

THE AFRICAN NETTLE: DILEMMAS OF AN EMERGING CONTINENT

Edited by Frank S. Meyer. John Day Company, New York, 1965.
Pp. 253. Price \$5.00.

This symposium by a dozen writers and scholars is moderately conservative in its approach to the problems, plight and prospects of Africa south of the Sahara. Its title, of course, derives from *Henry IV, Part 1*: "Out of this nettle, danger, we pluck this flower, safety."

The African nettle is its human resources or, more specifically, the capabilities of the Negro race. Is there a major shortfall in intelligence? Is this sufficiently large to preclude civilized and viable Negro self-governing societies? Does it militate against the likelihood that any independent sub-Saharan Negro state will be able to utilize the thought processes, techniques, institutions and technology of the modern world? Do the psychic qualities of the Negro—and in particular the paroxysmal nature of his thought processes, which J. C. Carothers likened to the results of prefrontal lobotomy—make the prospects for democracy and due process dim in the extreme wherever Black republics exist?

These questions, which seem to be the very essence of the African problem, are not even raised by the distinguished authors of the symposium under review. They have refused to grasp the nettle, preferring to join the fashionable make-believe of ethnic equality in brain potential, preferring to pretend that the African problem has nothing to do with differences in the ability of the races. (They do, however, stress the impact of race in its secondary aspects: the Black man's continual awareness of his *négritude*, his sense of outrage at real or fancied injuries inflicted by Whites, his use of race oppression and race discrimination as crutches and alibis for his own failures).

Nevertheless, *The African Nettle* is a thoughtful and valuable book. Skilful editing by Frank S. Meyer has resulted in contributions of an unusually high level. The articles by P. T. Bauer, Elspeth Huxley, Gilbert Comte, Sir Roy Welensky and Thomas Molnar deserve special mention. There is an intelligent awareness of certain basic ingredients in the African mess which liberal, egalitarian writers habitually ignore or deny. These include: (1) The "newly emerging African nations" are not nations at all, but mere congeries of warring tribes. (2) Colonialism brought the only era of economic, political, social and cultural advance for the African Negro that he has ever known. (3) The wellbeing of the Negro masses is greatest wherever they are in closest contact with Whites and with White civilization. (4) For this reason, among others, South Africa is the African region of greatest Negro progress. (This did not prevent the editor, however, from publishing two articles hostile to *apartheid* and none defending it). (5) There is no such thing as "African democracy;" we are dealing with primitive one-man dictatorships. (6) The United Nations, abetted in this effort by the U.S. Government (particularly under the late J. F. Kennedy), has applied massive pressure to accelerate White withdrawal regardless of whether the Blacks were ready for or capable of independence. This policy, motivated by hostility to the West, greed and pro-communist attitudes, has caused massacres and expropriation of the White élite in Africa, senseless civil wars, corrupt and dictatorial régimes, general disintegration of civilization in Africa and in some instances reversion to the savage state that antedated the White presence.

Before closing this review, I should like to take issue with the editor and authors of this symposium on two points. In his generally excellent introduction, Frank S. Meyer accepts Professor P. T. Bauer's view of African development and quotes Bauer. It is one thing to agree with Meyer that Negro Africa has made much greater progress under free enter-

prise than under state planning. It is a very different matter to assert that the African Negroes are capable of economic foresight and of becoming competent entrepreneurs. Bauer's examples of the success of small farm cultivation of export crops by Negro peasants in various parts of British West Africa are to the point, but he does not stress the great amount of White energy and direction that were needed to divert these people from traditional subsistence agriculture.

The symposium is marred by the inclusion of an emotional and misleading article on the Bantustans by Paul Giniewski. The author supports the Bantustans while abhorring *apartheid*, viewing the former as separate national development and the latter as racism. Since he believes that "the Negro race is capable of all the levels and all the nuances of the European cultures," his tendency to identify the development of Jewish communities in mandated Palestine (which served as the germ of the state of Israel) with the Bantustans is perhaps understandable. But it is not sound anthropology. And while Giniewski asserts that the African Negro has yet to produce his Einsteins, it seems predictable that we shall have to wait many centuries for them.

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THE HITTITES

By O. R. Gurney. Penguin Books, Baltimore, 1961. Pp. 240.
Price \$1.45.

In this book the author traces the history of the Hittites from the beginnings of the Kingdom in Anatolia down to the later Neo-Hittite Kingdoms of Syria. The Hittite state came into existence around 1760 B.C. At this time a group of Indo-European invaders imposed themselves upon the indigenous peoples of Anatolia. These indigenous people were known as Hattians and it was from them that the Hittite state took the name, the Land of Hatti. The Hittites proper called the language of the indigenes Hattili. Its relation to other tongues, as well as the race of its speakers, is unknown. The Hittites proper spoke an Indo-European language, though of neither the centum nor the satem groups. Their racial type seems to have been a combination of Nordic and Dinaric, the Nordic type being especially predominant in the upper class.

Gurney points out that "The civilization of the Hittites was most advanced in those aspects which can be referred to the ruling caste, namely in military genius, political organization, legislation, and the administration of justice." This further confirms the identity of the Hittites as Indo-Europeans.

The Hittites were masters of warfare, their principal force being the chariot corps. The Hittite chariot contained three men: the driver, the defender and the attacker. Further, the kings were brilliant strategists, often taking their adversaries completely by surprise. During the Empire period the Land of Hatti was one of the great world powers. It was only chance occurrence that saved the Egyptians, under Ramses II, from being routed by the Hittites, under Muwatallis, at the Battle of Kadesh in 1286 B.C.

Around 1190 B.C. the Hittite Empire as such came to an end. Yet for another five centuries the civilization persisted in the Neo-Hittite Kingdoms of Syria. The language and religion of these Neo-Hittites was not that of the earlier Hittites, nor any of the Syrian peoples. Syria was probably conquered by a people from one of the former Hittite provinces, and the Neo-Hittite states finally came to an end in the eighth century B.C. under the heel of the conquering Assyrians.

Though the deciphering of the Hittite scripts, both cuneiform and hiero-