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Coloniality, Westphalian Sovereignty, and Flag Design: The Francophone African Case

by Steven A. Knowlton

Vexillology encompasses the study of flags from their grandest moments—leading the troops in victorious battle, or raised high on an independence day—to the most picayune of details, such as the proper Pantone Matching System standard for a flag's colors. Sometimes it is the tiny details of vexillology that can be quite revealing—if patterns are found in them. This paper takes as its starting point a survey of flag proportions.

While the independent states of the world assign to their flags many different ratios of height to width, flag proportions are not randomly distributed.

Instead, the proportions of the flags of colonizing countries exert a powerful influence on post-colonial flags, even when those flags of independence bear no other graphic resemblance to their predecessors. For example, the unusual ratio of the United States flag, 10:19, is found in only two other national flags: the Federated States of Micronesia and the Marshall Islands—both former U.S. possessions. The British preference for flags in proportions of 1:2 has been even more influential, as countries with designs as distinct as Canada, Dominica and the Seychelles have all retained the proportions of the Union Flag. The Soviet Union also flew flags whose length was double their height, and those proportions have been carried forward by many former Soviet republics. In a remarkable instance, Moldova, whose flag is clearly intended as one of many cultural links with Romania, preserved Soviet ratios even though Romania uses proportions of 2:3. Romania's proportions, in turn, are the same as those of the French tricolor, upon which the Romanian flag was modeled (figure 1).

Based on the distribution of proportions among all national flags, any given flag should have a 26% likelihood of having a ratio of 1:2, and a 44% likelihood of having a ratio of 2:3. However, among former Soviet Socialist Republics (SSRs), 50% of flags share the old Soviet ratio; and among former British colonies, 43% share the British ratio. Among former French colonies, 88% have the same ratio as the *tricolore* (table 1); of particular note, all the former French colonies in Africa have flags with the same proportions as the French flag.[1] The persistence of this element of flag design is an

intriguing clue to some of the considerations that motivated the design of flags for post-colonial states in which a national identity is formed through what Kwame Anthony Appiah calls a "complicated negotiation of cultures."[2]

Figure 1. Flags of Moldova, Romania, and France, with proportions labeled.

The question of why flag ratios of the colonizing powers persist so prevalently in their former colonies is interesting in its own right, but also raises further questions. For example, why do former colonies use flags at all, when in many places flags had not been used as political symbols prior to colonization? And further, why do so many post-colonial flags resemble very strongly the flags of the colonizing powers, particularly in the case of former French colonies in West Africa? This paper proposes a combination of technical, psychosocial, and politico-symbolic explanations for these phenomena.

Ratio	Overall Distribition	Distribution among former S.S.R.s	Distribution among former colonies
1:2	26%	50%	43%
2:3	44%		88%

Table 1. Likelihood of a flag having a given set of proportions. Source: Compiled from data in the Flags of the World website, http://www.crwflags.com/fotw/flags/index.html)

On the technical side, French colonial policy had the purpose and effect of undermining local textile industries in favor of shifting cloth manufacturing to the colonizing country for resale in the colonies.[3] It was likely that mass-produced flags for newly independent states were ordered from flag manufacturers in France. When creating specifications for the new flags, bureaucrats faced with numerous challenges of setting up an independent post-colonial government may have found it easier to proceed with the assumption that the new flags would have the same proportions as the French flag, requiring fewer adjustments on the part of French flagmakers.

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Perhaps more important was the presence of French colonial administrators during the flag design process. In the 1950s, the French government prepared to relinquish its rule over sub-Saharan African colonies and negotiated limited self-rule with leaders in each of its colonies. Those territories held as "mandates" under the League of Nations and "trusteeships" under the United Nations—Togo and Cameroon—were the first to adopt flags of their own, by 1957. Throughout 1959, the remaining parts of French West Africa—Côte d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast), Dahomey (now Benin), Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, and Upper Volta (now Burkina Faso)—adopted flags in preparation for independence, which came in 1960.[4] A similar process occurred in the former colonies of French Equatorial Africa—Central African Republic, Chad, Congo (Brazzaville), and Gabon (figure 2). The sole exception was the Republic of Guinea. In 1958, the voters of Guinea had rejected a referendum, held throughout the French colonies, on the proposition that France and its colonies should be united in a "French Community." Consequently, Guinea was declared independent without any time to prepare for transition to post-French governance; the Guinean flag was revealed a month later.[5]

It is understandable that legislatures preparing the symbols of post-colonial states while still under the military occupation of the French government would defer to the standards of the colonial power. Many of the flags are "an obvious echo of the French flag in basic elements and proportions."[6] Of the twelve flags, all share the flag proportions of France, and five of them are vertical tricolors.

Africans subjected to colonial rule did not uniformly reject the culture and aesthetics of their occupiers. Sabelo Ndlovu-Gatsheni notes a phenomenon called "coloniality": "colonial modernity interfered with African modes of knowing, social meaning-making, imagining, seeing and knowledge of production, and [replaced them] with Eurocentric epistemologies."[7] It was particularly common for Africans educated in European-run schools to embrace European modes of thought and reference European standards for African social structures—and those European-educated Africans were often the leaders of anti-colonial movements and thus flag designers for new states. Coloniality leads a person in a French colony, when thinking of a flag, to gravitate toward flags on a French pattern. In the answering of the question, "what should a flag look like?," many of the leaders of French colonies clearly decided the answer should be, "like the French flag."

A broader question arises from this discussion, however. Why were flags desirable for post-colonial African states? Louis Meka Meka notes that among the first issues considered by the government of Cameroon was "'symbols without which, the identity of the State would have been deemed

Figure 2. (top row) Flags of Guinea Source: Getty; Senegal Source: Getty; Mali Source: USA Today; Chad Source: The World Weekly; (bottom row) Côte d'Ivoire Source: Getty; Benin Source: http://beninthere-donethat.blogspot.com; Cameroon Source: The World Weekly.

incomplete': the flag, the anthem, and the motto."[8] Similarly, among the first acts of the government of Central African Republic was creation of its new flag. In other cases, flags were not chosen until shortly before independence day; this was due not to failure to recognize a flag's importance, but rather to lengthy deliberative processes. The Chadian assembly, for example, debated 85 separate designs.[10]

It is clear that the new states of Africa recognized flags as vital to their legitimacy in the eyes of their citizens and the world—as do, in fact, all states. Flags, however, have not always served that purpose in Africa. While some pre-colonial African states did use flags, others relied on different devices as symbols of state sovereignty and authority. Ashanti, for example, regarded the Golden Stool of its monarch with a reverence similar to that of Americans for the United States flag.[11] Earlier generations of Ethiopian armies marched under "a cross like the ones carried in a procession by parishioners."[12] It is conceivable that a polity assuming a status of independence and sovereignty might choose to forego a flag and adopt some other visual marker of its status. And yet, none has. Furthermore, almost every independent state has a flag modeled on the European style of rectangular flags. As Nepal's flag demonstrates, there are many shapes and patterns which could be used for a flag. Figure 3 shows the diversity of styles available to flag designers.

One might expect that newly independent states would eschew those European-styled symbols of sovereignty such as flags and arms. After all, why should the ways of the oppressor be perpetuated? And in some ways, states that have become independent after the first wave of decolonization have moved farther from traditional European designs. As Don Healy notes, flags adopted since the 1970s have foregone the traditional elements of cantons and vertical or horizontal stripes, and instead have displayed a proliferation of diagonal stripes, circles, and complex charges.[13] But many of the flags

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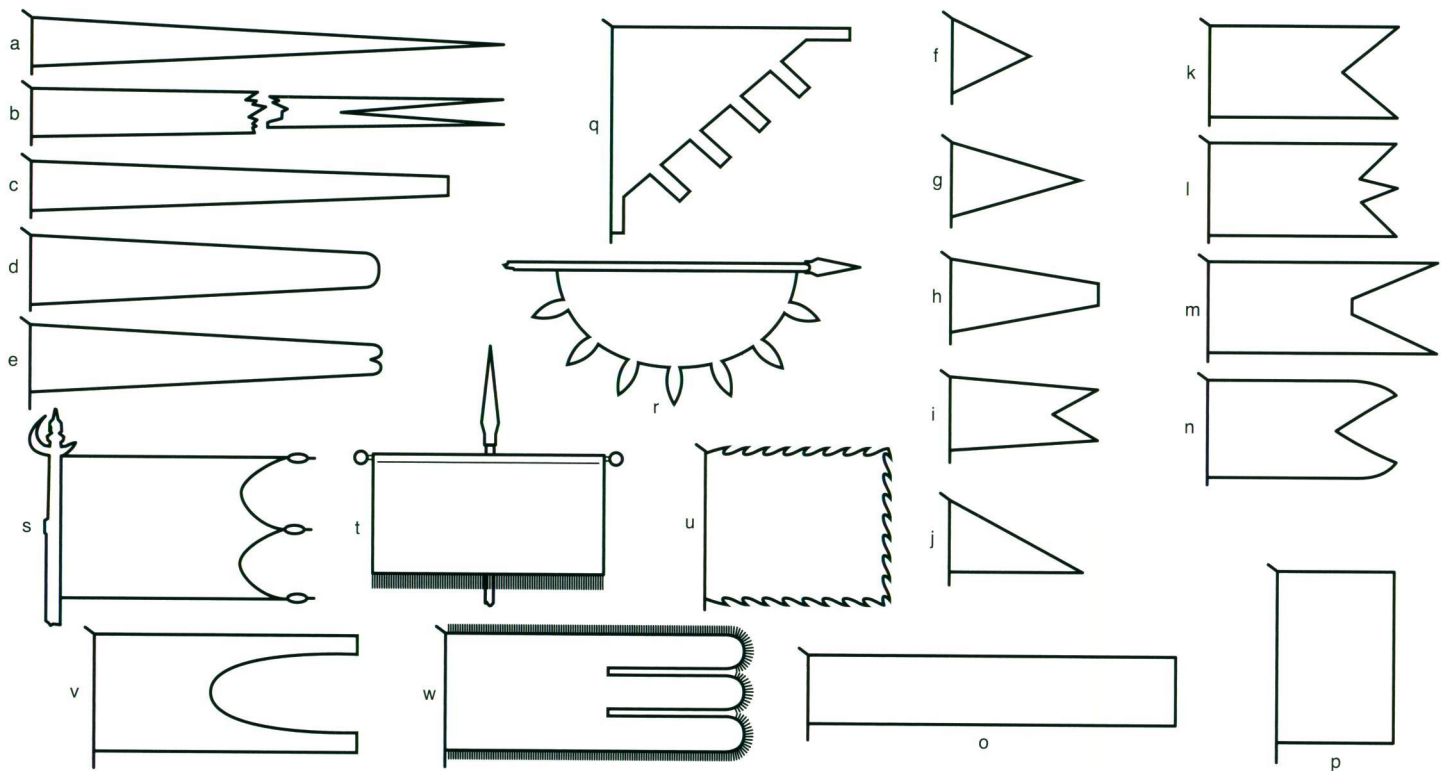l'Association nord-américaine de vexillologie

Figure 3. Non-standard flag shapes: a, b, c, d, e are 'pennants'; h, i are 'broad pennants'; f, g, j are triangular flags; k, l, m, n are swallowtails; the proportions of 'o' are 4:1; those of 'p' are 1:2; q, r are Viking flags; s is the flag of the Bukharan nation; t is a Roman vexillum; u is the 1943-45 edition of the Azad Hind flag; v is the flag of Imam Shamyi of Daghestan; and w is the royal 'oriflamme' of the Kings of France. Source: Sasha R. Weitman, "National Flags: A Sociological Overview," *Semiotica* 8, no. 4 [1973]).

adopted in the late 1950s, especially in French colonies, are closely patterned after the colonizer's flags. There are, it appears, multiple motivations for adopting flags for African states that follow European patterns.

A question to consider is, what value does a flag have for an independent state? Sasha Weitman notes that a flag serves a number of purposes for a state. As any symbol would, it serves as a visual reminder to its citizens of the state's existence as an "indestructible, immortal" entity entitled to reverence and obedience. But a flag specifically is essential to a state's international status. Because other states have flags, new states must also have flags in order to present a distinct identity to the world. More essentially, most flags conform to the established standard of rectangular shape and a limited color palette. By doing so, the flags communicate to other states the message that the new entity is part of the community of independent states.[14]

Conformation to the European model of flag design is required because of the world order imposed by Europeans upon the rest of the globe during the age of colonization. Throughout history, societies have varied in the ways they have organized their governance. In some systems, varying levels of authority between village leaders, aristocrats, and kings or emperors may lead to tension or conflict.

Post-Renaissance Europe fought wars over questions of which authority, the Holy Roman Emperor or a local prince, could impose religion on the people of a territory. After the horrific Thirty Years War that consumed Germany, the Peace of Westphalia was signed in 1648. Under its terms, a notion now called "Westphalian sovereignty" became the standard for international relations among European states. The defining characteristic of Westphalian sovereignty is that the government of a state has "supreme authority within its jurisdiction" and "sole authority in its external relations with other states." States are recognized as having the right to pursue their own interests in negotiation with other powers, and to administer internal affairs free from interference by other states.[16] In cases of war, a state may surrender its sovereignty when conquered by an enemy.

Pre-colonial African states had varying understandings of sovereignty. Some, such as the kingdom of Dahomey, exhibited centralized administration that would be familiar to Europeans, even to the extent that when it conquered neighboring states it extinguished all elements of local rule.[17] On the other hand, the several emirates ruled by the Sokoto caliphate controlled defense of their borders but were subject to the intervention of the caliph in the administration of internal affairs.[18] Despite these differences from European

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notions of sovereignty, however, African states almost always chose to resist when confronted with European attempts to dominate them. Adu Boahen notes, "The issue at stake was not short-term or long-term advantages but rather the fundamental question of his land and his sovereignty, and it is precisely because of this that virtually all African polities, centralized and non-centralized alike, sooner or later chose to maintain or defend or try to regain their sovereignty."[19]

Colonialism, especially as practiced during the "Scramble for Africa" between 1881 and 1914, was the abrogation of sovereignty. European powers used a variety of legal statuses, calling them "protectorates," "trust territories," and "crown colonies," to justify their control over the external affairs and the internal administration of states that had formerly enjoyed rule by their own inhabitants. Regardless of the legal trappings, colonialism meant that the European powers could dictate economic and administrative policy on internal affairs, and involve their colonies in wars with foreign powers.

As leaders of the colonies preparing for independence considered the tasks that their flags and other state symbols would be required to perform, two challenges may have loomed largest. First, the symbols would be necessary for the work of nation-building. Second, the symbols would be a vital tool is asserting Westphalian sovereignty of the newly independent states.

Regarding nation-building, the reader may have noted that this paper has to this point used the word "state" to identify a top-level polity. While in lay usage, the words "country" or "nation" may seem acceptable synonyms, political scientists are careful to distinguish a nation from a state. A state is the government exercising exclusive dominion over a defined territory. A nation, on the other hand, is what Benedict Anderson calls "an imagined community." The members of the community perceive themselves as having some relationship with others who share the nationality—even if they live thousands of miles apart and will never meet. Furthermore, there are perceived limits to the community – not everyone is eligible to be part of the nation.[20] As Wilbur Zelinsky summarized, "A nation, for practical purposes, is a tribe of people… who believe they possess a set of historical and cultural traditions that place them apart. A modern state is a recent invention, a lofty, impersonal abstraction that is fleshed out by a government."[21]

Traditional limits of national identity may have included shared language or shared religion, but nationalism is also seen in pluralistic states such as the United States or Indonesia. In the European model, as states expanded, one method of inculcating a sense of shared nationality was to impose the language or religion of the majority populace upon residents of outlying areas.[22] Nationalism need not be coterminous

with the boundaries of a state—for example, many Québécois feel themselves to constitute a nation, and the provincial parliament is called the National Assembly of Québec, and their flag is "the national emblem."[23] When a state governs a people who feel a shared sense of nationality, a "nation-state" is created.

Leaders of emerging African states felt an imperative to build strong states, and felt that a sense of national identity would serve that purpose. The necessity of a strong state with a sense of nationality was for the governments to enjoy "autonomy vis-à-vis the interests of the social groups that make up a country in order for the state to perform its developmental role."[24] Those "social groups," however, constituted the prime difficulty in establishing nation-states in West Africa, as they constituted nationalities which had enjoyed greater or lesser degrees of sovereignty prior to colonization and still commanded the loyalty of members of their imagined communities. Their sense of community was rooted in "myths of origin, the ideologies of kingship and the oral histories of migrations and conquests."[25] The colonizing powers had paid little heed to the boundaries of those nations when drawing the borders of colonies to suit their own purposes. For example, Mandinka people were divided among seven colonies.

The colonies becoming independent states retained the boundaries drawn by colonial powers, and contained a populace of several nationalities, with none dominant enough to create a sense of nationality on the European model of expansion of culture from the center. The use of symbols, including flags, was an attempt to create an alternate sense of nationality corresponding to the new state. Jonathan Matusitz has noted that "whenever a flag is present, ideology is present."[26] Flags can even "constitute their own reality," by expressing "solidarity" among those whom it represents.[27]

The flag as a fundamental tool of nationality is touched upon by Sékou Touré, the first president of independent Guinea (figure 4). Reflecting upon the flag of his state, he noted, "Like every other independent state in the world Guinea has adopted a flag… The [colors] call on the citizens of the Republic of Guinea to love their flag and always defend the national honor which it incarnates… the people demand that it express their common pride as it waves in the breeze."[28] The flag, in Touré's estimation, offers an object of loyalty that supersedes national feeling among Fula, Mandinka, Susu, or Kissi.

A second strategy for inculcating national feeling in newly formed states is also reflected in the design of many of the newly created flags. Touré notes that "the colors of Guinea are the same as those of the African state of Ghana… The identity of choice of colors indicates that the Republic of

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Guinea always considers it necessary to continue the political struggle for the realization of the unity of Africa."[29] The colors of Ghana, Guinea, and most of the former French colonies were green, yellow, and red—known as the "Pan-African" colors, and derived from the flag of Ethiopia, the only indigenous African state to resist the first wave of colonialism. The choice of Pan-African colors was a deliberate link to a movement intended to counter the pre-colonial nationalistic feelings hindering the development of nation-states. The proponents of Pan-Africanism agreed that the entirety of Africa should aim for "African nationalism to replace the tribalism of the past: a concept of African loyalty wider than 'the nation' to transcend tribal and territorial affiliations."[30]

Figure 4. Sékou Touré. Source: Ousmane Soumaoro, Flickr.
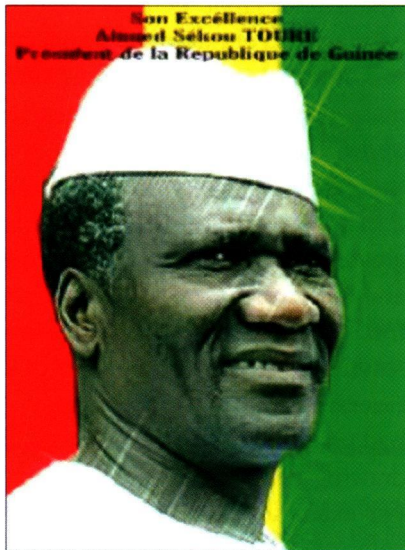
Use of Pan-African colors in the pre-eminent symbols of the new states encouraged loyalty toward a wider African nationality, of which the new state was a representative. Even in cases where Pan-African colors were not used, the color scheme still reflected a desire to overcome pre-colonial nationalistic loyalties. In both Côte d'Ivoire and Niger, the flags were designed with orange, white, and green stripes. The colors are those of a political party, Rassemblement Démocratique Africain (African Democratic Assembly), which worked throughout the several colonies of French West Africa to pursue independence.[31]

Aside from their usefulness in cultivating nationalism for newly created states, flags for independent African nations staked a claim to Westphalian sovereignty for the new polities. The principles of territorial inviolability and self-governance that are the hallmarks of sovereignty are essential to statehood everywhere, but in the case of post-colonial governments they are crucial to creating nations from those states. In the absence of imagined shared origins or common languages, the citizens of the new states needed outward symbols by which to mark their new shared identity, which was defined solely by the borders drawn around the state in which they lived. Lacking myths, songs, or fictive kinship to draw them together, the citizens of newly created states required symbols of sovereignty to define their country as a place where "territorial nationality" could prevail. Crawford Young notes, "The iconography of

currency, stamps, and flags communicated a silent message of state presence… Thus placed in the citizen's pocket, the state could hardly fail to also find a way to his or her head."[32]

A place among independent states required a flag—recall Weitman's observation that by using a flag, new states declared their similarity to existing states. It is worth questioning why the newly formed states chose flags that so resembled European design. It is not difficult to imagine flags using indigenous textile patterns, along the lines of the Byelorussian S.S.R. flag of that day, or the later flags of Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan (figure 5). In West African textile design, certain patterns are even associated with the sovereignty of their wearers, such as the *aso ipo* cloth worn by leaders of the Bunu, or *kente* cloth worn by Akan royalty (figure 6).[33]

However, all the states formed out of French West Africa chose rectangular flags made with simple designs of large blocks of monochromatic cloth. The only charges were occasional stars. The choice of those European-style flags was influenced by several factors, all of which contributed to a prevailing notion of "what a flag looks like."

As mentioned, the influence of the "coloniality" mindset was strong among the European-educated leaders of post-independence states. The use of rectangular, striped flags, along with other European symbols such as heraldic-styled state arms, official titles modeled on European governments (such as "President"), and European-styled military uniforms were a not-unexpected outcome of decisions made by leaders who identified in important ways with European notions of culture and status.

Furthermore, the European model of a rectangular flag with simple shapes was calculated to command the respect of the international community. It was a technique first used in Africa by the Ethiopian emperor Menelik II in 1897. Menelik's empire had used a distinctively shaped flag—composed of "three separate pennants in the colors of red, yellow, and green, flown together on a single pole in no established order."[34] But as Menilek sought to exert his sovereignty against encroachments by French expeditions, he took the advice of a visiting Frenchman and designed a flag along European lines to command the respect of the colonial armies.

Furthermore, in 1960 the range of colors and designs seen in national flags was limited. Well over half the world's flags were "simple horizontal or vertical stripes."[35] And only seven colors were used at all: red, blue, green, yellow, orange, black, and white. A new state asserting its sovereignty might seek the conformity of a simple tricolor in order to assert the "equality and normalcy" of the new state among the powers of the existing world order.[36]

The presence of stars on the new flags is another clue to the aspirational nature of the flags. Eran Shalev has pointed

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out that stars are symbols of sovereignty in European tradition dating back to the eighteenth century.[37] The first stellated African flag was that of Ghana, whose black star was inspired by the Black Star Line shipping company operated

Figure 5. Flags with indigenous textile patterns (clockwise from upper left): Belarus Source: Gerard Flores, Flickr; Kazakhstan Source: Arijit Sen, Flickr; Turkmenistan Source: The Sloths, Flickr.

Figure 6. West African textiles denoting sovereignty: (above) aso ipo cloth used as drapery Source: HartCottageQuilts.com;

(left) Kente cloth worn by Presidents Jerry Rawlings of Ghana and Bill Clinton of the United States Source: dupsies.com.

in the 1920s under the auspices of Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association, widely seen as an important step toward increased self-determination among black people throughout the world.[38] Although his own flag had no star, Touré in Guinea found it a powerful symbol of sovereignty: "It was not many years ago that there shone in the sky of Africa only a single star of liberty…. Liberation each brought forth a further star to better light for other countries still under foreign domination the program of anti-imperialist action."[39] The stars of Senegal, Cameroon, and Central African Republic (as well as, perhaps, Niger's sun, which is really just our local star), call upon well-known European tropes, placed in an African context, to use their flags as another means of symbolizing the sovereignty of their state and future nation.

The colonial enterprise was one which brought not only economic distress and political subjugation to West Africa, but also an understanding of the use of flags to construct nationalism, project sovereignty, and stake a claim to equality among the states of the world. It is not surprising, then, that post-colonial flags should have so much in common with the flags of occupying powers. The flags of French West Africa have the same purposes as the French flag—so why should they not resemble it?

Note: this paper is an expansion of ideas originally presented at the 48th Annual Meeting of NAVA on October 5, 2014 in New Orleans, Louisiana.

[1] Some sources claim that Niger's flag has a ratio of 6:7; however, observation of Nigerien flags in use shows that they typically are in proportions of 2:3. See the discussion on *Flags of the World* at http://www.crwflags.com/fotw/flags/ne.html.

[2] Kwame Anthony Appiah, "Language, Race, and the Legacies of the British Empire," in *Black Experience and the Empire*, ed. Philip D. Morgan and Sean Hawkins (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 387.

[3] See, among others, Richard Roberts, "French Colonialism, Imported Technology, and the Handicraft Textile Industry in the Western Sudan, 1898-1918," *Journal of Economic History* 47, no. 2 (1987): 461-72; Bonnie Campbell, "Neocolonialism, Economic Dependence and Political Change: A Case Study of Cotton and Textile Production in the Ivory Coast 1960 to 1970," *Review of African Political Economy* 2 (1975): 36-53.

[4] Whitney Smith, "*La Communauté* and Its Symbols," *Flag Bulletin* 37, no. 5 (1998): 174-84.

[5] Sékou Touré, "The Flag of Guinea," *Flag Bulletin* 24, no. 6 (1985): 213n1.

[6] Louis Maxime Meka Meka, "The Flag of Cameroon—Its Creation, Significance, Evolution, and Display," *NAVA News* 215 (2012): 2.

[7] Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, *Coloniality of Power in Postcolonial Africa: Myths of Decolonization* (Dakar: Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa, 2013), 8.

[8] Meka Meka, "The Flag of Cameroon," 2.

[9] Smith, "*La Communauté*," 176.

[10] "New Flags of 1960," *Time*, December 5, 1960: 23.

[11] A. Kyerematen, "The Royal Stools of Ashanti," *Africa* 39 (1969): 1-10.

[12] Manoel Barradas, *Tractatus Tres Historico-Geographici: A Seventeenth Century Historical and Geographical Account of Tigray, Ethiopia*, trans. Elizabet Filleul (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1996), 70.

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[13] Don Healy, "Current Flag Design Trends," *Flag Bulletin* 25, no. 6 (1986): 211-14; Don Healy, "Modern Flag Design Trends," *Flag Bulletin* 38 (1989): 168-75.

[14] Sasha R. Weitman, "National Flags: A Sociological Overview," *Semiotica* 8, no. 4 (1973): 328-67.

[15] Robert H. Jackson, *Quasi-States: Sovereignty, International Relations, and the Third World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 32.

[16] Henry Kissinger, *World Order* (New York: Penguin, 2014), 6-7.

[17] Kola Folayan, "Dahomey before the French Conquest," *Tarikh* 5, no. 1 (1974): 17-30.

[18] Obaro Ikime, "The Establishment of Indirect Rule in Northern Nigeria," *Tarikh* 3, no. 3 (1970): 1-15.

[19] A. Adu Boahen, "Africa and the Colonial Challenge," in *General History of Africa*, vol. 7, Africa under Colonial Domination 1880-1935, ed. A. Adu Boahen (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 10.

[20] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed. (New York: Verso, 1991), 6-9.

[21] Wilbur Zelinsky, "The Flag's a Religion," *NAVA News* 18, no. 5 (1985): 1. Zelinsky made a lengthy study of the use of symbols, including flags, in nation- and state-formation within the United States in *Nation to State: The Shifting Symbolic Foundations of American Nationalism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988).

[22] David D. Laitin, *Language Repertoires and State Construction in Africa* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 12-14.

[23] *Regulation Respecting the Flag of Québec*, quoted in Patrice de la Brosse, "Flag Display and Precedence in Québec," *Raven* 13 (2006): 50

[24] Jeremiah I. Dibua, "State," in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of African Thought*, ed. F. Abiola Irele and Biodun Jeyifo, vol. 2 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 358.

[25] Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja, *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Africa: Essays in Contemporary Politics* (London: Zed Books, 1987), 45.

[26] Jonathan Matusitz, "Vexillology, or How Flags Speak," *International Journal of Applied Semiotics* 5, no. 1-2 (2007): 209.

[27] Ibid, 206-207.

[28] Touré, "The Flag of Guinea," 209, 213.

[29] Ibid, 209.

[30] Colin Legum, *Pan-Africanism: A Short Political Guide* (New York: Frederick Praeger, 1962), 38.

[31] *Complete Flags of the World*, relaunched 6th ed. (New York: DK Publishing, 2014), 116, 128

[32] Crawford Young, *The Postcolonial State in Africa: Fifty Years of Independence, 1960-2010* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2012), 311.

[33] Lisa Aronson, "West Africa," in *Encyclopedia of World Dress and Fashion*, vol. 1, Africa, ed. Joanne B. Eicher and Doran H. Ross (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 147; Bridget O. J. Omatseye and Kingsley O. Emeriewen, "An Appraisal of the Aesthetic Dimension to the African Philosophy of Cloth," *Journal of Language, Technology & Entrepreneurship in Africa* 3, no 2 (2012): 61.

[34] Whitney Smith, "Twentieth Century Flags and Arms of Ethiopia," *Flag Bulletin* 35, no. 4 (1996): 150

[35] Weitman, "National Flags," 341.

[36] Weitman, "National Flags," 338. Don Healy notes a parallel development in ensigns of former British colonies, which often retained the British pattern of a national flag in the canton and a field of white, blue, or red to distinguish whether the ship is military-, government-, or merchant-operated: "The three quarters that compose the area outside the canton do not serve to identify any particular nation, but rather, the type of vessel using the flag.... Nationhood and sovereignty are derived solely from the canton... By adopting the functional use of the fly at sea, the emerging nation asserts its equality with its former ruler..." "Modern Flag Design Trends – At Sea," *NAVA News* 21, no. 1 (January/February 1988): 4.

[37] Eran Shalev, "'A Republic Amidst the Stars': Political Astronomy and the Intellectual Origins of the Stars and Stripes," *Journal of the Early Republic* 31, no. 1 (2011): 40-73

[38] William George Crampton, "Marcus Garvey and the Rasta Colours," in *Report of the 13th International Congress of Vexillology, Melbourne, 1989*, 169-180 (Melbourne: Flag Society of Australia, 1993).

[39] Touré, "The Flag of Guinea," 209.

NAVA 51 Annual Meeting & 50th Anniversary Celebration • Boston • 13–15 October 2017

It's not too late to sign up and still get the best hotel rates!

Join us where NAVA was organized in 1967—historic downtown Boston. It is our hope that this "going back to where it all started" will inspire us to come together and renew the camaraderie that should be at the center of our scientific yet joyful occupation, at the same time as it helps us come to terms with the recent passing of our irreplaceable founder, Dr. Whitney Smith.

Get NAVA 51 details at nava.org/all-annual-meetings/nava-51-2017. Register for NAVA 51 at http://nava.org/shop, then register directly with the Omni Parker House using the NAVA link at https://www.omnihotels.com/hotels/boston-parker-house/meetings/nava-golden-anniversary.

Come to Boston from October 13–15, 2017 to enjoy the talks from fellow NAVA members while we celebrate NAVA's 50th anniversary. And don't forget to leave time to explore historic Boston.
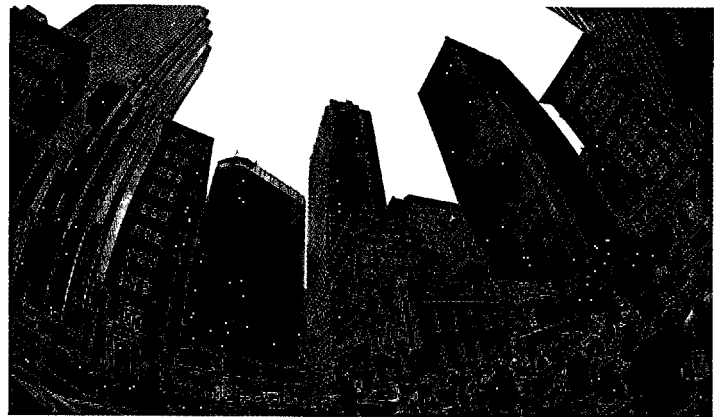
Above: Historic downtown Boston with a fisheye lens, across from the Old State House. Source: CristalArt, Flickr. Left: Omni Parker House. Source: Omni Hotels.