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AMILCAR CABRAL: EVOLUTION OF REVOLUTIONARY THOUGHT

by

Bernard Magubane

*Assume a particular rate of development in productive faculties of man and you will get a particular form of commerce and consumption. Assume particular stages of development in production, commerce and consumption; and you will have a corresponding civil society.*  
(Marx)

Portugal has been fighting a rearguard action in her African colonies, especially in Guiné Bissau, since the early 1960's. The reckless attack on the Republic of Guinea to overthrow the government of President Sekou Touré and to attempt to kill Amilcar Cabral, the leader of the Partido Africano da Independencia do Guiné Cabo Verde (PAIGC), was a futile attempt by Portugal to redress its tenuous hold on its colonies in Africa, particularly 'Portuguese' Guiné. This situation requires an analysis of the thoughts of the man who leads the struggle. The analysis, concepts and ideas which have been previously used to define independence movements in other African ex-colonies do not apply to Guiné Bissau -- they mystify our view of the situation. Amilcar Cabral has provided in the book *Revolution in Guiné: An African People's Struggle: Stage I*, the first redefinition of the realities of this new situation.

Modern anti-colonial movements have been revolts against the political system of foreign exploitation, in which the national question could be resolved only by political independence. Cabral has redefined the situation in Guiné as one of foreign exploitation in which the national question could only be resolved by structural change which also implies profound mutation in the productive forces.

To redefine the situation Cabral did original research and used the Marxist dialectical method. Most of the people of Guiné, despite 400 years of Portuguese presence, still live in folk communities (I use the word 'folk' rather than 'tribal' because it embodies cultural and economic meanings whilst the word 'tribal' emphasizes elements of barbarism). The essential aspect of the dialectical method as developed by Marx is an analysis of reality without isolating it either from its process of formation or from the general context of the macro-structure within which it is inserted. Cabral has been able, through this approach, to throw light on such questions as economic and social development, the

growth of classes and class conflict, and on such elements of the 'super-structure' as religion, 'tribalism', authority systems (particularly the state), etc. in Guiné. This enables us for the first time to know what kind of contradiction the party had to resolve before launching the armed struggle. Cabral's anthropological method differs with those of non-Marxists. It is based on the materialist understanding of social life.

Cabral's theoretical formulations have been developed in the midst of the struggle for national liberation against Portuguese ultra-colonialism -- the most primitive, the most defective and the most savagely exploitative booty-colonialism in Africa (1). The PAIGC struggle against this decadent system, so far, is the most successful. Why and how? is the question that readily comes to mind. It is not easy as Worsley has pointed out to turn men, especially illiterate peasants into revolutionary fighters (2). The readiness to take up arms is something that the revolutionary organization has to create, for men are scared when confronted with overwhelming power. Secondly an illiterate person, as Lenin pointed out, "is outside politics, he must first be taught the alphabet. Without that there can be no politics. Without that, there are only rumors, gossip, fables and prejudices, but not politics" (3).

The success of PAIGC, therefore, is partially explained by Cabral's own acute sense of history, which revealed to him the possibilities in the Guiné situation. In the study of Guinea society Cabral sought out those elements which make a society dynamic. However, in a society whose fundamental nature has been distorted by imperialism, this is a difficult task indeed. Neither the type of colonial system nor the course of decolonization can be understood without the direct analysis of the specific economy and society that has experienced colonial implantation.

There are several features of the essays by Cabral in this book which make it unique. Most African leaders claim to be "socialist", and they have arrived at this position in a pragmatic fashion, so to say. Nyerere and Kaunda, two leaders who today are involved in the restructuring of the socio-economic realities inherited from imperialism, have arrived at 'socialist' solutions because they reject capitalism on both ethical and empirical grounds. This has meant 'revolution' from above. Many other African leaders have not even made any attempt at restructuring their societies. They have been satisfied with the inherited colonial structures. Independence for these leaders, has been described scornfully as meaning merely a ceremony of the Changing of the Guards.

Cabral both as an active combatant and theoretician has realized that social transformation cannot be effected by changing only the consciousness of people, only by a theoretical criticism of obsolete colonial relations. The ultimate, determining force is the revolutionary remaking of social life. Cabral, however, in no way minimizes the significance of theory.

*The ideological limitations, if not to say the total absence of ideology, of national liberation movements, due to our ignorance of the reality we set out to change is one of the greatest, if not the greatest, weaknesses of our anti-imperialist struggle. (p. 75)*

Knowing this deficiency of some of the African leaders, Cabral has arrived at socialist solutions to the problems of Guiné Bissau through ideological convictions. The party he leads, PAIGC, is a revolution party based on Marxist analysis of social reality. Basil Davidson asks a very relevant question: What other revolutionary movement of the last forty years ever declared itself to be any different? He answers by pointing out that Cabral's Marxism is a living reality based on the concrete analysis of social structures in Guiné (4). Therefore his

*Theory, particularly in its strategic and organisational aspects is active in relation to its social base. It actively opposes the evolution of the existing state of things and poses revolutionary alternatives, and thus has a necessary autonomous and voluntarist aspect which permits it to articulate the strategy essential for the transition from the present to the desired state of affairs. Types of political practice are premised on revolutionary theory and evaluated in its terms. (5)*

Cabral proves in this book (if proof were needed), that the basic categories of social analysis can not be externally imposed, they must arise from a concrete context. It is not only anti-Marxist, but dogmatic and undialectical to hold any previously reached conclusion as valid independently of a concrete analysis of objective conditions.

This attitude of independent analysis based on practice has enabled Cabral to arrive at the most refreshing analysis of class as a motive force of history. Its importance justi-

fies quoting it at length:

*Those who affirm -- in our case correctly -- that the motive force of history is the class struggle would certainly agree to a revision of this affirmation to make it more precise and give it an even wider field of application if they had a better knowledge of the essential characteristics of certain colonized peoples, that is to say peoples dominated by imperialism. In fact in the general evolution of humanity and each of the peoples of which it is composed, classes appear neither as a generalized and simultaneous phenomenon throughout the totality of these groups, nor as a finished, perfect, uniform and spontaneous, whole. The definition of classes within one or several human groups is a fundamental consequence of the progressive development of the productive forces and of the characteristics of the wealth produced by the group or usurped from others. That is to say that the socio-economic phenomenon 'class' is created and develops as a function of at least two essential and inter-dependent variables -- the level of productive forces and the pattern of ownership of the means of production.*  
(p. 76-77)

There are many works that trace the development of mankind from the earliest times to the present. But where will the inquirer find a reliable analysis of the evolution of the pre-capitalist, so-called "stateless" formations of Africa, which can shed light upon the puzzling questions of whether they have a history or not, and where they belong in the evolution of mankind through the ages. The paucity of data on a subject of utmost concern to many Africans should not come as a surprise. Anthropology, the subject that should have enlightened us on this subject, up to now, has been written primarily from the stand point of imperialist needs -- to rationalize its exploitation and oppression of African peoples -- it thus turned its early and promising beginning away from scientific inquiry to tell the whole truth about societies that were pre-capitalist.

It will be remembered that Marx and Engels, the exponents of dialectical materialism, were influenced and inspired in their social theory by the works of both Darwin and Morgan. In fact Engels later was to take up the key question that Darwin had posed, but could not answer. Just how did our progenitors among the higher apes pass over into the earliest humans? In his essay, "The Part Played by Labor in the Transi-

tion from Ape to Man," Engels explained that it was because of their systematic labor activities that the anthropoid became the humanoid. In this outline form, Engels was the first to present what can properly be called the 'labor theory of social origins.' And as we shall see, this has a very important bearing on the historical position of Africa's pre-capitalist formations in Cabral's work (6). Anthropology, as the hand maiden of imperialism, looked upon Africa's pre-capitalist societies as indicative of some hypothetical point that the 'truly' human races of mankind had passed long ago. And in most anthropological works of the late 19th and early 20th century, African societies were studied as if they existed in a timeless present. Social anthropology in its relativity ceased to be a science of social evolution and became a mere descriptive catalog of a 'variety' of cultures. This vulgar relativism left the African outside history and a step-son of the human race without a past and future. He was now fit only to provide raw muscles for the comforts of the 'real' human races.

Cabral has, in the process of revolutionary struggle, posed crucial questions which have always been an embarrassment to Africans and ammunition to his enemies. Was it true that African folk social formations had no history? Was it true that history began with the appearance of the phenomenon of 'class'? Was it true that 'colonialism' was to usher the Africans into the 'modern age'? What did imperialism mean, in short, to the evolution of African societies? What path was open to African societies to cope with the problems of the present age?

Cabral says that to reply to the first two questions in the affirmative would be to place outside history the whole period of human groups, from the discovery of hunting and later, of nomadic and sedentary agriculture, to the organization of herds and the private appropriation of land.

*It would also be to consider -- and this we refuse to accept -- that various human groups in Africa, Asia and Latin America were without history, or outside history, at the time when they were subjected to the yoke of imperialism. It would be to consider that peoples of our countries, such as the Balantes of Guinea, the Coaniamas of Angola and the Macondes of Mozambique, are still living today, if we abstract the slight influence of colonialism to which they have been subjected -- outside history or that they have no history.*  
(emphasis added)

(p. 77)

Cabral's refusals are based on the 'labor theory of social origins', which is based on concrete knowledge of the socio-economic reality of Guiné and Africa's pre-capitalist social formations. The dialectical materialistic approach of class formation led him to his conclusions.

*---if class struggle is the motive force of history, it is so only in specific historical periods...It therefore seems correct to conclude that the level of productive forces, the essential determining element is the content and form of class struggle, is the true and permanent motive force of history.* (p. 77)

By the use of the labor theory of social origins Cabral solves many burning questions and shatters many prevailing myths and prejudices, which affect in particular the African's self-conception as it pertains to his historical position in human evolution. The ideas associated with African socialism, African personality and Negritude were attempts by black intellectuals to solve this problem by idealist notions of an African essence. And Cabral gives us a materialist and sociological explanation of the African position in history.

*Because, if on the one hand we can see that the existence of history before the class struggle is guaranteed, and this avoids for some human groups in our countries -- and perhaps in our continent -- the sad position of being peoples without any history, then on the other hand we can see that history has continuity, even after the disappearance of class struggle or classes themselves.*

Cabral has thus given a sharp twist to the wheel of history. The African who belonged to what are sometimes called the 'stateless societies', has been re-integrated into the main stream of history, just as the societies which, like Cuba are laying the foundation for a classless society have been assured their place in history. Dialectical anthropology is based on the 'totality' of the human stock and its progress in different socio-economic formations.

*Eternity is not of this world, but man will outlive classes and will continue to produce and make history, since he can not free himself from the burden of his needs, both of mind and of body, which are the basis of the development of the forces of production.* (p. 78)

## The Colonial Impact:

Cabral through his materialist approach and class analysis has revealed to the African people themselves that their natural process of historical development had been frustrated by the continuing stagnation of colonial domination. He has in fact told them that, "there is no new entity born of colonialism." (7) The impact of colonialism can be summed up with Davidson as follows: African peoples in particular and other peoples who were once colonized need a renewal of their civilization. "Whatever colonialism, imperialism, capitalism, may or may not have achieved, one thing is certain about them. They utterly failed to raise those structures -- whether social or moral, political or economic -- upon which the deprived peoples, the abused peoples, the 'underdeveloped' peoples --, can carry themselves into a new civilization capable of standing and evolving on its own foundations (8). The failure of imperialism is not because it was malicious, it stems from its inherent quality which is defined by Cabral as a world-wide expression of the search for profits and the ever-increasing accumulation of surplus-value by monopoly financial capital, centered in two parts of the world; first in Europe, and then in North America.

*And if we wish to place the fact of imperialism within the general trajectory of the evolution of the transcendental factor which has changed the face of the world, namely capital and the process of its accumulation, we can say that imperialism is piracy transplanted from the seas to the dry land, piracy reorganized, consolidated and adopted to the aim of exploiting the natural and human resources of our peoples.*  
(p. 80)

Having given this indictment of imperialism, Cabral does not deny its 'progressive' historical character, which is

*a consequence of the impetus given by the productive forces and the transformations of the means of production in the general context of humanity, considered as one movement, that is to say a necessity like those today of the national liberation of people, the destruction of capital and the advent of socialism.* (p. 80)

Nkrumah, Nyerere and Kaunda arrived at the realization that capitalism was unsuited for African development when faced with insoluble problems of inheriting political power without economic power. Cabral in the cause of armed strug-



gle for national independence has realized that people do not fight for ideals, for the things in one's head. They are fighting to win material benefits, to live better, and in peace.... This realization would explain Cabral's awareness that a true revolution is a process of structural change which overcomes not only direct colonial subjection but also, and still more decisively, indirect or 'neo-colonial' subjection as well. To the extent that Cabral wants to bring about a concrete society in which men can harmoniously develop, he is a socialist. Socialism will be the only true defense of the African as a human person when independence is eventually won. A society that socialist reconstruction envisages is the society of live and true men, i.e., of live labor. Capitalism poses itself in a relation contrary to that reality and truth.

Nyerere writes in the same theme:

*...humanity's progress must be measured by the extent of which man is freed from the domination of the need to produce. When the demands of 'efficiency' and 'production' override man's need for a full and good life, the society is no longer serving man, it is using him.*

(Quoted in *Mohidin*, 1968, p. 29)

Even though Cabral recognizes the 'progressive' nature of capitalism and that imperialism and colonialism were part of this system, he is not interested in drawing a balance sheet of the pros and cons of imperialism. He points out that in situations of classical colonialism, the social structure of colonies suffers paralysis, stagnation, and in some cases even regression; though this paralysis is not complete.

#### Colonial Social Structures and National Independence:

Cabral's analysis is dialectical in the sense that he looks at reality and defines it by the contradictions that exist between the reality and its ideal or between various aspects of reality and various ideals. The use of the concept dialectical is not a mere concession to fashion: society that is subject to capitalistic forms of exploitation is intelligible solely in its becoming. Imperialism through the laws of combined and uneven development prepares and in a sense realizes the universality and permanence of man's development. By this law capitalism as a phase in Africa's development is ruled out. Nkrumah expresses the reasons thus:

*Capitalism has already had its turn in Africa,*

*for 50 years, 100 years or more, and Africa is underdeveloped. In other words, capitalism, as far as development is concerned is seen as having failed.* (Genaud, 1969, p. 205)

Secondly, according to this law there exists a privilege of technological backwardness, which permits or rather compels the adoption of whatever is already in advance by the technologically backward society in any specified date. This development necessarily means a peculiar combination of different stages in the historic process. The various forms of African socialism despite their grotesque naivety express this historical reality at an instinctual level. Such technologically backward societies frequently debase the achievements borrowed from outside in the process of adapting them to their folk cultures. Unevenness, the most general law of the historical process reveals itself most sharply in the destiny of the small country of Guiné.

According to Cabral, imperialism stimulates permanent action of some internal (local) factors through interacting with external factors, like the introduction of a money economy and the development of urban centers. Among the transformations noted by Cabral was the progressive loss of prestige of the native ruling classes, the forced voluntary exodus of part of the peasant population to urban centers, with consequent development of new social strata: salaried workers, clerks, employees in commerce and liberal professions; and an unstable stratum of unemployed. In the countryside there develops, with very wide intensity and always linked to urban milieu, a stratum made up of small land owners. In the case of neo-colonialism, external action takes the form of creating a local bourgeoisie or pseudo-bourgeoisie, controlled by the ruling class of the dominating country.

The development of the productive forces under colonial or neo-colonial structures prevents and limits the development of the national productive forces. Colonial and neo-colonial societies are societies without the means to maintain themselves as economies capable of self-sustained growth. The pseudo-bourgeoisie, however strongly nationalist it may be, cannot effectively fulfill its historical function; it cannot freely direct the development of the productive forces, because it is subject to manipulation from outside; in brief, the pseudo-bourgeoisie cannot be a national bourgeoisie.

*For as we have seen, the productive forces are the motive forces of history, and total freedom of the process of their development is an indispensable condition of their proper functioning.* (p. 82)

The crucial question which is raised in this passage is the meaning of national liberation. The mode of production is the basis of social life, and historical progress; therefore says Cabral, national liberation is to be defined not so much as the right of a people to rule itself, but as the right of a people to regain its own history.

*We therefore see that both in colonialism and in neo-colonialism the essential characteristic of imperialist domination remains the same. The negation of the historical process of the dominated people by means of violent usurpation of the freedom of development of the national productive forces... On the basis of this, we can state that national liberation is the phenomenon in which a given socio-economic whole rejects the negation of its historical process. In other words, the national liberation of a people is the regaining of the historical personality of the people, its return to history through the destruction of the imperialist domination to which it was subjected.*  
(p. 83)

National liberation is thus the self development of social states of mankind, which can only be achieved in its full meaning if the people themselves control their productive forces (tools and means of production) and can reorder the production relations (also called economic and property relations).

Colonialism and imperialism forces those it exploits to live in limitation because it denies their real essence. The denial of their essence stems from the usurpation of their means of livelihood, the productive forces. The African under colonialism was allowed to live only to the extent which sufficed to allow exploitation, whilst there was always the remaining temptation to destroy him.

Cabral considers the difference between national independence and national liberation. The latter is the inalienable right of every people to have its own history and to free the process of development of the national productive forces from the clutches of imperialism.

#### The Faults of National Independence:

Fanon discussed the faults of national consciousness and Cabral has given these faults a sociological explanation. The limits of bourgeois nationalism are essentially defined by its underlying loyalty not only to the institutional

structures inherited from colonialism, but also by the belief of colonial elites that the virtues of Western democracy remain valid in spite of man's mistakes. The African pseudo-bourgeoisie according to Fanon is unlike the European bourgeoisie. The European bourgeoisie was transformatory, productive, and parasitical; the pseudo-bourgeoisie in Africa is simply parasitical. This social fact receives in Cabral its historical and sociological explanation. On the international level many factors are unfavorable to national liberation; amongst which is the neo-colonial situation of a great number of states. In these states the pseudo-bourgeoisie is necessarily dependent on the international bourgeoisie which obstructs the path of revolution. Under the rule of the native pseudo-bourgeoisie, the productive forces, the life blood that nourishes national growth, is still manipulated by neo-colonialism.

Cabral interprets the dialectics of present day 'independent' countries in the framework of the global appreciation of the era of world imperialism. Thus the failure of national emancipation is predicated on the historical conjecture of imperialism, which has locked together folk societies with the capitalist forms of economic activity implanted in their midst by imperialism. Though imperialism united a world economy into a single world market, it has not united the world society into a homogenous capitalist milieu. It has in fact accentuated to the utmost the differences between these societies (10). During the struggle for emancipation the economic structure of the colonial situation was such that the main contradiction was between what Cabral calls the nation class, i.e. the population as a whole and colonialism. The repressive forces of the bourgeoisie of the colonizing country produced the spirit of nationalism. This contradiction led in the 'dependent' countries to nationalist solutions (national independence).

*The nation gains its independence and theoretically adopts the economic structure which best suits it. The neo-colonial situation (in which the working classes and their allies struggle simultaneously against the imperialist bourgeoisie and the native ruling class) is not resolved by a nationalist solution; it demands the destruction of the capitalist structure implanted in the national territory by imperialism, and correctly postulate a socialist solution.*

(p. 86)

The neo-colonial situation in fact plants the seeds of future conflict in the uneasy coexistence between a form of

capitalism based upon local labor and alien capitalism within a single polity whose expansion was hamstrung by not owning its own productive forces. National independence represented not a triumph of nationalism over imperialism, but a compromise or coalition between the national pseudo-bourgeoisie and international imperialism. Where independence has been described as the Changing of the Guard, the pseudo-bourgeoisie defined its own nature and position within the context of a neo-colonial society. For it, the 'conquest' of political power represented the final ratification -- the recognition of its class interests, producing in fact the neo-colonial society. During the colonial era the petty bourgeoisie were confined to getting salaries or fees, i.e. money for services rendered, and neo-colonialism gives a-plenty. However, for the mass of the people -- peasants and workers on the other hand -- independence was expected to give rise to a society freed from neo-colonial exploitation. In its immediacy therefore, and its pure objectivity, the unemployed and under-employed proletariat as it appears in the shanty towns of the 'neo-colonial' towns of Africa, represents the most faithful expression of neo-colonial reality.

The thing to note is Cabral's analysis of the weaknesses of the pseudo-bourgeoisie in that none of the defects are blamed on psychological weaknesses, on vices of the instinct, nor lack of character. These are strictly social defects of historical and structural origin. The 'corruption', 'bribery', exploitation of ethnic or 'tribal' sentiments (defects relished by bourgeois sociologists), etc., are all due to arrested development, which itself is the result of the fact that the productive forces of the neo-colonial society are externally controlled.

A neo-colonial system needs a pseudo-bourgeoisie with relatively high incomes and with aspirations and tastes which can be satisfied only by the importation of goods from the former metropolis. 'Tribalism' according to Cabral, together with other contradictions, is of lesser importance. The existence of 'tribes' manifests itself as an important contradiction only as a function of opportunistic attitudes, generally on the part of 'detrIALIZED' individuals and groups.

#### The Role of Violence:

*Mass forced labour: de facto post laws: omnipresent foreign capital: an incidiary white lumpen proletariat: a superstructure of magic: an economic and social machine turning in a void, driven by pure terror. (11)*

This according to Anderson was the system of Portuguese imperialism at the opening of 1961. Like the Belgians in the Congo, the Portuguese in their colonies of Angola, Guiné, and Mozambique thought they had abrogated history.

*On February 4, 1961, a series of synchronized attacks suddenly struck at military and police points. Groups of Africans attacked the military prison, the police barracks and the civil prison: others ambushed isolated units on the outskirts of the town. Fierce fighting followed before the assaults were beaten off. Seven Portuguese police and soldiers were killed, and officially 15 Africans; 53 were wounded and 100 arrested. The next day there was a public funeral for the Portuguese killed. A lynch mob of whites ran riot in the presence of the Governor-General, crying "Mata Todos" (Kill Them All) and attacking every African in sight.*

In 1947, the Inspector General of the colonies, Henrique Galvao, told Prime Minister Salazar, in a report which was carefully suppressed, that

*in some ways the situation in Angola is worse than simple slavery. Under slavery, after all, the native is bought as an animal: his owner prefers him to remain as fit as a horse or an ox. Yet here the native is not bought -- he is lured from the state, although he is called a free man. And his employers care little if he sickens or dies, once he is working, because when he sickens or dies his employer will simply ask for another. (12)*

Given this colonial reality, the issue which faced Cabral and the PAIGC was to decide which forms of violence should be used by the nationalists in order to win true independence.

*The facts make it unnecessary for us to prove that the essential instrument of imperialist domination is violence. If we accept the principle that the liberation struggle is a revolution and that it does not finish at the moment when the national flag is raised and the national anthem played, we will see that there is not, and cannot be national liberation without the use of liberating violence by the Nationalist forces, to answer the criminal violence of the agents of imperialism.*

*Nobody can doubt that, whatever its local characteristics, imperialist domination implies a state of permanent violence against the nationalist forces.*  
(p. 87)

Even the memory of limited aims and achievements of national independence has compelled Cabral to eschew half-way measures. Since the content of colonial rule is violent in its economic, political, cultural and psychic sphere, since under colonial rule the folk society, in Fanon's words, exists in perpetual agony and its culture is mummified so that it can testify against its members, only liberating violence can offer meaningful emancipation. Racism was inherent in every action of the colonizer, and therefore the struggle for removal of economic and political institutions of the colonial situation with their underlying racism. Accordingly, only through the crucible of revolutionary struggle can the individuals purge themselves of the dead weight of past prejudices and irrationalities. The aim then in revolutionary struggle is to change society, so as to renew society within its own re-conquered history.

*Warfare for national liberation gives our people the conviction that they can triumph over their enemy. Its dynamic creates the most favorable conditions for the resolving of tribal and social antagonisms. By aiming at the total destruction of colonial structures, it accelerates the emergence of those revolutionary forces which will irreversibly influence the conquest of this nationalist phase.*

(Quoted in Davidson, op. cit., p. 90)

What does renewal mean? Did not "colonialism" mean renewal of archaic traditional societies? The life of Cabral includes practically all the categories of colonial experience: from the peasantry to the assimilated petit bourgeoisie to a revolutionary who returned to the village life as a freedom fighter. He could only fill the role of leader and freedom fighter, by re-integrating himself into the culture of which he was the prodigal son. Thus by his life he gave a potent example, emancipating himself from the temptations of compromising with neo-colonial interests (which is what acceptance of assimilation means). Through revolutionary struggle he has become one with his people and thus they also pay him their tribute, they follow him and guide him in the liberation struggle.

## Conclusion:

Basil Davidson tells us in his little book that has informed this article, that: "Much separates it (Guiné) from its neighbors and gives it an interest of its own." But he goes on, "there are also certain ways in which Guiné may be more than interesting in itself, may be microcosmic in meaning, a paradigm of the African situation in the late 1960's: a place not only worth observing for itself but also worth learning from." (15)

In this article I have attempted to abstract from an intricate argument those ideas which I think make the revolution in Guiné what it is. The dialectics of the struggle in Guiné is based on the axiom that all societies are part of the human 'totality', and that the task of national liberation movements is to look beyond the present reality of neo-colonialism to the real social world and context. The true success of national liberation would of necessity mean the integration of partial developments introduced under imperialism into the totality of the world of which colonial societies are an integral part. This involves not only the necessity of struggle but also the necessity of socialism. A true revolution can not draw its model from the past and present, but only from the future, because its content goes beyond the present social reality.

*Beyond the limits of the present, there is space, both physical and mental, for building of the realm of freedom which is not that of the present: the liberation also from the liberties of exploitative order -- a liberation which must precede the construction of a free society, one which necessitates an historical break with the past and present. (16)*

Cabral has taken the idea of revolution out of the continuum of contemporary reality epitomized by neo-colonial situations and has placed it in its authentic dimension: that of socialist liberation and reconstruction.

Cabral's book will, in my opinion, rank with Lenin's work on the *Development of Capitalism* in Russia, which was to be the theoretical cornerstone of the Bolshevik revolution, and with Mao's brilliant studies and analysis of the objective political relation of class forces in China in the 1920's, *The Report of an Investigation of the Horan Peasant*, which was a necessary basis for his guerilla strategy which led to final victory in 1949.



The appreciation of Cabral's analysis must be derived, not from texts alone, however important their study may be, but from awareness of the requirement of the revolutionary movement that he leads and its day-by-day practice. Revolutionaries need to know the pre-existing structures of society in which they operate (this need is the same as that of imperialism which creates various institutes to study the colonized) in order to carry out the transformations necessary to abolish the prevailing exploitative forms. This can only be done if the leaders know how to handle correctly the contradictions in the consciousness of the peasant, in order to enhance those positive aspects which favor revolution. Any wonder that the Portuguese are after Cabral's life!

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### Footnotes

1. Cf. Perry Anderson, "Portugal and the End of Ultra-Colonialism," in *New Left Review*, 17 (1962), p. 805.
2. Peter Worsely, "Frantz Fanon: Revolutionary Theories," in *Monthly Review*, 21 (1969), p. 35.
3. Quoted in C. R. L. James, *Radical America: Special Issue* (Detroit 1970), p. 102.
4. Basil Davidson, *The Liberation of Guiné: Aspects of an African Revolution*, (Baltimore, Md., 1969), p. 73.
5. M. Gluckman, "Lucian Goldman: Humanist or Marxist?" in *New Left Review*, 56 (1969), p. 51.
6. Cf. Evelyn Reed, *Problems of Women's Liberation, A Marxist Approach*, (New York, 1969), p. 9.
7. Fanon, quoted in Davidson, *The Liberation of Guiné*, p. ix.
8. Loc. cit.
9. Quoted in Roger Genouy, *Nationalism and Economic Development in Ghana*, (New York, 1969), p. 205.
10. Cf. Ernest Mandel, "The Laws of Uneven Development," in *New Left Review*, 59 (1970), p. 22.
11. Anderson, "Portugal," p. 84.
12. Ibid., pp. 84-86.

13. Quoted in Davidson, *Liberation of Guiné*, p. 25.
14. Quoted in Davidson, *op. cit.*, p. 90.
15. Davidson, *op. cit.*, p. 21.
16. Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation*, (Boston, 1969), p. viii.

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