each.

Political development can be looked at in one of two ways—as synonymous with the modernization historically experienced by the West, or, following Huntington's lead, as a process of institution building "independent of, although obviously affected by, the process of modernization."⁷⁹ The first of these approaches focuses on those forces of change leading to a dispersion of power; the second on the containment of such forces for purposes of power accumulation. In one case analysis centers upon such well-known facets of the "developmental syndrome" as (1) differentiation of political roles and structures; (2) equality as the "central operative ideal" of society; (3) capacity as "not only the logical imperative of system maintenance, but also the enhanced adaptive and innovative potentialities possessed by man for the management of his environment, human and nonhuman."⁸⁰ In the other the microscope is turned on "the institutionalization of organizations and procedures" as the absolute precondition of political development.

It takes no special gift of intuition to realize that the second of these approaches is clearly more compatible with our earlier characteriza-

⁷⁹ Samuel P. Huntington, "Political Development and Political Decay," *World Politics*, 17, 3 (1965), 393.

⁸⁰ James S. Coleman, "Introduction" in James S. Coleman, ed., *Education and Political Development* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), p. 15.

⁷⁷ Foltz, "Social Structure and Political Behavior . . ."

⁷⁸ Henry Bienen, *Tanzania: Party Transformation and Economic Development* (Princeton: University Press, 1967), p. 412.

tion of machine-clientelism, and that neither is particularly congenial to traditional forms of clientelism. Indeed, in the light of the assumption which underlies the first of these approaches, the contribution of traditional clientelism to political development might seem negligible if not counterproductive: "Political development," writes Coleman, "can be regarded as the acquisition by a political system of a *consciously-sought*, and *qualitatively new and enhanced political capacity* as manifested in the successful institutionalization of (1) *new* patterns of integration . . . and (2) *new* patterns of participation and resource distribution. . . ."⁸¹ (my emphasis). Making due allowance for the variations noted earlier among different types of traditional clientelism, one might argue that the differentiation of political roles and structures along functional lines is hardly compatible with the dichotomous, particularistic basis of role-differentiation between patrons and clients; that the principle of equality is violated by the very definition of traditional clientelism; and that the distributive capacities of the political system are lessened rather than enhanced by the "prebendal" features of traditional clientelism and the subjective criteria it implies for allocating resources. Moreover, since traditional forms of clientelism have rarely been coextensive with the boundaries of the newly created states, "the institutionalization of political organizations and procedures" would seem to require rather different materials than those available from traditional clientelistic networks.

The trouble with this line of reasoning is, first, that it so reifies traditional forms of clientelism as to deny their adaptive capacities; and second, that it overstresses the compartmentalization between "traditional" and "modern" forms of clientelism, thus ignoring the contribution that one makes to the other. Each of these points requires elaboration.

The first point has already received partial substantiation from our previous discussion: That certain forms of traditional clientelism are more adaptable than others, and may lend themselves to innovation both on a horizontal and vertical plane can be explicitly inferred from our analysis of the "spillover" and "pyramiding" processes. Suffice it to note here that some of the specific features conventionally associated with modernization can just as well be identified with the operation of traditional clientelism: the patron-client relationship may contain, in germ as it were, the elements of a further hierarchical differentiation of political

roles and structures; in spite of traditional status differences between patrons and clients, the reciprocities attendant upon this relationship may lead to an equalization of wealth among the parties; and the distributive capacities of the system may be enhanced as a result of the brokerage functions performed by local patrons and the control they exercise at the subsystem level.

That there may be limits to how far traditional patrons can be relied upon to accelerate processes of modernization is equally obvious; yet the very obstacles to mass political mobilizations that may be raised by traditional clientelism can be turned into major assets in the sphere of institution building. Traditional clientelism regulates political mobilization along traditional patron-client lines and maintains a measure of cohesion among ethnic segments, meanwhile permitting the accumulation of political and economic capital at the center. To the extent that it does these things, traditional clientelism releases those very resources that are needed for the "institutionalization of organizations and procedures," while at the same time insulating the ethnic subsystem from the disruptive impact of modernization. The main dilemma in this case is that those very forces that encourage the growth of political institutions at the center may in time generate their own destruction. The more power that is accumulated at the center, the greater the potential for initiating social and economic change, and hence also the greater the chances that modernization may sap the strength of traditional clientelistic networks.

Whether power accumulation at the center leads to a decay of traditional clientelism on the periphery, or, on the contrary, provides the support necessary for its continuation, depends in part on the balance of reciprocities between the central political institutions and the clientelistic subsystem. As long as exchange processes are seen as mutually satisfying by the machine politicians at the center and the traditional brokers in the countryside, the system retains its homeostatic qualities. Preservation of the system's equilibrium, however does not necessarily lead to political development. When the power asymmetry between patrons and clients is matched by gross disparities of wealth and income, and when the resources generated through this relationship become the privilege of a sybaritic class of political entrepreneurs, the chances for political development are slim. Liberia is a prime example: Although the True Whig party represents one of the most successful efforts at institutionalization in contempo-

⁸¹ Coleman, p. 15.

rary Africa (indeed to the point where it is now regarded as too successful by the incumbent elites), Liberia is hardly a showcase of successful political development. "Economic growth has not spread its benefits evenly but has tended to make the rich richer,"⁸² meanwhile keeping the populations of the rural hinterland in a state of near stagnation. Economic choices in Liberia, as elsewhere in Africa, have paid relatively little attention to conventional criteria of long-range economic and political development; the volume and quality of immediate political and economic payoffs have been the only yardsticks for evaluating the soundness of social and economic policies. Although similar criticisms have been leveled against the Ivoirien plantocracy,⁸³ the evidence in this case suggests a far less lopsided pattern of exchange, as well as a more conscious attempt to de-emphasize short-run benefits for long-term developmental goals.

The next point is that the juxtaposition of modern and traditional value orientations at different levels of the clientelistic structure may meet the requirements of modern organizational forms at the center and yet impose serious handicaps on the system's capacity to innovate. What Powell describes as the "rural problem-solving system"⁸⁴—whereby demands for goods and services in the rural sector are met by governmental agencies in return for voting support—is not a very widely accepted procedure in contemporary Africa; the least that can be said is that in specific instances the social context imposes major limitations on how far the local traditional patrons can tolerate reformist moves without at the same time destroying their own bases of support. The setbacks suffered by the "rural animation" program in Senegal illustrate the point: Having noted that "determined maraboutic opposition is reserved for those governmental ventures which have more than mere technical content, those inspired by theories of socialist development, which are designed not only to improve methods of cultivation but also to bring radical changes in the social structure of rural Senegal," Donal Cruise O'Brien goes on to observe that "rural animation . . . was the worst of all these schemes from a maraboutic point of view."⁸⁵ Only to the extent that exchange processes are perceived as

mutually beneficial by government officials and rural patrons is there a reasonable chance of harnessing developmental goals to the clientelistic substructure. This is where the cooperative movement in Senegal, in contrast with rural innovation schemes, offered genuine scope for innovation.⁸⁶

Exchange processes are conditioned not only by perceptions of self-interest but by the overall availability of resources at the center. Thus where clientelism becomes a technique for neutralizing a political opposition absorbing at the same time the economic and financial resources needed for development, the result is evidently dysfunctional in terms of the developmental process.⁸⁷ Much, of course, depends on the overall volume of disposable resources, and the relative costs involved in the diversion of such resources. In an environment of scarcity, where the demands for jobs or sinecures become ever more pressing with every new generation of university graduates, clientelism as a preventive political technique may lose its instrumental value for the achievement of long-range development goals.

Clearly, considerably more empirical data must be assembled before the patron-client model can serve as a general instrument for assessing developmental strategies. Much of what has been said in this section, therefore, must be seen as a starting point for further investigation rather than a conclusive formulation of the relationship of clientelism to development. At least three major avenues of inquiry suggest themselves:

(1) There is, first, the problem of determining the relationship of different types of clientelism to patterns of resource allocation. How effective, for example, is the party-institutionalized type of clientelism, as compared to the traditional or neo-traditional types, in promoting what Uphoff calls "political market integration" and "increases in factor endowments?"⁸⁸ What are the intervening variables that need to be taken into account in order to assess the rela-

⁸⁰ O'Brien.

⁸⁷ Absorption of opposition elements (mainly student and trade-union leaders) through clientelistic techniques has been a standard procedure in both Senegal and the Ivory Coast; how far this technique can be used without posing a major threat to development goals remains to be seen. For further information on the sources and implications of the *mouvements contestataires* in each country, see *Le Monde* (Sélection Hebdomadaire), December 18–24, 1969.

⁸⁸ See Norman T. Uphoff, "Ghana and Economic Assistance: Impetus and Ingredients for a Theory of Political Development," a paper prepared for delivery at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Los Angeles, 1970.

⁸² See "Tubman Asks for Opposition," *West Africa*, January 3, 1970.

⁸³ Samir Amin, *Le Développement du Capitalisme en Côte d'Ivoire* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1967).

⁸⁴ John D. Powell, "Peasant Society and Clientelistic Politics," *American Political Science Review*, 64 (June, 1970), 411–425.

⁸⁵ O'Brien, *The Murids of Senegal*

tive advantages and disadvantages attendant upon each type of clientelism? What sorts of factors or circumstances are likely to bring about the conversion of one type of clientelism into another, and with what consequences for the political system? So far only the most speculative answers can be given to these questions.

(2) Closely related to the foregoing is the question of how new political resources are likely to affect the operation of preexisting patron-client networks, and, conversely, how new types of resources, whether defined in terms of status, wealth, authority or legitimacy, can be generated out of such networks. Passing reference must be made in this connection to the wealth of interesting insights to be gleaned from Ilchman and Uphoff's seminal work on *The Political Economy of Change*: Besides offering a much more rigorous conceptualization of "political resources" than has been attempted in this article, by emphasizing the productivity and convertibility of political resources made available through self-interested exchanges, the authors suggest new and theoretically significant perspectives from which to look at clientelistic reciprocities.⁸⁹

(3) A third area of investigation concerns the relationship between external and internal forms of dependency. However much disagreement there may be among political scientists about the extent of economic, social, and political control exercised over their former dependencies by metropolitan powers, it is difficult not to recognize the reality of such control. How these external links of dependency may in

turn affect the operation of patron-client ties atention from students of African politics. It the domestic level has as yet received little at may be, however, that just as the international dimensions of clientelism can help us elucidate some of its domestic manifestations, the latter may in turn give us valuable insights into what Nkrumah once referred to, not inaccurately, as "clientele sovereignty." If nothing else, some of the phenomena currently lumped together under the convenient rubric of "neo-colonialism" may thus be brought into a universe of discourse more amenable to dispassionate inquiry.⁹⁰

In view of what remains to be done to operationalize further the concept of clientelism, some may well feel that our claim to have identified the "missing link" in current theories of development is grossly exaggerated. Some questions may also arise about the universality of the phenomenon described, or the presumed generality of its manifestations. Certainly, the conclusions one may reach about the effect of clientelism on political conflict, or the absence of conflict, are bound to reflect the nature of the empirical data from which one seeks to generalize. That something does lie between "ethnicity" and "class" in contemporary Africa is nonetheless undeniable. Thus, whether referred to as "political clientelism," "the patron-client nexus," or "dependency relationships," the kind of interpersonal relationships described in this article may yet emerge as one of the central foci of inquiry in African scholarship. My hope, in the meantime, is that it can stimulate some fresh thinking on the part of those interested in political development.

⁸⁹ Warren E. Ilchman and Norman T. Uphoff, *The Political Economy of Change* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1969). Other discussions of political exchange that might interest social scientists dealing with clientelist politics, include: Anthony Heath, "Exchange Theory," *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 1, Part 1 (January 1971), 91-119, and Georges Dupré and Pierre-Philippe Rey, "Réflexions sur la pertinence d'une théorie de l'histoire des échanges," *Cahiers Internationaux de Sociologie*, 46 (Jan.-June 1969), pp. 133-162.

⁹⁰ These and other questions are tentatively dealt with in my unpublished manuscript "Political Exchange, Clientelism, and Development in Tropical Africa", a paper presented for delivery at the annual meeting of the Southern Political Science Association, Atlanta, 1970.