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The Editor (Sales)
TINABANTU
P.O. Box 352
Plumstead, 7800
Cape Town, South Africa
e-mail: casas@casas.co.za
fax no. +27-21-762-4452

The Centre for Advanced Studies of African Society (CASAS)
P.O. Box 352
Plumstead
Cape Town
7800 South Africa

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Editorial

The appearance of this journal is the fruit of several years of reflection and discussion with various people about the need to create such a platform for Africa and its diaspora. The idea is that *Tinabantu* will initially appear twice a year, and will serve as a forum for the consideration of diverse views, ideas and opinions reflecting differing philosophical and political dispositions, but committed to the maintenance of high intellectual standards and a recognition of the historical and cultural unity of Africa and its diaspora.

The Editor and founder of this journal is of the view that particularly important, at this juncture of the history of Africa, is the need to create a cultural movement which is Africanist in orientation and which takes the best out of Africa's historical and cultural record and uses these as bases for the development of African society. The idea is that the much discussed notion of an African Renaissance, to be realisable, would need to be premised on the cultural and linguistic foundations of African society. It is therefore ironical that we start this journal in a non-African language. It is a compromise we for obvious reasons make with a heavy heart at this stage. For the same reasons we will be happy to publish also papers in French, which meet the requirements, we have spelt out above. If we receive contributions in major African languages like Swahili, Pulaar/Fulful or Hausa etc. we shall publish them.

This first issue like all subsequent issues contains articles and papers with views attributable only to the authors. The Editor does not necessarily share or support the views of the various authors. We hope that this maiden issue will serve to attract contributions.

Kwesi Kwaa Prah
Cape Town
May 2002

Fela as a Conscious Musical Caliban

Sola Olorunyomi

Fela Kuti's choice of a language of musical communication has always coincided with his perception of who his primary audience is and, even here, we find convergence with the three broad Fanonean stages he underwent. He sang mainly in English in that phase of his high modernist mode of African-American jazz music with tracks like *My Baby Don't Love Me* and *Everyday I got My Blues*; in Yoruba, during the reactive ethno-nationalist phase (having experienced racism in the West); and pidgin, once Pan-Africanism became his main ideological focus.

His version of Pidgin English strove towards the Midwest variant spoken in the Sapele-Warri areas of Delta State of Nigeria — generally regarded as the standard Nigerian Pidgin (henceforth NP). The convenience of this variant for other users of the form, in the vortex of a politically charged language situation like Nigeria's, cannot be divorced from its emergence among minority nationalities. Its cultural dominance over politically dominating larger language groups such as Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba poly-nationalities is not new in history. A most ready example is the cultural incorporation of Fulfude by Hausa language in spite of the fact that Fulfude was the language of the conquering Fulani nationality after the 1804 Jihad in northern Nigeria.

This is not suggesting however that the NP both at Kalakuta Republic[1] (Fela's residence) and the Afrika Shrine[2] (His place of worship and nightspot) does not hold promise for the inflection of many other variants in Nigeria and, particularly, from Anglophone West Africa. On the contrary, research conducted in the sub region reveals a symbiosis of loan words derived from those sources and the broadcast of registers of Fela's cultural practice in these countries. Constantly referencing Ghanaian folk forms in several lyrics, a country he considered his spiritual home, he sings entirely in Twi in the track *"Fefe Na Eye Fe"*. "Ichibuchi", "Tiafi", "Sakarame", "Saluga" and "Gunusi", used to describe the traditional method of faeces disposal in various parts of the continent, are only a few of the breadth of such borrowings.

This is hardly surprising for, apart from the role of the mass media in popularizing a deviant cultural practice (especially outside the shores of Nigeria), Kalakuta in its heydays was residence to "every African escaping persecution,"[3] a truly micro Pan-African commune. An important factor that aids the normative role that NP plays in the commune is the existence of a creolised pidgin among the younger generation from the Midwest (mainly Urhobo, Itsekiri and Ijaw) for whom pidgin is a first language, spoken as a primary language in a manner that pidgin is not among the numerical majority Yoruba nationality in the Lagos area. I find the suggestions of Ben Elugbe and Augusta Omamor on the subject quite persuasive, both on the count that "Pidgin is decidedly a recent development in metropolitan Lagos" and the fact that "there

was linguistic heterogeneity all along the coast, except for the Yoruba part.[4]

For a language that first emerged from contact established with trading and colonizing missions in the Niger Delta, and later transferred to the 'interior' Midwest, Fela's role in further broadcasting the language was preceded by first 'domesticating' it in Lagos, and transforming it (along with other composers) into a valid medium for serious musical composition. By using pidgin to contest the 'airspace' of the linguistic (English) code of officialdom, he gave prestige to it and helped in transforming it into a prominent language of the broadcast medium. Being the official language of the commune, this status came to confer a privilege on the variant, which others aspired towards as a means of gaining the social exclusivity and identity against official culture, which the Republic typifies. This is in many respects similar to the manner in which Rastafarians and other sub cultural groups use language as an "effective means of resisting assimilation and preventing infiltration by members of the dominant groups.[5] While it is correct that pidgin has become a language used by all classes in the Nigerian society, as Elugbe and Omamor assert, it is indisputable that there is a higher dexterity of use, with a variety of coded decoys and hidden transcripts, among persons for whom it is the only medium of communication. This is more so for a community of artists constantly targeted by a repressive state. This dexterity is manifested at the various levels of Kalakuta speech act, ranging the lexical-conceptual structure of their tenses, morphological realization patterns in verb phrases and an increased syntactisation in word order. Surely, there are codes for identifying security agents, demobilizing enemies and generally 'surviving', which I believe disclosing will not only further endanger these habitués but also amount to an abuse of confidence generously granted a researcher.

The structural pattern of the more open transcript noticeable in the song lyrics conforms to the general usage of NP in a number of ways. Fela uses the repeated adjective qualifier to intensify meaning as in the lines "Na *so so* water for Africa," and "*Good good* things e go dey happen" of *Original Suffer Head* and *Pansa Pansa* respectively. Juxtaposed against the abundance of water so described, he says there is not a drop for citizens to drink. In *Alagbon Close*, he narrates the ordeal of the suspect against whom the police "... go bring dem dog to *bite bite* you." Not done, the police "...don butt my head with dem gun." In capturing this brutality against his person, Fela transforms a noun (butt, of a gun) into a verb, a process. The interrogative clause "No be" in BONN anticipates an affirmation:

No be outside police dey?
No be outside soja dey?
No be outside court dem dey?
No be outside magistrate dey?
No be outside dem kill dem students?
No be outside all dis dey happen?

The affirmation is eventually given by the chorus: *Na craze world* (it is a crazy world), implying the extent to which the public sphere has been circumscribed in spite of the presumption of living in a free ('outside') world.

Like Victor Jara, the Chilean folk singer persecuted for his alternative vision, Fela is essentially a deconstructionist whose creative spiel is at its best when subverting standard norms and coinages. He stretches to the limit, the centrifugal potential of language through his re-coinage of standard acronyms and words in order to subvert actual and perceived

hegemonic constructs. During *Yabbis* sessions in the Shrine, in between the night's musical performance, he either heightens the trivial into a grotesque, laughable proportion, or deflates presumed formal categories such that they are removed of their larger-than-life image and re-cloaked in their ordinary, human dimensions. In other words, he creates a burlesque scenario with which he demythologizes the dominant discourse of the ruling elite while at the same time empowering the margins. In a country where the military uniform is dreaded by citizens as a semiotic of power symbolized in the repressive State, Fela, in *Fear Not For Man*, emboldens the margin to deride it reminding that:

Uniform na cloth
Na tailor dey sew am
A (military) uniform is also made of normal threads
(And just as well) sewn by a tailor

Playing his usual Hermes, he alters each of these standard acronyms into novel utterance:

1. *VIP (Very Important Person)*
   Vagabonds in Power
2. *BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation)*
   Big Blind Country
3. *BONN (West German city)*
   Beast of No Nation
4. *SAP (Structural Adjustment Programme)*
   Suck African People
5. *US (United States of America)*
   Underground System
6. *COP (as in police)*
   Country of Pain

While he taints in the negative such references that appear to reinforce institutions or concepts of (authoritarian) power, he cloaks in positive registers others that pertain to his vision of African humanism; hence:

7 *MASS (as in the political mass)*
Movement Against Second Slavery, and Music Against Second Slavery

8. *MOP (as in cleaning up)*
   Movement of the People

These ribald practices constitute the basis of yabbis at the Shrine, where Fela highlights otherness: that silent but potential alternative in every discourse. The linguistic potential for this has its background in his Yoruba tone language, where any utterance beyond the phoneme can become victim of a tricky polysemy. Hence, Àbújá, the nation's capital, differently inflected in this game of playful distortion could become Àbùjá, a short cut.

In what must now appear like an irony, given that he died of an aids related complication, Fela had said that the developing world was bound to contract AIDS once it started taking aid from the developed world. In another breath, he could not understand the whole fuss about the emergence of violent cults in Nigerian universities given that the institutions are structured along a 'Fa-Culty' system, which in Yoruba language will translate as 'invitation to cult.' Germany, he says, can hardly be blamed for the world wars of this century since the Yoruba rendition of the name 'Jà-mà-ni', with a silent (i)-initial position, means 'it is about war'. When officials of the recording label, Motown arrived in Lagos to sign a contract with Fela, he suddenly gave an impossible condition that had frustrated the business executives. Once they left, Fela explained to fans and acolytes at the Shrine that he reneged when he suddenly realized the Yoruba etymology of 'Mo-ta-oùn' (Motown), which is, "I have pawned my voice!"

All the jive 'bout 'Popular Culture'.

By describing Afro beat as a popular music we may not necessarily be stating the obvious, because there has been a major confusion in clarifying such related but different terms like

'popular', 'mass', 'folk' and 'people's' art. As a result of the ideological inflection assumed in the discourse of some of the forms, a watertight definition has become all the more difficult. Karin Barber had partially alluded to this in noting that "there is a vast domain of cultural production which cannot be classified as either 'traditional' or 'elite', as 'oral' or 'literate', as 'indigenous' or 'western' in inspiration, because it straddles and dissolves these distinctions.[6] Stuart Hall and Paddy Whannel attempt to distinguish between 'folk', 'popular' and 'mass' art. The identification of popular art as an interest of study, for them, is itself informed by the significant difference observable between the form and folk artistic production in the same way that written literature was predicated on oral literature. The main distinction they make between folk art and popular art is that, unlike the latter, folk art is a pre-industrial variant of popular art. Barber complements this view in identifying another level of difference in the fact that, generally, unlike in folk music proper, popular music is produced by professionals and they are mainly in the urban centres. With mass art, there is general agreement that it shares the modern medium of communication with the popular arts; unlike popular art however, it is considered a product of mass mechanical reproduction beside being potentially politically reactionary as Theodore Ardono has argued.[7] To further clarify the popular art debate, Karin Barber isolates two features of the same phenomenon: "emanating from" or "belonging to" the people; while the first aspect is concerned with the origin, the latter emphasizes the interest it serves. Even this has received a sharp critique by Dapo Olorunyomi who notes "there is nothing in the internal character of the text to assist in the definition, yet the externality of this reality cannot provide a sufficient basis for its definition." [8]

While the distinction between folk art and popular art is fairly clear, the same cannot be said of popular art and mass art. Since their features could overlap on a continuum rather than through any fundamental lateral shift, to insist on a rigid taxonomy may only impoverish the debate. It is perhaps more helpful to identify the features identified with each. For instance, even while in general decline, elements of the folk survive till to date, and supposedly mass forms such as the Nigerian Juju and Fuji music, and the 'junk' press have demonstrated the potential of popular forms in specific contexts. In the aftermath of the annulment of the general elections of 1993 by General Ibrahim Babangida, the 'junk' press — so called because of a preoccupation for breezy, personality slant of story ideas momentarily joined the pro-democracy advocacy media offensive, contrary to the general public's perception of their traditional practice. The later Fuji music too, in spite of its conservative ideological character has, through a secularizing hybridity, blunted the sharp edges of the Islamic orthodoxy from which it emerged. It must be added though that these are only tentative gestures and a more compelling reason for such a shift could also be the promise of an expanded income space in articulating the sensibilities of such diverse persuasions.

Many factors inform the classification of Fela's musical practice as popular (music) art, as distinct from mass (music) art. An important distinction usually alluded to in the debate is the relationship between the artist and his audience. Mass art, as it were, presumably panders to the whims of its clientele and does not engage them in problematising their social situations in a manner that popular art does. By refusing to act the commercial art superstar, or what Michael Veal refers to as "substituting the

myth of art as a communal enterprise in place of the Western myth of the concert hall, or of the artist as separate, other-worldly sphere,"[9] Fela was invariably re-enacting the subversive griot of ancient times, with the burden of delivering his art uncorrupted by material lure. Rather than pander to the whims of even his audience, he challenged their claims, *yabbed* their assumptions and constantly invited them to a debate. Quite often at the African Shrine when the audience would request that a particular number be played, he could counter after a mild debate that, "I used to play that kind of stuff when I was blind like you now are." [10]

The morbid fear expressed by successive Nigerian governments against a popular music expression like Afrobeat is not unique; countries as diverse as the Soviet Union and Canada had embarked on such ventures. A popular music research conducted by James Lull[11] reveals that while the Chinese government embraces Western classical music as part of its 'spiritual modernization', it strictly limits importation of youth oriented popular music to avoid the sort of incidence in which China's most famous western-style domestic pop musician, Ciu Jan, became a central figure in the ideological and cultural uprising for "freedom and democracy" in the late 1980s.[12] While the Nigerian state forbade the airing of Fela's Afrobeat (even after his death, only a select few 'harmless' numbers can be aired), it actively encouraged other mass music forms like Juju through generous allocation of air time and patronage, mainly because, unlike Afrobeat, Juju does not challenge its ideological assumptions or the elite project to "reproduce...its structure of dominance."[13] Herein lies the uniqueness of Fela's Afrobeat form which, even as a popular musical idiom, exhibits a rare capacity to locate society's sense of place, time and event, while also challenging the patronage structure on all these fronts.

NOTES

1. Fela Anikulapo-Kuti's communal residence, created out of the desire to accommodate "every African escaping persecution." The Nigerian authorities ceaselessly attacked this attempt to foist this autonomous republic within the confines of its nation state.
2. Fela's place of worship and nightspot.
3. This was Fela's conception of his extended household.
4. Ben Elugbe, and Augusta Omamor. *Nigerian Pidgin.* (Ibadan: Heinemann, 1991. p. 12.)
5. See Dick Hebridge, "Reggae, Rastas and Rudies" in James, Curran, et. al. (ed.) *Mass Communication and Society.* (London: Edward Arnold Ltd, 1977. p. 427.)
6. Karin Barber, ed. in introduction to *Readings in African Popular Art.* (Oxford and Bloomington: James Currey, 1997. p. 2.)
7. See ibid and Michael Etherton, *The Development of African Drama.* (London: Hutchinson and Co., 1982. p. 361.)
8. Dapo Olorunyomi, "Towards an Aesthetic of Popular Art." Ph.D. Graduate Seminar, Ilorin. 1991. Indeed, a rather timely caution has been given by others who observe that the designation 'popular culture' may be misleading in so far as it carried the implication that popular culture is as coherent and uniform as the official culture.
9. Cite Michael Veal, "And After a Continentalist," in *Glendora: African Quarterly on the Arts.* (Vol.2 No.2. 1997. p. 051.)
10. In other words, he saw his music as a dynamic process, which over the period became increasingly spiritual.
11. See introduction to James Lull's "Popular Music and Communication," in James Lull (ed.) *Popular Music and Communication.* (Newbury Park: Sage Publications, 1992. p.14.)
12. Ibid.
13. Cite Stuart Hall, "Culture, the Media and the 'Ideological Effect' ", in James Curran, et. al. (ed.) *Mass Communication and Society.* (London: Edward Arnold Ltd, 1977.)

Apartheid's Prison

Raymond Suttner

Perhaps I should clarify what this input is and is not. I was asked to talk about my prison experiences. This is therefore not a detached, criminological or penological analysis of the character of political imprisonment in South Africa. It is what I have experienced myself. But I try to combine the personal with some reflection on what it has meant over and above how I experienced it. This paper is constructed mainly from extracts out of my forthcoming book, *In Apartheid's Prison.*

This was very hard to write. Not only because the experiences were difficult but also because there is a culture amongst South African political prisoners which discourages acknowledging and talking about their experiences as pain. It may seem strange that I say this when so many books have been written about experiences in South African prisons – books by former president Mandela and many others, which I cite at the end of this paper. There have been a lot of books, but there remain a lot of silences. The silences relate to what has and has not been written about and who has been able to tell their own story.

One thing that struck me about my own writing experience is that it took me some time to convince myself that my story was worth telling, that it would interest others that it was worth recording. In our liberation movement someone like Nelson Mandela has towered over all of us and has set an example of modesty. He has not made much of his 27 years in prison so some of us thought, why should we, who served what one of my prison comrades termed 'parking tickets' of much shorter periods, be complaining or even telling our story?

There is a reasoning here that is not found with other traumas. If you are assaulted you do not say 'thank heavens I was only assaulted and not murdered.' You expect people to understand the assault as a crime and that you have experienced a trauma. That much is acknowledged. For some reason there is a state of mind with regard to political imprisonment, which is different. It is a variant of the phrase 'cowboys never cry' – political prisoners do not complain or even think it is right to talk about their experiences. Yet we are a damaged country, many people are wounded by their experiences. We need to speak about these and try to understand what has happened.

Another reason why I felt some hesitation about writing is that – what may surprise many observers – there is not always a receptive climate to books on imprisonment. Many reviewers of prison books start with a weary sigh as if to say – if they do not say it literally: 'not another prison book'. In a sense we have a denial of the significance of our experience and a denial of the social

importance of what was done to people over many years, sometimes in isolation, sometimes with ill-treatment including assault, sometimes without access to reading materials or news. It is also a denial of some of the sacrifices and resilience that made April 1994 possible. I will give just one example. There was a recent review of the re-issue of Indres Naidoo's book on Robben Island, where the reviewer remarked that the book lacked intellectual depth. Now, besides the arrogance displayed, what this betrays is an unwillingness to acknowledge the character of the experience that Indres Naidoo underwent, to understand it in its own terms. Indres was not describing an intellectual odyssey in his book, but harsh conditions that he and other prisoners survived.

We all have different stories. We all have different backgrounds that led us to take the steps that led us into prison. We all have similar and distinct ways of coping with torture, solitary confinement and other privations.

The factors that go to develop the moral consciousness of an individual enabling that person to cope, to withstand torture or alternatively, leading such a person to collapse and betray comrades or simply to give up attempting to survive – these are a species of adaptation or human choice in adversity. Unfortunately not all of us have been able to write our stories. In some cases, there is a reluctance to speak. In others, there is a problem with writing, relating to the inferior education that black people have received. We need to find ways of telling the stories of those who are still silent.

My account: part of the story of the difficult years

In my own case, I came to the liberation movement as a white South African youth who had grown up in a liberal family. At home we were taught that all people should be treated with dignity and respect. We rejected apartheid. Perhaps we did not fully acknowledge what the liberation movement understood as emancipation of black people, but I saw no incompatibility between the liberalism that I grew up with and the ideals for which Nelson Mandela went to jail, as I read about this in my early years at University in the 1960s.

I did not see anything incompatible with being a liberal and supporting the ANC, although I did not have the opportunity to contact the ANC because it had been banned in 1960 and the SACP, which had been banned 10 years earlier.

Nevertheless, through my own experience, I came to feel that there was a certain futility in pursuing liberal politics since it amounted to protest politics and the South African government made it clear that it paid no attention to such protests. What was the practical value in this form of politics? It was morally right but I came to believe that liberalism did not have a strategy for change.

In the late 1960s I won a scholarship to study overseas and I then used the opportunity to link up with the liberation movement. I wanted to engage in political activities that would make a difference and I concluded that this entailed illegal, underground work. I was nevertheless worried about my preparation for the eventuality of arrest. I had witnessed in the early 1960s how one of my university lecturers had been arrested and surrendered in police detention and became a traveling state witness, giving evidence against his former colleagues. I did not want this to happen to me. I went through a period of training and read a great deal to prepare myself for working underground and the possibility of

arrest and torture.

For over ten years now, people in South Africa have been free to walk around wearing T-shirts signifying their loyalty to the ANC or the SACP. They may not know of or remember the time when to have contact with the liberation movement – just contact – could have led to a charge in court. Consequently, when I met up with comrades from the ANC and SACP in the late 1960s, I did not simply go over and greet them. We would follow from a distance, trying not to appear to be following one another. In chapter 2 ('Preparing') I describe this:

'[Joe Slovo and I] had a series of meetings. Joe certainly looked the part of the underground operator. And sometimes I had to "tail" him to our meeting places. We took no chances, suspecting (correctly, as we now know) that there were spies and other agents of the regime operating in London. Consequently, I could never be seen with someone like Joe. We might have to get to the same destination, but we would never go together. I would follow him, but that meant not appearing to have any connection with him.

'For example, if we were in a shopping area, I would watch Joe's reflection in the shop window – so I would seem to be window-shopping, while actually watching Joe. And he might be on the other side of the street. Sometimes I would follow him, and sometimes walk ahead and watch his reflection behind me.'

I was trained in surveillance and counter-surveillance, methods for sending off concealed messages, elementary ways of setting off explosions (mainly intended for distributing pamphlets, not sabotage).

This was in 1970/71 and in June 1971 I returned to South Africa, by ship, to take up a lecturing post at the University of Natal, Durban. What were the conditions of the time?

After the ANC underground structures were smashed in South Africa in the mid-1960s, the liberation movement had very little presence within the country. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the ANC reestablished a limited underground presence, but its activities were few. The liberation movement inside the country mainly consisted of small groups or cells producing ANC or SACP literature. Underground publications were erratic, appearing occasionally in Johannesburg, Natal, or the Cape.

Underground literature was illegal. It communicated ideas and news from organisations with zero access to the conventional, officially tolerated media. Without underground literature, there were few ways South Africans could learn about the ANC and SACP. People usually had only second-hand, distorted knowledge of these organisations, which was filtered through the apartheid regime and the country's fairly compliant liberal media.

At the time, *Umkhonto we Sizwe* [The Spear of the Nation, the ANC's military wing] had not yet fired a single shot within South Africa. People feared the power of the security police. There was a sense in the 1970s, of the overwhelming power of the Apartheid State and people feared to tell others of their sympathy for the ANC. It was hoped that underground literature would become a tool around which they could organise; that it would assist people to find one another, and to build, extend and strengthen the structures of the ANC.

My brief as an underground activist was rather vague – there were no working groups or structures into which I could be integrated. This was an entirely new phase of the struggle. There was no example to follow, no one to offer advice. I had to survive on my own or not at all.

There is a certain romanticism associated with work underground. Let me disabuse readers of that assumption. This was the start of four very lonely years. Struggle is about comradeship, about sharing and co-operation with others. But I was alone. All I had were coded messages received every six weeks or so. The liberation movement was nonracial and fought for an equal society, but I never had the chance to work with black people.

Our anthem was *Nkosi si-kelele i' Afrika* (God bless Africa), but I never sang it, until I was in jail with comrades who were on death row in the late 1970s, in Pretoria Maximum Security Prison.

The main aim of the struggle was the liberation of the black majority, in particular the African people, led by the working class, but I had no political contact with Africans, or much with working people. I was committed to the struggle but there was no nod of agreement from the oppressed majority around me in Durban.

There had been no network for me to contact on my return from England. I was 'my own boss' and if I made mistakes there was no one to say, 'Do something else'. Or, if I hit on some good ideas, there was no one to say, 'Yes, stick to that one.'

Underground work can take a variety of forms – all of which are very stressful and extract a toll on one's personal life. Everything essential – what one is, what one feels, and what is most significant in one's life, must be concealed. You reveal only the inessential, in order to safeguard the most meaningful aspects of your being. Working undercover makes it difficult to form or maintain intimate relations.

Mine was a very isolated existence. I longed for communications from my contacts in exile. Their brief coded messages, written in 'invisible ink', were a lifeline, filling me with new resolve. Within the stringent limits of our situation, my contacts did what they could to support me. In the meantime, I did my best to maintain my morale and my cover.

My work consisted mainly in painstakingly producing pamphlets through a duplicating machine, getting rid of the defective copies, which was quite difficult but necessary because they were incriminating, and then posting the pamphlets.

Posting might seem a simple matter, but it was not. At first, I would bundle them into suitcases at night and dump them all into a couple of large postboxes. But as Ronnie Kasrils and Joe Slovo correctly pointed out when I saw them in 1974, if the postal authorities or police saw anything suspicious in one envelope, they could easily collect the lot. It was better to post the pamphlets in a number of separate boxes.

So I gradually came to know the whereabouts of just about every postbox in Durban and Pietermaritzburg. I used a variety of envelopes, varied the typing of the addresses and staggered the times that I posted the envelopes, to make it harder for the pamphlets to be discovered.

I was not a natural for working underground. There was nothing in my previous life that had prepared me. I had never broken the law

in any way. I was also unaccustomed to secrecy. I was used to sharing what I valued, speaking about matters that pleased or upset me.

I was also in no way prepared for *consistent* law breaking, a programme that must be carefully managed if it is to continue. Breaking the law means one sets oneself up against those who devote themselves to one's capture. Had I worked in a group, we would have regularly evaluated what we were doing, and assessed what the police might have been doing to combat us. I had no such reference group and consequently it was easy to make serious mistakes.

Throughout the years when I was involved in the struggle, we often heard the ubiquitous slogan or cliché: 'victory is certain'. Perhaps it was certain – but it didn't always look that way in the 1970s! In our underground units, we tried simply to maintain a flickering presence, and to continue the work of the liberation movement.

Arrest and torture

The main thing about my experience as a political prisoner is that it was a total experience. Imprisoning someone is an attempt, in varying degrees successful, to take full control of the life of a prisoner. As I say in chapter 1 ('In Police Hands') immediately after my first arrest in 1975:

'Now, I was in police hands. This intrusion into my privacy was to become characteristic of my life as a political prisoner for the long years to follow. From the moment I was arrested, there was nothing about me that the state did not want to know or have access to. There was nothing I could shut away from the police and say this is "not your business". The law now gave them access to every corner of my life.'

South Africa had laws against assault, but they provided no protection for someone in my situation. I knew I could be held for long periods without scrutiny, without access to lawyers or other people from 'outside'. Numerous court cases, at every level of the judiciary, had confirmed exclusive access of the police to detainees, even where assaults were alleged. And, as I expected, and soon found out for myself, they did abuse their powers.

The events of that night marked a crucial turning point. From that moment on, I passed from being an independent person and fell under direct control of the South African Apartheid State. In the years that followed, which saw me in and out of jail and detention, I would not be free of police intrusions. Even now – when this chapter in our history is over – I have habits that persist from this period of constant surveillance.

Trying to maintain a semblance of control

When I was arrested on June 17, 1975, I was caught red-handed and my own 'guilt', in terms of the South African law of the time, was easy to establish. The question really was how to alert two comrades with whom I had started to work a few months earlier, so they could escape.

The rule in these situations was that if a member of an underground unit was arrested, anyone else working with that person should immediately leave the country. One's job, on being arrested, was not to hold out indefinitely but to try and find a way of alerting the others and hold out sufficiently long for them to escape.

The police knew their time was limited. Consequently, they would torture me fairly early in my detention.

I did not think of it then, but I held a certain power over them. I alone had the information they wanted. Nothing they had could substitute in value for that. There was nothing they could give me that could persuade me to part with the information. I had no kinship with the torturers. There were no bonds whatsoever. There was nothing they could persuade me to do of my own free will.

I tried to use what powers I had to avoid telling them anything. I also tried to determine the timing of my torture

They did not offer me my freedom, or any concessions if I were to provide the information – which I would not have accepted in any case. They sometimes said, but without much conviction, that I would feel much better if I told the full truth. And they stressed how my career as a university lecturer was ruined, as if that might induce me to talk.

The police questioned me in teams, two or three at a time, with some police hanging around in the background, and sometimes butting in with obscenities.

It was clear to me that I could not give them what they wanted. I continually said I did not wish to be rude but I would not answer any more questions. Captain van Zyl, one of the heads of the investigation, replied that I *was* being *very* rude. I suspected that at some point they would 'burst', either losing patience or becoming, or pretending to be, enraged. The assaults would then begin.

I wanted, as far as possible, to remain master of the situation. I said I was not going to talk and they might just as well take me to be tortured. I hoped that I could provoke it *then* rather than be taken by surprise. Captain Wessels replied laughing: 'You believe what you read in the newspapers?'

It must have been in the early hours of the morning that Warrant Officer A Taylor, a very tall man, entered without his glasses, wearing a white butcher's apron, carrying handcuffs. He took off my glasses and put handcuffs on my hands, saying quietly that I would now be taught a lesson. He then blindfolded me and led me to a lift, which went up a floor or two.

The torture through the application of electric shocks to my genitals then started. They seemed aware of the danger of electric shocks. They wanted me to know that damage or death could result from such torture. A person whom I thought was Captain Dreyer said: 'This is bad for your heart, you know.' They said that my mother and sister had been arrested in Johannesburg – while they continued to torture me, presumably so I would associate torture not only with myself but with my family, who were supposedly also being held. I knew these were tricks used to break a detainee's resolve and did not fall for them. At one point they said: 'We must put our kaffirs onto him. Tell him to speak!'

Then an African voice shouted: 'Tell the truth man! Tell the truth!'

When they stopped, Captain Dreyer said: 'Let's see if you can put on your socks.' I could not. I felt very disoriented. He said: 'I'll put them on for you'. And he did this.

When they stopped the shocks, it was the morning of the next day and interrogation continued.

In the evening I was taken to a police station and booked in and urged to rest and think about things and prepare to 'feel better by telling them everything'. I knew I would not be left to rest and after a short while I was collected by a very aggressive group of younger Security Police, led by Taylor, for

further questioning and torture.

What was it like to be in the hands of the SA security police? (In chapter 5, 'We'll give that Jew a hiding!') I try to answer this:

'...You know they have already tortured and killed many people. You know this precludes any sense of human kinship between you and them. You are surrounded by these people, and have no access to family, friends or lawyers. The security police are a law unto themselves. They decide when and what you eat, whether you are allowed books to read, and how much exercise you get.'

'These people guard you. They stand in front of you, at your side, and behind you. You never know what they are going to do next, if a blow is about to fall and from what direction it may come.'

'There is nothing you can do, nothing unobserved by them, nothing you can do without their permission. What limited washing is allowed is a luxury, and they will not permit you to wash until they have finished their intensive interrogation and torture. Sleep is out of the question – until they have completed their business.'

'There is much crudity, and violence is always in the air. Yet the police also try to maintain a contradictory self-image. They would like to appear to be civil servants who would serve under any government. They are just doing their job. That is why there is an elaborate pretence that torture and other violence is practiced without the knowledge of the senior officers, or while they are off-duty, since they would never approve of it.'

Police 'kinship' with me

Anti-Semitism was an obsession with the police. For them, being Jewish was a crime in itself, predisposing a person to political 'criminality' and particularly to Communism.

What then did their threat of putting the 'kaffirs' on to me really mean?

Despite my perception that there was no kinship between the torturers and myself, the white torturers, in their reference to the 'kaffirs', may have assumed a kinship with me.

I may have been in jail for taking up the struggle of the black people, but they still claimed me as a fellow white who would fear, as they did, the thought of 'the kaffirs', the barbarians at the gate, the hordes waiting to be let loose on 'us'. With my white captors, reason allegedly had a place. What they wished to convey to me was that there was a threat that went beyond reason: and this was the 'kaffirs', a type of primeval force.

'The kaffirs' did not refer to sophisticated police, who turned the electricity on and off, usually stopping just short of mortal danger. Such behaviour was supposedly rational. The violence of 'the kaffirs' was, in contrast, a basic, unthinking violence.

In a sense, the police were responding to my polite refusal to talk, by saying that I should tell them what they wanted to know quickly – before the chance of rational communication became impossible.

So what we have, on the one hand, is a sense of *dissociation* from me as 'a Jewish Communist' – representing to the police, the worst of the worst type of white treachery and betrayal. But on the other hand, we also have *association.* The police calculated that their racist associations between Africans and primeval violence would strike a chord with a fellow white.

Uncertainty

I had prepared for detention. Yet, in detention, uncertainty is of the essence. There is a large unknown. One does not know what is going to happen. One knows it will be terrible, but there is great anxiety because of unawareness of what that entails. People say that every detention is different. It may be long. It may result in a trial. It may not. It may entail torture. It may not. But it is always traumatic. Even when one has been tortured, one does not know whether it is over, when the torturers will come back and what they will do next time.

Awaiting trial

After the interrogation was completed I was charged and tried. In a sense, I was gradually coming to understand how my life was changing. After returning from my first court appearance, I was taken to prison.

I had never seen a door as massive and heavy as the steel one that shut behind me in Durban Central Prison. It shocked me in a way that the loudly crashing doors in detention had failed to do. There was something very final about the way it closed.

This door was at once a physical barrier to movement and symbolic of a change in my life. My previous life was now excluded, part of the 'outside'. In the years that lay ahead, my life now belonged to the 'inside'.

Normally, we close doors to provide personal security, comfort and safety. Behind the door of one's home there is usually warmth, harmony and contentment. A prison door, in contrast, locks you into a world that strips you of your dignity. Here, comfort is absent and there is no personal privacy. There is also a constant barrage of unwelcome sounds.

Being in prison does not come naturally to anyone. The concrete floors and walls and steel surroundings are alienating, and a cell is quite unlike the home of any person, rich or poor. Although one is 'inside' one always feels like an 'outsider'.

That is why, at first, I experienced prison life as if I were an outsider looking in. On one level, I accepted that I was a political prisoner. In fact, I was proud of it. But part of me could never accept the 'prisoner' tag, or having been thrown in jail because of what I stood for.

The prison was all grey and steel. These two words define the textures, the materials and colours I would have to deal with for a long time. In prison, there is little you want to touch or look at.

Although not yet a sentenced prisoner, I started to get a glimpse of what lay ahead of me. I saw the various ways in which prison rules try to rob prisoners of their individuality. There were constant invasions of privacy and attacks on the dignity of prisoners. One little thing that immediately struck me was the 'Judas hole' on the door. Any passer-by could look into my cell whenever it took his fancy and sometimes other [common law] prisoners would do so, and shout obscenities at me. I felt, then, a peculiar sense of powerlessness. I could not see much of the outside from inside the cell, but anyone looking in could see as much as they liked and deprive me of any semblance of privacy. It was sometimes quite intimidating to have a person I could not see shouting threats at me from outside the cell.

From early on I noticed the prison noises, the occasional silences, broken by terrible noises, the banging of steel doors, jingling of keys, shouting and swearing of warders. No prison official speaks softly. Officers would shout at warders and warders always shouted at

prisoners.

Sleep was difficult, since the young warders on patrol did not bother to be quiet. When they looked into my cell at night, they would switch on the light long enough to wake me and then go away. Sometimes a young warder would just stand around, apparently aimlessly, but lightly jingling his keys, enough to cause considerable irritation and make me realize how frayed my nerves were.

On trial

In the liberation movement we had very clear ideas about how freedom fighters should conduct themselves in court. This is not to say that everyone abided by this. But our view was that you should not beg for mercy but proudly defend your beliefs. My statement to the court included: 'I am not the first person, nor the last, to break the law for moral reasons.' I realise that the Court may feel that I should have shown more respect for legality. Normally, I would show this respect. I would consider it wrong to break laws that serve the community. But I have acted against laws that do not serve the majority of South Africans, laws that inculcate hostility between our people and preclude the tolerance and co-operation that is necessary to a contented and peaceful community.

'For this, I will go to prison. But I cannot accept that it is wrong to act, as I have done, for freedom and equality, for an end to racial discrimination and poverty. I have acted in the interests of the overwhelming majority of our people. I am confident that I have their support.'

A politically motivated defence tended to be prejudicial to the personal interests of the accused. It made it harder to get out of jail and may have increased the length of our sentences. It tended to make certain types of legal defence impossible. In some cases, in order to safeguard our organisations or security, we had to conceal some of what might have freed us from jail.[1]

There were some things I just could not say, even if they reduced my sentence, because they may have reflected negatively on the liberation movement. I first experienced this while an accused person; and then again in the 1980s, when applying for release from detention during the state of emergency. To some extent, we sometimes aided the process of legal conviction because we were unable to advance arguments to free us.

Naturally, my statement did not impress the judge, who in passing sentence said:

'There is no question of his succumbing to sudden temptation or pressure....I consider that his reasons for breaking the law, even if sincerely held, affords little basis for mitigation of sentence. I have no doubt that many terrorists all over the world who have killed innocent people by the indiscriminate use of explosives claim that they were morally justified in so doing, but such conduct cannot be tolerated in a civilized community. And the motives of the terrorists are of minor importance when deciding upon an appropriate sentence, because the requirements of law and order are paramount.

Similarly, a man like the accused, who promotes revolutionary change in South Africa and urges others, by means of widely distributed subversive pamphlets, to support that change by using every available means, including violence and guerilla warfare, cannot lay claim to special consideration from the Court because he asserts that he acted from the highest moral principles. Although the accused has not himself detonated a bomb, he had endeavoured to light a trail of

gunpowder, which he believes will cause a bomb to explode...

While it is true that he never disclosed to his colleagues, students and friends, or to his family, that he had embarked on an illegal course and, as far as we know, only recruited two assistants that does not rebound entirely to his credit. For it seems to indicate that he possessed the fanatical dedication of a resolute man who had embarked on a secret subversive course and had disciplined his life to prevent any sort of suspicion falling upon him. ...'

Serving my sentence

Immediately after my conviction on November 13, 1975 I was returned to my cell and issued with prison clothing. The next morning I was transferred to Pretoria, and started to serve my seven and a half-year sentence.

The entire framework of prison existence is aimed at turning the prisoner into a passive object – an object whose every movement, whether inside or outside his or her cell, is either determined by others or severely limited.

The prisoner's number was said by officials to be the most important part of his or her identity and there was a pre-numbering period when prisoners were deemed to have no identity at all. To be allocated a prison number was to be saved from this nothingness.

The language of prisons expressed the view of prisoners being regarded as things – as objects whose management was in the hands of warders. Thus it was common to refer to prisoners in Afrikaans – the language of the prisons and police force - as '*eenhede*', or units. You would often hear announcements directing a particular warder to come and collect his 'units'. The words used for 'collect' and 'to bring' are '*afhaal*' and '*aflaai*', and both are associated with the delivery or loading of things.

Many of the ordinary criminal prisoners conformed to these expectations. They waited for their cells to be opened for exercise – and said nothing if this was later than regulations demanded. They waited to be asked before speaking, went back to their cells when told to do so, showered at the times allowed, accepted food when it was given and ate it hot or cold, all without complaint.

As political prisoners we challenged this dehumanised concept of prisoners and the prison world and generally prevented it being applied to us.

We were very conscious of our dignity and any attempt to undermine it. We expected, and demanded, respect. If they called us we would go, but we would not run or move with undue haste. It was common for warders to shout *'Kom, kom, kom!'* at prisoners; which in English literally means 'Come, come, come!'. But in Afrikaans it sounds much harsher and more degrading. If a warder shouted this at us – and new warders would sometimes try – we would normally object to being summoned as if we were dogs. The prison regulations made reference to treating prisoners in a civil manner – as we would never fail to remind officials who deviated from this rule.

Prisoners were expected to stand to attention when speaking to an officer. Our version of being at attention was by no means a military one. We would not fawn or beg; though we adopted various stratagems to win concessions that might improve our conditions.

I came into an environment in which, after

long years of struggle, some of the conventional ways of treating prisoners had been reversed and the prisoners ran many aspects of their lives.

By the time I arrived some of the worst excesses, which had characterised the early years, described in Hugh Lewin's book, *Bandiet*, were no more. How did we relate to the boere (Afrikaans word literally meaning farmers but applied by us to white prison officials and police, whether English or Afrikaans speaking,) as we called the warders?

A type of peaceful coexistence reigned most of the time, with neither the boers nor the prisoners seeking confrontation. For our own reasons, and in order to reduce their involvement in our lives, we kept the prison clean and did most of the things expected of us. It was rare that prison officials would go around scraping their fingers on the top of doors to look for dust, as one found in other prisons. We did not polish the floors because we convinced the warders that the tiles were made of a material that did not need polish.

Through this 'balance', we managed to achieve a sense of tranquility most of the time. I remember how, during breaks from the prison workshop, we would sit with our backs to the wall in the prison yard and there was a sense of peace that I prized.

It suited both sides to reduce conflict and avoid situations where we had no option but to fight. We could not be at their throats every day. We did not have the energy for that. Conflicts drained us more than in normal life. The dullness of prison life made it harder to deal with sudden changes and it suited us to let some things pass, even when they were unjust.

Being a white political prisoner was always different from being a prisoner on Robben Island. As was the case with women prisoners, who by all accounts had a very hard time, we were always very few in number. Managing small group dynamics was very difficult.

Before I joined the others in Pretoria Local, I had been held in solitary confinement prior to trial and again in Maximum Security. I longed to be with the other prisoners. In that situation of isolation, I conjured up in my imagination some sort of idealised version of what the other political prisoners would be like. I imagined that the liberation movement comprised figures such as one finds in revolutionary novels, people who had managed to eradicate all the normal human weaknesses.

It was a rude awakening to find that many of the men that I was to spend years with possessed various habits and traits that were not only contrary to what I had imagined but were downright irritating and difficult to live with.

We were together because of our common allegiance to the liberation movement. Outside of that commonality, a great deal divided us. And personality differences often made for serious incompatibility.

We were from different generations. Our life experiences and the character of our involvement in the struggle were very different. In theory, these differences might have enriched our community, but they often led to tensions. Every individual has his or her way of coping with extreme conditions. Sometimes one person's coping mechanisms disrupted another's. Some of us required solitude at times, when others wanted company in order to deal with a difficult

situation. Some wanted to play while others were more inclined to read and study.

And the pettiness of prison life heightened these differences. Prison life comprises a number of petty interactions that make up social life. Just as people may fall out over major issues outside prison, great anger could arise over minor issues within prison. For example, how someone dried a floor, or whether or not a mop was adequately rinsed, or dishes properly cleaned, could cause ill feeling. Most of us had gone through some sort of training, but nothing prepared us for being thrown together in the way that we were – for so long, and with people we would not have chosen to be with in the normal course of events.

There is not time to go into details of the special problems we had, for example, access to news, restrictions on visits and so on. Let me conclude this section by saying that a variety of factors made for a stressful and difficult existence.

Out, then on the run

When I was released, on May 11, 1983, my mother fetched me from Pretoria Local. I was given a couple of cardboard boxes. One contained personal belongings and the other books and papers that the prison censors had not allowed me to have while in jail. In the margins were written remarks, such as 'pure Marxist formulations', which the prison censor must have jotted before handing the papers back.

I wore clothes borrowed from one of my brothers, because I did not yet have clothes of my own. We drove from Pretoria, a place I had only known from prison vans and prison walls, on to the highway to Johannesburg.

When I was released, I had at first planned to leave the country on an exit permit. Many political prisoners had left the country after serving sentences, because they immediately found themselves placed under close surveillance and heavy restrictions, and had great difficulty finding work or playing any political role.

But conditions had changed and it was no longer inevitable that I would be restricted on release. It seemed if I proceeded cautiously, that I could play some constructive role within the country.

This was a political choice. But it was also a very difficult personal one. I knew and feared the implications of the decision to remain in South Africa. I did not intend withdrawing from politics. I did not intend taking unnecessary risks, but I did foresee the possibility, indeed likelihood, of experiencing further state repression. I did not want to go back to jail. I did, in many ways, long for peace, quiet and a contented family life. I dreamed of a tranquil home life, uninterrupted by police attention or the threat of it. But, I asked myself this: If I were a black South African, without any opportunities to take up a professional career or emigrate, would I then consider withdrawing from politics?

Having been in jail once, having been tortured, I knew what might well lie in store for me. But I saw no other way. I had made my choice in the late 1960s to throw my lot in with those wanting to change South Africa. I considered it important that I, as a white person, should not demand less of myself than did my black comrades.

I was also influenced by the choices made by Joe Gqabi, the ANC militant who was, assassinated in Zimbabwe in the 1980s. He, too, had been in jail, but came out and continued to struggle, first inside the country,

until he was re-arrested; and later, after he was forced to leave. I saw very clearly that my end could be like his. I did not want that, but felt I had no alternative. The decisions were my own. The consequences flowed from what I had chosen.

For some time, I was very cautious about my political role, operating in semi-conspiratorial fashion, for fear of inviting police attention. I met with various activists and engaged in discussions, but this was with a fairly low profile.

I gradually emerged from seclusion, particularly in efforts to popularise the Freedom Charter, the unifying vision adopted at the Congress of the People in 1955. I became more and more deeply involved in the activities of the United Democratic Front, the broad organisation of anti-apartheid forces, formed in 1983.

The state decided to clamp down. When a partial state of emergency was declared in 1985 I went underground to avoid arrest.

I was in disguise. All I had learnt from Ronnie Kasrils in the 1970s, simple as it may have been, now proved of use. I had to watch out in earnest, to see whether I was being followed on foot or by car, and carefully applied what I had learned. I had to study my own habits and form an identity that appeared quite different to my normal one. I changed my walk. I combed my hair straight back and grew a very severe and ugly moustache of the type that one finds amongst prison warders. I smoked. Few people recognised me in this more extreme disguise and I escaped police detection throughout the first emergency.

There had been no safe houses prepared for me, or by me. Seldom do you know exactly when you will be forced underground. For the first few nights of the emergency, it was nightmarish, as I moved from place to place, staying with people I did not know and in circumstances that were very inconvenient and unsafe. I had to borrow a car or exchange my own car, and try to find more permanent accommodation.

It is interesting to note how many people were prepared to take the risk of offering refuge. There were many unsung heroes and heroines who, despite the dangers, gave me – and others like me – a place to stay.

In general, during the 1985/6 state of emergency, we regrouped and carried on. We escalated our activities against the regime and advanced calls that raised the level of resistance.

However, this was a period when I felt considerable fear. At the beginning of the emergency, I really did not want to be caught. When I heard the way people were being tortured, I believed I was not ready to face that again. I remember one night driving with Khehla Shubane, who was then an activist in Soweto (and now head of the Nelson Mandela Foundation). We were discussing what would happen if I was arrested. And he quite practically assured me that I would, definitely, be tortured. I did not resent his frankness, but I wondered if I still had the same single-mindedness that had carried me through my earlier detention.

Nevertheless, through applying myself to political activities, I was not obsessed with the prospect of arrest. I just carried on, causing as much trouble for the regime as I could. To do so was the policy of the ANC.

Politically, the 1980s were a very exciting time. I saw living examples of what one may call 'mass creativity', a phenomenon I had

previously known only as a phrase from books. The 1980s were a very important period in many people's political involvement. The struggles of the 1980s forced the apartheid regime to negotiate.

Back inside

The partial state of emergency was lifted in February 1986 and activists cautiously re-surfaced. However, around June, we started to be more careful again, because that was the month when the Soweto risings were commemorated and arrests could follow. I was however in an ambiguous situation. I found a fresh hiding place, but I could not go fully underground. I wanted to hold onto my job at the university and felt that I should, at the end of the first emergency, reappear at work.

I was re-arrested on 12 June 1986. I had been invited by Professor Reg Austin, now a senior executive at International IDEA in Stockholm, who was then a professor at the University of Zimbabwe, to deliver some lectures at the University. In fact, my main purpose was to meet with the ANC. I had been chased by some cars the night before my intended departure and was not sure about going. But a meeting of activists believed I should go. Unfortunately, we did not have a proper alarm and I overslept. When I arrived at the airport we had not seen the morning's newspapers that said a state of emergency would be declared that day. The police were waiting for me in the departure lounge and I was back 'inside.'

I had dreaded this moment. I was back in police hands. I wondered how I would handle it, now that I knew all of what it entailed. I asked a question of the arresting officer, Major Oosthuizen, and he answered me rudely. I immediately felt angry at being treated this way. I think that anger was also a surge of strength flowing back into me and this made me better prepared to deal with what lay ahead.

On the way back into the city, they spoke to someone on the police radio. I heard the person on the other side saying, 'Gaan jy hom 'n ding of twee wys?' (Are you going to show him a thing or two?). That is, were they going to beat me up? I said nothing. I just waited.

One of the places they took me in order to search, was my office at Wits University. Some of the police did not know how to behave in this environment. They wanted to appear different from the image we had of them – as being thugs. But on arriving at a security barrier, they simply got out, displaying their guns, and lifted the barrier. After they parked, just before going into the Law Faculty, one of the policemen came out brandishing a huge rifle. Oosthuizen, slightly embarrassed, told him this was not necessary.

They took me to my office. This is where their problems started. I am not very neat and tend to accumulate a lot of paper. There were lecturing and research notes going back to 1968. There were also political papers. The police had no idea where to start, what was relevant to their task and where this mass of papers should end up. In the meanwhile, people were knocking on the door of my office. Eventually they let in Professor June Sinclair, then Dean of the Law Faculty, and decided to bundle me out, abandoning their search.

In the passage, I told those around my office that I had heard the police say on the radio that they intended to beat me up. I said I had been tortured the last time I was in detention. I asked them to bring an interdict preventing similar assaults.

The police were furious. Oosthuizen turned to me in the car and said, 'Now we are seeing the real Raymond Suttner.' It was as if I had betrayed a sacred trust, by taking steps to avoid being tortured.

The university did bring an interdict and although the police denied they had intended to torture me they gave an undertaking not to do so. That gave me slightly more peace of mind than I would have had otherwise.

But I was not expecting to be in detention long. I thought the police were holding people like myself, just for precautionary purposes, until after June 16 and June 26 (the anniversary of the adoption of the Freedom Charter). I thought I would be out in time to resume lectures in July of that year.

In the meantime I tried to make myself at home in John Vorster Square police cells, which was not a very pleasant place. It had been specially designed to hold political detainees and had an audiovisual system whereby the police were able to monitor our every movement and sound. There were very many prisoners, but very little space to exercise and according to the regulations, which I managed to extract from the police after much argument, we were each entitled to exercise for one hour a day. It was impossible to fulfill given the lack of space and the number of detainees, each of whom was supposed to be held in solitary confinement.

But after many written complaints I was taken out to exercise. The policeman who took me out said, 'It is twenty-five to four now. You have an hour's exercise. You finish at twenty-five past four.' I thought that perhaps I had not heard correctly. I did not argue. The next day, however, he said, 'It is twenty to four now. You have until twenty past four.' So I asked myself, 'What would happen if he were to take me out at five to four, would the exercise end at five past four?' I explained that an hour was the period from 20 minutes to one particular hour until 20 minutes to the next hour that followed it – not until 20 past the first hour. He looked at me suspiciously and called another policeman 'Jacobs, kom hierso!' (Jacobs come here!). Jacobs confirmed my version.

In the beginning, there was a general state of ignorance about our conditions, the prospects of our release and how long we were likely to spend in detention. Thousands of people had been pulled in and the officials had not sorted out who would go out and who would remain. I was not interrogated at all for the first 19 days. I had expected to be interrogated immediately. But once the expectation of interrogation was removed, I used the time to rest. I just lay on the mat in the cell and reminisced about what I had done in the three years I had been out of prison – all the interesting things, as well as the errors I had made. I did a little exercise. I did not think I would be in very long.

From inside the Perspex-sealed cells, cars outside on the highway made a 'whoosh, whoosh' sound. I tried to imagine it was the sea. I felt alone and abandoned in the cell. Sometimes, the only social interaction the whole day would be rudeness from a policeman. Most of the time, I felt powerless.

During this period, many people were being held for just two weeks, although they had no idea that was the case. In fact, many only knew they were in jail, but not the provisions under which they were being held. One day, I bumped into the unionist Bashir Valli in the showers and he said to me, 'Raymond, what is this about a state of emergency?' I said, 'Yes, there is a state of emergency.' He said, 'Does this mean we will be in for long?' I

said, 'I don't know.' Bashir was out a few days later.

'Pack all your things!'

There appeared to be some irregularities in the way I had been arrested and my lawyer, Peter Harris, brought an application for release – on grounds that had led to some other detainee's release. I did not count on anything, but I had a slight hope of success. On the day I expected to hear the result of the court application, a policeman came to the door of my cell and said, "Pack all your things." I asked: "For release, or for moving to another place?" He answered: "For moving to another place."

I was moved to Diepkloof prison, into a section reserved for white prisoners, but intended to be separate from the other (criminal) prisoners. Over the two years that I spent there I was joined by up to four other detainees. But after a while they were all released and I spent 18 months in solitary confinement.

Being alone was difficult. But being with other detainees could be both supportive and stressful. The dynamics of small groups within prison are always very intense and difficult. Some comrades were determined to get by, while supporting others as much as they could. But some detainees felt a sense of despair and gave up finding ways of surviving. Instead of remaining occupied and doing things to keep up their spirits, they threw in the towel and left it to the regime to show mercy or not. When someone was not coping, it made it harder for all of the rest of the detainees. It meant that – in addition to coping yourself – you also had to carry the other person on your shoulders.

To get by, you had to do things that made life still seem meaningful. These included exercise, reading and writing, study and watching movies (which they allowed once a week). After years of prison, I was experienced with strategies for survival and applied these.

Gradually, all of the other white state-of-emergency detainees were released and I was on my own. The last to go was Tom Waspe. He was released on 10 June, 1987, the last day of the 1986/7 state of emergency. They released him in front of me, in the passage of the section of the prison where we were housed. I had known this was coming and was thus able to handle it 'without visible emotion.' In fact, I argued with the police, and that made me feel better.

They asked: 'Are you satisfied?' I said I was not. They asked why not and I said my continued detention was illegal. They asked why and I said I needed to consult my lawyer before I formulated my position to them. This continued without my conceding it was a valid re-detention.

As the months went on and on, solitary gradually wore me down. Very many letters people wrote to me never arrived. There was hardly anything getting through the prison walls. Near the end of my period in detention, the prison officials started to worry about my psychological condition. They were not concerned about my health, but worried that they might land in trouble if anything happened to me. I took advantage of the situation to apply to have a pet, confident it would succeed. I had seen how sentenced prisoners were allowed pet birds and I successfully applied to have a pet lovebird/parakeet.

One day, Sergeant Joubert, a warder who was always very kind to me, arrived with this beautiful little red-cheeked parakeet in a

shoebox. I clipped the wings so the bird could not fly away. It was then a question of training it. I held the bird and it bit me. I let it carry on biting, even though my hand was sore, just to get it used to me. After a few days, it relaxed, and spent most of its time under my tracksuit or on my shoulder. It was wonderful having this beautiful little live creature with me. Its head smelt like a baby and it had no one else in the world besides me. I called him Jail Bird or 'JB'

We bought a cage. When I put the bird inside, it would pace up and down, much like prisoners did in their cells. When it was time to sleep, I would put a towel over the cage and JB would sleep.

We were inseparable. The bird would eat out of my mouth. I used to buy granola bars and the moment the bird heard me open the packet it would stick its beak into my mouth. When I exercised, the bird would sit on my shoulder. If it were angry with me, it would retreat into my tracksuit, and sit there. If I tried to touch it, JB would bite me.

House arrest

On September 5, 1988, I was presented with a restriction order and released. Unknown to me, a police document marked 'confidential' explained why it was necessary to put me under house arrest and various other restrictions:

'He is a ... hardened activist who has made highly knowledgeable attempts through speeches, statements and publications, to encourage individuals in the Republic of South Africa to contribute to the overthrow of state power. ...SUTTNER was sentenced to seven and a half years in prison on 13 November 1975.... He maintained his political views and principles during his period of imprisonment...After his release SUTTNER continued with his activities and concentrated on advancing and propagating the Freedom Charter. SUTTNER tries hard to create an environment in the academic world, which would advance the goals of the ANC.'[2]

In the light of these factors they felt it was necessary that I be placed under house arrest and prohibited from political activities.

I came out of detention with an immediate sense of insecurity, a feeling that the police still viewed me as their prisoner and possibly in transition between one detention and another. The restrictions resulted in a form of surveillance of my life, which had a similar effect to that of detention. Every time I wanted a variation on the restriction order, or to go somewhere outside the magisterial district to which I was confined, I needed permission, in writing, from the police. They usually answered at the last moment.

At an objective level, there were very substantial differences between detention and restrictions. An impersonal official did not lock me up behind a grille at night. I could switch off my own light whenever I chose. I had the food I wanted. I could drive a car. I was surrounded by colours I had not seen in prison. I saw women and children. There were substantial differences. But I was nevertheless dealing with a continuation of trauma and stress in a different form. House arrest was a lot better than prison, but, at that particular moment in my life, it was very difficult.

On the surface, I might have seemed in reasonable shape, but I paid a price to appear this way. I survived through means similar to my period in detention. I required medication for depression and insomnia. I still experienced the tension I had felt inside prison, and had to prepare myself to deal with

my responsibilities. If I had to meet someone, I would try to plan the day in such a way that I could also fit in relaxation exercises, just in case the meeting imposed stress. I still did extensive physical exercise and continued using many of the coping mechanisms that I had employed during my prison period.

I was a free citizen but, at the same time, fell under the administrative authority of the police. I was a lawyer but I could not deal with the police on a similar basis to other lawyers. I did not grovel, but I could not relate to the police purely as a professional lawyer.

I did not abide by all my restrictions, however, and engaged in political work. Engaging in such activities was important to me, not only politically, but to my mental well-being and recovery. It was re-empowering. House arrest had an isolating effect, similar to solitary confinement. It was very hard for black comrades to visit me without attracting attention, so I found it hard to be politically involved. This, in itself, was dehumanising and depressing – in that a crucial aspect of my identity was being denied. In solitary confinement and house arrest, one concentrates on personal survival and getting by. And, insofar as one becomes increasingly inward looking, it is a de-politicizing process.

In August 1989 I decided on a more serious act of defiance, leaving the country to attend a meeting of the Organisation of African Unity, as part of a delegation of the Mass Democratic Movement. I was not discovered and went out by aircraft, spending five months outside the country. I returned, not knowing whether or not I was to be prosecuted, early in 1990. A few days later the ANC was unbanned and all restrictions were lifted. A new phase had opened.

Conclusion

I have tried to describe my choices and journey as a white South African activist who joined the liberation struggle. At the time of my initial involvement, few could have foreseen that, in the 1990s, we would be enjoying liberty from apartheid, under a government led by the ANC. I did what I believed was right. I had no idea when our struggle would succeed.

This is my own way of making sense of what happened, looking back and interpreting the past and present. It is not clear that what I did was a major factor in bringing about any decisive victory. But I like to think that I was there when the going was hard and it was difficult to be in the liberation movement. And that I helped further our cause in the dark years between the Rivonia trial and the Soweto uprising.

While writing my own book, I have been mindful of the need to help other South Africans find ways of telling their stories and of validating their experiences. In a sense, the telling of a story of imprisonment – even in post-apartheid South Africa – cannot escape the history of privilege, availability of skills and material circumstances to write and find a publisher. I am conscious of the challenge to take steps to avoid reproducing patterns in which the lives and experiences of black people are invalidated.

Apartheid could only be preserved – or brought to an end – through our individual and collective action. In telling our individual stories as whites and blacks, the larger South African story can be appreciated and our history as a whole understood.

I do not want to leave people with the impression that what I experienced was solely never-ending privation. It is true that being

imprisoned for so long meant I missed some things. I do regret not having fulfilled my potential in various careers. But my choice also brought me gains as a human being. The liberation movement gave me an opening, gave me a way of escaping from acquiescence in apartheid South Africa. In a sense, I got a fresh start in life. I felt I could not celebrate my own humanity unless I threw my weight in with the people. I was given the opportunity to realise my humanity, to be truly 'humanised'. This is something very important and irreplaceable that I gained from the struggle.

It is now 30 years since I began a political process that led me to jail, torture, re-detention and house arrest. These past three decades have been eventful ones in our country's history and the world at large. I do not think that everything I believed then remains valid today. But what was central to my involvement was not an attachment to any particular social model. My involvement was primarily in order to find a way of bettering the lives of the majority of South Africans. I like to believe that a sense of justice and commitment to this process of transformation still motivates very many people in our liberation movement.

I have undergone some changes in my perspective since those early days, as the transition has unfolded. But the basic commitment that drove me throughout this period remains. That is why I want to remain part of the building of a democratic South Africa.

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Indres Naidoo, *Island in Chains. Ten Years on Robben Island*. 2nd ed. Penguin Books. London. 2000

NOTES

1. But cf. Jeremy Seekings, *The UDF. A History of the United Democratic Front in South Africa*. 1983-1991, David Philip, Cape Town, 2000. Pp. 26-7 discussing using court records as a resource where he remarks that 'the accused themselves were not above lying if necessary to avoid conviction or mitigate sentence. ...' Certainly that did happen, but this disregards the many cases when accused lied and got higher sentences through protecting others or their organisation.
2. I am grateful to Dr Rupert Taylor for providing me with this document a few months ago. It is held in a special collection of police documents at the University of the Witwatersrand.

THE AFRO - ARAB CONFLICT IN THE 21ST CENTURY

The Racial and Religious Dimensions of the Sudanese Conflict and its Possible Ramifications in East, Central and Southern Africa in the Next Millennium[1].

Peter Adwok Nyaba[2]

I. Background

Islam, as a religion as well as culture, is a major factor in the Sudanese conflict. This is related to its self-transmutation into a vehicle for the Arabization of the African people in the Sudan since the eleventh century. The current trends of Islamic revivalism ***(tajdid)*** and reformation ***(islah)*** spearheaded by the present National Islamic Front (NIF) government, and encapsulated in its political ideology and a cultural package dubbed as ***'el tawajat el hadharia'*** (literally meaning an orientation towards Islamic civilization) is found in the promulgation of the Sudan's 1998 Islamic constitution. The introduction of this constitution has effectively made the country a ***de jure*** Islamic republic, with the strict and harsh application of the ***Islamic Sharia*** codes even against non-Muslims. These developments are all manifestations of the modern day attempts by the Arabs to re-conquer Africa.

The NIF regime, a radical wing of a pan-Arab ideology, has elevated itself to the fiduciary of realising this Arab dream. First, as a minority political force in north Sudan, in order to save a weak Arab government, it had to usurp the state in a military coup on June 30th, 1989. Since then it has thrived on war in South Sudan. It brands the Sudan People's Liberation Movement /Army (SPLM/A) as anti-Islamic and anti-Arab as bait for mobilising Arab and Muslim support worldwide. Its proclamation of ***jihad*** (holy war) against the SPLM/A was meant to draw into the war even the most liberal of the Muslims in the north. This has consequently changed the character of the conflict, making the religious dimension more conspicuous.

Secondly, the regime has promulgated and passed an Islamic Constitution, a religious platform it shares with the other northern political parties such as the Umma Party and the Democratic Unionist Party although now in opposition. The regime intends to pull the carpet from under the feet of these sectarian parties knowing perfectly well that none of them will ever attempt to change or cancel ***Allah's*** laws should they come to power. It has put the northern opposition in an awkward position, which borders on political ransom. The NIF regime seems to tell the Muslims in

opposition: *" Why are you fighting us when we have achieved what you could not in forty years?"* The positive aspect of this development is that the regime permanently and irreversibly has eschewed the usual Arab pretensions and ambiguity that Sudan is both an Arab and African country, which in practice really meant nothing.

Thirdly, the NIF regime, by a series of punitive measures against dissent and opposition, has managed to monopolise all sectors of the national economy pushing out of business and the market the traditional social base of the Umma Party and the Democratic Unionist Party, the main opposition forces in the north. It has steadily eroded the social base of the Umma Party in western and central Sudan by re-organising the Arab peoples in Dar Fur and Kordofan along an ancient Arab political and administrative hierarchy. The tribal chiefs are now known as *'Amirs'* and *'sultans'* instead of *'sheikhs'* and *'omdas'*. The national currency has been changed from the pound to *'Dinar'* in accordance with the Arab and Islamic orientation of the regime.

Fourthly, the NIF regime has adopted a political survival strategy by fomenting conflict and instability in the neighbouring countries. It actively supports Islamic and dissident groups fighting the governments in the neighbouring countries of Eritrea, Ethiopia, Egypt and Uganda. The regime supports Islamic political movements in Kenya and Somalia. It supports the Hutu rebels and the *interahamwe* against the RPF government in Rwanda and who are based in DR Congo. The NIF regime has thrown its political and military weight behind Laurent Kabila in a conflict that shattered the alliance in the Great Lakes Region that brought about the demise of Mobuto Sese Seko in 1997.

The objective of this strategy is first and foremost to destabilise, and then, where possible, assist in the overthrowing of the regimes in order to pave the way for the take over of the state by the Islamic groups in these countries. This expansionist and political survival strategy, mediated by the export of a brand of Islamic fundamentalism utilises subtle means including terrorism, drug trafficking and corruption, and aims to create a halo of satellite regimes around Khartoum as the centre of fresh Arab conquest and colonisation of Africa. This strategy is borne out in a statement by the NIF regime's chief ideologue and architect of Islamic revivalism, Dr. Hassan Abdalla el Turabi, who, as recently as February 1999, was quoted in the media as saying, *"We want to Islamise America and Arabise Africa"*. These twin objectives can only be realised in modern times, as in the ancient, by means of conquest notwithstanding the fact that the international settings have changed.

The continuation, therefore, of the NIF at the helm of power in Khartoum is most likely to escalate the war in the south, east and west of the Sudan. Should it succeed in defeating the SPLM/A and the National Democratic Alliance (NDA)[3], and break the resistance of the Africans in the Sudan, and then it can easily transform the Sudan into a springboard for the NIF's subterfuge in the countries of the Horn of Africa, the Great Lakes Region and possibly Southern Africa. The tactics of their war reveal a remarkable resemblance to those of the seventh century. These include *inter alia, scorched earth policy* and *'ethnic cleansing'* against the African people, in the South, Dar Fur, Kordofan, Blue Nile and Red Sea Hills. The war, now characterised by pillage, plunder, enslavement of the conquered of the African peoples[4] or their conversion to Islam, is reminiscent of the seventh century Arab wars of conquest in

North Africa and other parts of the world.

The NIF regime has now started to export Sudanese petroleum. This will put at its disposal huge economic and financial resources it can utilise for vigorously prosecuting the war and fomenting conflicts and wars in the neighbouring countries. Because this regime fronts for the Arab cause in the Sudan, the various Arab dominated political blocks in the Sudan, irrespective of their ideological hues, were able to mobilise (on the basis of solidarity and right to support fellow Arab) and garner political, economic and military support from other Arab countries[5]. Sudan accordingly is setting itself up as a front of a fresh wave of Arab conquest and Arabisation of black Africa. In this respect, the present wars in different parts of the Sudan can be characterised as aspects of a wider Afro-Arab conflict.

This explains why the conflict in the Sudan receives wide and close hearings in the Arab forums. The situation in the Sudan and the progress of the war is regularly put on the political agenda of the Arab League. This is at a time when it has never been raised in or placed on the agenda of the Organisation for African Unity (OAU). The Arabs led by Egypt have tenaciously resisted the inclusion of the conflict in the various OAU summits and ministerial meetings on account of it being an "*internal matter*".

Many Arab leaders and political thinkers in the Sudan and other parts of the Arab world have the propensity to invoke the past glory of the Arab nation, partly as a means of escaping from their harsh realities of defeat by the West following the collapse of the Ottoman empire at the beginning of this century, and the West's subsequent predominance in the political, economic and technological spheres, which led to their colonisation[6].

The Arabs have an overt political agenda for the destruction of the Jewish State of Israel, whose establishment in the middle of the Arab world they blame on the Christian West. *Hamas, Hizbu Allah* and other radical Islamic and Arab groups that sprouted onto the political scene in the Middle East in the late seventies and eighties were a reflection of the Arab desire to regain their glory and dignity. This made the shift towards winning over to the Arab side of black Africa, whether by force or otherwise, a significant factor in Arab foreign policy, especially after the October 1973 round of fighting between the Arabs and Israel, as a result of which the Arabs unleashed their oil 'weapon' on the world.

The Arabs look down with contempt on the African people in general as an inferior race, deserving nothing more than enslavement[7]. Thus, even being a Muslim is not a sufficient criterion to save an African from this scorn and contempt. The war between the African peoples of Fur, Masalit and Zaghawa and the Arabs in western Sudan serves to prove this point[8]. This falsity is exacerbated by the conviction among many Arab thinkers and writers that the Africans don't have a culture of their own. Accordingly, a cultural vacuum exists in Africa following de-colonisation, which must be filled with Islamic and Arab culture. The refusal on the part of the Arabs to recognise the rights of the Africans to self-determination, a denial, which actually fuels the Sudan conflict, underpins this falsehood.

II. This Paper – a Theoretical and Empirical Definition of the Problem

This paper is a modest attempt to link the current conflict and war in the Sudan to the ancient Afro-Arab conflict which began twelve centuries ago, and which culminated in the conquest, occupation, Islamisation and Arabisation of North Africa. Its objective, therefore, is to illustrate how the Arab

political, cultural, religious, economic and military ***'threat'*** to black Africa in the next millennium is more real than imagined. It suggests there is an Arab design to defeat Africa by religious and economic means, and to occupy and transform it into a military machine in support of the Islamic confrontation with the Christian West and the Jewish State of Israel.

The material for this paper is made up of empirical data drawn from the Sudan and the countries immediately bordering the Sudan. In defining the problem, we make the following assumptions and considerations: -

- Islam's doctrine and theology, like other heavenly faiths, is that some of its tenets cannot be liberally debated nor their validity debated scientifically, even by Muslim scholars without running the risk of being accused of apostasy[9]. Its difficulties and, therefore, conflict with other cultural realms arise from its nature and the fundamental contentious assumption that it is humanity's ultimate destiny. Its proselytisation methodology, which sanctions violence and war to achieve its objective(s), makes constructive dialogue with Islam in order to achieve ***détente*** and peaceful coexistence or cohabitation almost impossible[10]. The Muslims have a propensity to use violence to frustrate any meaningful dialogue, which they perceive would not be in their favour.

- At various stages, Islam has, wherever it set foot, served as a vehicle for the propagation of Arab language, culture and influence, except for the brief period when the Turks (nineteen - twentieth century) took over as the dominant political and military power in the Middle East and North Africa. The resurgence of Arab nationalism following the defeat and collapse of the Ottoman Empire after the First World War was hooked to Islamic revivalism and reformation, which became the ideological battle cry for Arab independence and solidarity.

- The Arabs, stirred by their profound belief and conviction of belonging to an elite nation, superior to all others, and a people destined by divine provision to conquer the world, propel themselves into war believing they are fulfilling a religious duty and executing the will of ***Allah***. In the same vein, the Arabs inflamed by the desire to regain their ancient glory, can easily ignite in Africa a big religious and racial conflagration, in the hope that the victories out of such an adventure can remove the stigma of their repeated humiliations at the hands of the Europeans and the Jews.

- The Christian West at present is more concerned with, and protects its economic interests and markets found in the Middle East and the Arab world. It is, therefore, not likely to perceive these contradictions in terms of Christianity versus Islam. Hence, it will not be drawn into a religious war of resistance to Arab expansion in Africa. The plight of the Lebanese Maronite Christians in the rise of Islamic revivalist movements in the Middle East in the late seventies and eighties is a case in point, especially when it occurred in the wake of the Islamic revivalist movement that culminated in the Iranian revolution in 1979 and the destruction of the Lebanese state. The Copts in Egypt have resigned themselves to a destiny of *dhimmitude*[11] (protected persons) in their country of birth.

- The current conflict and border war between the erstwhile allies, the Eritrean and Ethiopian regimes, against the NIF regime has complicated the situation in the region of the Horn, giving the NIF more

leverage. The mutual weakening of the Eritrean and Ethiopian people as a result of this war gives the Arabs advantage in their centuries old ambitions to Islamise and Arabise Ethiopia and Eritrea. The hands of the NIF regime in this conflict, and its escalation, are obvious. First because Eritrea initially severed diplomatic relations with the regime and not only that, but the Eritrean Authorities preceded to hand over the Sudan Embassy in Asmara to the National Democratic Alliance. The NIF regime's relations with Ethiopia soured in June 1995 following the assassination attempt on the life of the Egyptian President Mubarak. The Sudan government was implicated in this terrorist action, and it was put under UN Security Council sanctions.

- Classical Islam divides the world into *'dar el Islam'* and *'dar el harb'* inhabited by the Muslims and non-Muslims respectively. These two are in constant conflict until Islam triumphs over the non-believers. In such a situation Islam can only compromise when it is in a weak position: politically, economically and militarily. Propelled by this ideology, the Arabs don't respect any agreement they make with people considered as inferior. For instance, the present war in the Sudan has its roots in Nimeri's abrogation of the Addis Ababa Agreement reached in 1972 with the South Sudan Liberation Movement, which ended the seventeen years war. The ethnic conflict in Dar Fur, which the NIF regime prefers to call *'armed robbery'*, is a full-blown war between the Arabs and the African peoples of Fur, Zaghawa, Masalit and others. This is occasioned by the Arab's hegemony, both politically and economically, with serious ramifications in Chad and the Central African Republic.

- Still on the Arabs not respecting agreements, they also don't accept or recognise the existence of ethic and religious minorities in their midst, especially if they are weak and dependent on the Arab state. This, of course, springs from the logic that in an Arab/Islamic state, a non-Muslim is not a citizen. This underpins the destruction of the Lebanese State under the pressure of the Islamic fundamentalist groups.

- The various northern political parties, including the NIF, reject the inalienable right of the people of South Sudan, the Nuba Mountains and Southern Blue Nile to self-determination. Although the parties to the NDA endorsed the provision for self-determination in the Asmara Declaration 1995, all of them made independent and separate submissions against the exercise of the right of self-determination[12]. In fact, they equate self-determination with secession, and in the words of Mohammed Osman el Mirghani, the DUP leader and Chairman of the NDA, it is only a mechanism for stopping the war.

- The Sudanese conflict predates its independence in 1956; nevertheless, it has never been put on the political agenda of either the Organisation for African Unity or the United Nations. It has always remained at the level of humanitarian intervention. This has been because of the strong Arab lobby in both organisations headed by Egypt, which still harbours colonial ambitions over the Sudan and Africa as a whole. It can go to war on the side of the Arab government in Khartoum should it perceive that its interests are being jeopardised. Although Egypt projects the question of the Nile waters as its main reason for Sudan's territorial unity and integrity, which disposes it against the rights of the African people in the Sudan, it

is dominance of the Arabs that it intends to protect in the Sudan.

- The recent Libyan-Egyptian peace initiative[13] – deliberately engineered to water down the Inter-Governmental Authority on Draught and Development (IGADD) Peace process – is a manifestation of the Arab attitude towards the African people. IGADD sub committee on the Sudanese conflict does not have a single Arab country. This has made the Egyptians and the northern political parties uncomfortable with IGADD and its Declaration of Principles (DoP) 1994. The Egyptians and the Libyans reject out of hand the rights of the people of South Sudan and other marginalised areas to self-determination. It therefore becomes even more impossible to merge the two initiatives, as has been suggested recently.

- The SPLM/A, the only credible political-military force in the Sudan opposed to the NIF regime and its political-ideological orientation, suffers from serious organisational and structural malaise manifested in schisms, in fighting and desertions within its rank and file, sometimes paralysing its military operations. These internal developments make the SPLA vulnerable, which could eventually lead to it being defeated by the NIF regime and its militia (some of whom were former SPLA soldiers), unless the situation is remedied.

This scenario conjures up prospects for increased military pressure on the governments in the Horn and the Great Lakes Region. A number of critical observations have been noted: -

In Uganda

Nearly all the Ugandan dissident groups, until 1997, had bases and operated from the Sudan. They are part of the NIF regime's strategy of destabilising its neighbours. A defeat of the SPLA will witness the strengthening of the NIF regime's support for e.g. the Lord Resistance Army (LRA), the Allied Democratic Front (ADF), the West Nile Bank Front (WNBF), the Royalists and federalists opposed to the National Resistance Movement government.

- In 1994, when the SPLA was with its back to the wall in Nimuli, President Omer el Beshir declared he was going to say his evening prayers in a Kampala Mosque twenty four hours after his troops captured Nimuli from the SPLA. This is a revealing comment, suggesting that the Sudanese army would not stop at the Sudan-Uganda border, but would proceed to overthrow the NRM government and replace it with a puppet regime made up of the various rebel groups fighting the NRM government.

- The picture becomes clearer when viewed against the recent declarations made by Hassan el Turabi that *"We want to Islamise America and Arabise Africa"*. This underpins the NIF regime's hope to defeat the SPLM/A and hence the Arab intransigence and refusal to recognise the right of the people of South Sudan to self-determination is shown.

In Kenya

- The Republic of Kenya, apart from the disturbances in the North Eastern Province inhabited by the Somali, has been relatively stable. However, in the context of the struggle for political pluralism, the Islamic Party of Kenya (IPK), a radical Islamic group professing fundamentalist tendencies, sprouted onto the political stage.

- The political programme of the IPK, apart

from propagating Islamic religion, entails increased and effective participation of the Muslims in the running of the state. The IPK is working hard for the introduction of the Islamic Sharia Laws and at the same time to minimize the influence of the Church and the West in Kenya.

- Although, the NIF regime has not committed itself as in Uganda, it is an open secret that the regime has had contacts with, and supports, the IPK. It offers material and moral support to the Islamic groups. This includes training of IPK operatives and activists in the Sudan.

- In Kenya, the NIF operates through such open channels as the Islamic Relief and Humanitarian Agencies (IARA), which run humanitarian assistance programmes (food and medical) for the poor in the slums of the major cities and rural areas like the Turkana District, Eastern, North-Eastern and Western provinces. It also undertakes clandestine activities through the IPK and some Sudanese commercial businesses in Nairobi, belonging to the NIF.

- The spread of Islam, as a religious faith, is on the increase in Kenya. This is assisted by the dire economic crisis that has pushed the vast majority of the people into a cycle of poverty in which salvation seems to lie in religious revivalism. The Muslim organisations have been using food and other economic assistance as a weapon in their proselytisation programme.

The DR Congo

- The formation of the Democratic Republic of Congo came against a backdrop of regional political engineering, that brought about the demise of Mobutu Sese Seko through an alliance of the Congolese rebels under Kabila, the RPF in Rwanda and the NRM government in Uganda. This alliance, however, ran into internal disputes, which witnessed a shift in the alignment of forces. The NIF regime took the side of Kabila in his conflict with his former allies, which went far beyond the economic and diplomatic considerations between neighbouring states. In fact the NIF regime amassed troops in northern Congo with the intention of attacking the SPLA from its rear in western Equatoria.

- The regime supports a small group of Congolese Islamic groups, most of whom were former refugees and rebel groups that have been living as refugees in the Sudan since the sixties. Many of them have now converted to Islam and have been transported back to the Congo to form an advance team.

- The Kabila regime is now allied to the enemies of his former allies in Rwanda and Uganda. The Kinshasa regime continued to give sanctuary to the *interahamwe* and the Hutu rebels against the Rwandan government. Through Kabila, the NIF regime continued to supply military logistics to the Allied Democratic Front (ADF) and the West Nile Bank Front (WNBF) both based in DR Congo after being routed out of South Sudan by the SPLA in 1997. While the immediate objective of this co-operation is to get a bridgehead for action against the SPLA, the NIF intends to make political and ideological inroads into Central and Southern Africa[14]

In Ethiopia

- Ethiopia has the longest common borders with the Sudan. Historically all the regimes that came and went in the Sudan supported the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) on account of its being a pro-Arab movement.

But the hidden agenda of the Arabs regarding Ethiopia was the desire to break the resistance of Ethiopia to Islamisation and Arabisation.

- Its dismemberment, through internal contradictions therefore, became their goal. The Sudan government supported the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF), the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF – *shaabia*), the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) and other groups that fought Emperor Haile Sellassie, the regime of Mengistu and the present EPRDF regime in the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia led by the TPLF.

- The NIF regime continues to support the Oromo Liberation Front, the *Gamia el islamiya* and others fighting the government of Meles Zenawi. This resulted in the cooling of relations between the two countries, especially in the wake of a terrorist attempt on the life of the Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in Addis Ababa in June 1995. But now, because of the conflict with Eritrea, the relation between Addis Ababa and Khartoum has tremendously warmed to the chagrin of the Eritreans and the Sudanese opposition. The NIF is exploiting these contradictions for its political survival.

In Eritrea

- In spite of its massive support for the people of Eritrea in their bid for independence from Ethiopia, the NIF continued to undermine the independence of the state of Eritrea by encouraging cross border raids by the Islamic groups opposed to the regime in Asmara and based in the Sudan. The Sudan government has not hidden its support for the Arab-led Eritrean Liberation Front, that was routed out of power in the struggle for independence by EPLF (*Shaabia*).

- In 1995, the government of Eritrea, wary of these provocations, severed diplomatic relations with Khartoum, closed the embassy and took a rare and courageous step of handing over the embassy to the Sudanese opposition of the National Democratic Alliance. Since then the two countries have been in a state of undeclared war. The NDA forces operate from their H/Qs in Asmara and from the former Sudanese Embassy.

- The Eritrean action befits a rogue regime that does not respect international protocols that guide relations between states. This is because the NIF regime justifies its actions in the neighbouring countries of Eritrea, Ethiopia and Uganda on account of the conflict between *dar el Islam* and *dar el harb*, sanctioned by divine will.

In Somalia

- Although Somalia falls outside the scenario described above, it is an excellent example of chaos and anarchy, which presents opportunities for Islamic fundamentalist to exploit. The collapse of the Somali state could be a precursor to some of the scenarios in the Horn of Africa.

- The NIF regime in Khartoum has been entangled in some of the warlords' rivalry. In addition, but it has found the situation in Somalia quite opportune to train Islamist cadres from the countries neighbouring Somalia, e.g. Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and to infiltrate them back into these countries.

III. The Basis of the War and Conflict in the Sudan

Sudan is a multiplicity of ethnicities, religions,

cultures and languages. The carving out of the Sudan by the Anglo-Egyptian condominium into what it is today was completed only in 1920.[15] Despite this fact, and since its independence from the Anglo-Egyptian condominium in 1956, the Arab ruling political and military elite, who inherited the colonial state, defined Sudan in terms of only two parameters: Arabism and Islam. This definition excludes a great majority of its citizens, who don't subscribe to the two parameters.

The ethnic and religious multiplicities of the Sudan run approximately along the north-south divide. Mainly Arabs and those, who claim Arab ancestry and identify with an Arab Muslim culture, inhabit the north. In fact north Sudanese consider themselves part and parcel of the Arab nation[16]. They aspire to develop culturally, spiritually and socio-economically along a political path that will eventually integrate them with the rest of the Arab world. They uphold that ideally their way and conduct of life should be organised in accordance with the ***Qu'ran*** and the ***Sharia*** (Islamic legal code). North Sudan looks further north to Egypt and eastwards across the Red Sea to the Arab world for inspiration, identity and development[17].

In contrast the Africans, who inhabit south and central Sudan, aspire to develop culturally, spiritually and economically along a political path that will perpetuate and enrich their authentic African identity and heritage and enable them have harmonious social intercourse with their kith and kin in Africa. South Sudanese and other African groups in the north look to their African neighbours for identity, solidarity, culture, and socio-economic development.

The conflict in the Sudan, therefore, arises on the basis of the Arab north's claim that the Sudanese nationality is a transition to full integration to Arab nationality for those who are not of the Arab stock. The different regimes in Khartoum, therefore, prosecuted the war in the South, Western and Central Sudan on the basis of transforming the Sudan into a fully-fledged Arab nation. Furthermore, the rulers in Khartoum consider South Sudan a frontier for Arab and Islamic expansion into East, Central and Southern Africa. This has been repeatedly and publicly stated by various North Sudanese leaders and their *"warrior priests"* as a means for soliciting economic and financial resources in the Arab capital cities.

The resolution of this conflict lies not in the territorial unity of the Sudan, but rather in its dismemberment as a rational means of stopping the war and containing Arab hegemony. The people of South Sudan, the Nuba Mountains and Southern Blue Nile have resolved for the establishment of the New Sudan[18], which can only enter into a confederal arrangement with the North during the interim period leading to an internationally supervised referendum to exercise the right of self-determination.

The African people in Western Sudan (the different Fur peoples) and Eastern Sudan (the Beja) have taken up arms to defend their rights to national existence. In fact Dar Fur was the last province to be annexed to the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. It is highly possible that, in view of the current situation, the Fur peoples could opt for separate and independent existence, or join up with their compatriots in the New Sudan.

The break up of the Sudan will leave the Arabs with a small riverian territory. It will be a weak state, which may definitely unite with Egypt for its survival on the basis of Islam and Arabism. This will minimise the threat of

Arab expansion into Africa through the Sudan.

IV. The Arab Conquest of North Africa and the Sudan - Some Historical Dimensions of an On-Going Process

The rise of Islam in the early part of the seventh century united the Arab peoples in *Hijaz*, Yemen and the adjoining territories into a powerful military machine that conquered and destroyed civilisations, enslaved their peoples, plundered and pillaged their wealth and erased their cultures and languages etc., in what apparently was an Arab attempt to conquer and dominate the whole world.

A lot has been written about the Arab-Islamic conquests. Although much has been attributed to the nature of Islam and what it promises its converts, and those who rise to leadership positions within its ranks, the fact is that these conquests could not have been without a strategic impulse. Sir Thomas Arnold attributed the Arab expansion not to religious zeal but to the *"migration of a people driven by hunger and want to overrun the richer lands of their neighbours*[19]*."* As nomads living under desolate desert conditions, this assessment is credible. This explains the devastation, the pillage, enslavement suffered by the conquered nations and the tendency after war to bring back the booty to *Hijaz*. The acquisition of wealth was the motivating factor in these wars of conquest.

It was through these wars that the Arabs arrived in North Africa. And already by 640 AD, Egypt had been conquered. In 643 the Arab armies ransacked Tripoli (present day Libya), Carthage was also razed to the ground, and the whole of what is now Maghreb was put to fire and sword breaking the resistance of the Berbers[20].

The Arab conquest of North Africa, like most of the other territories in Western, Southern and Eastern Europe and Asia, was characterised by excessive brutality, pillage, plunder, destruction and desecration of churches, temples, places of worship and other sacred places, erosion of cultures and languages, and either wanton massacres, enslavement, especially women and children, or their conversion of the inhabitants to Islam.

The countries of North Africa: Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco and Mauritania, claim Arab nationhood today, including its leadership (Nasir's Egypt championed and led the Arab nationalism), as a result of these conquests and the twin processes of Islamisation and Arabisation. The original peoples, their languages (except for the Berbers), religions and cultures have been completely and irreversibly erased from the face of the earth. Only the Copts were able to retain their religion.

The rest of black Africa was perhaps saved the scorch of Arab savagery by two factors: The Sahara desert, that was a physical barrier, which could not be traversed easily by foot soldiers and the *suddud* marshes and the thick tropical forests that hindered the Arab penetration.

But, perhaps, the most important factor had more to do with Europe and Asia. Since Arab conquest was driven by religious zeal – Islam, and territorial aggrandisement for acquisition of wealth, their main target was Christianity and Judaism. Therefore, Europe and the outlying areas drew the attention of the Arab and Muslim commanders. The detour into North Africa by the Arab-Islamic armies was perhaps to outflank Europe. Had they conquered Europe completely, perhaps the Arabs would have returned to Africa in time to complete their conquest. Islam and Arab influence in West Africa and parts of the

Sahel region in the latter years was more by peaceful means than wars through the missionary works of the Arab traders – priests. The Arab conquest of the Sudan, however, came overland from Egypt. It was more in search of treasures: slaves, gold, ivory, ebony, ostrich feathers and conquest of land that attracted the Arabs rulers of Egypt to the Sudan, as can be illustrated by these words.

"...[you] are aware that the end of all our efforts and this expense is to procure Negroes. Please show zeal in carrying out our wishes in this capital matter..."[21]

By the end of the fourteenth century the Arabs had completed their penetration into the Nubia, with the defeat and consequent Islamisation of the Christian Kingdoms of Mukkura with its capital in Dongola and Alwa whose capital was in Soba. Dongola finally fell to the invading Arab forces in 1275-76.

Ibn Khaldun describes the Arab conquest of the Sudan as follows:

"... In Upper Egypt from Aswan to beyond its as far as the land of the Nuba and that of Abyssinia are numerous peoples (Arabs) and scattered sections, all of them belonging to the Guhayna, one of the branches of Kuda'a. They filled those parts and conquered the land of the Nuba and swarmed over those of Abyssinia and shared their countries with them..."[22]

This conquest did not follow the pattern set by the Arabs in North Africa, but occurred in bounds, depending on the resistance of the local people. For instance in 651-2, Abdullahi Ibn Sa'd Ibn Abi Shah led a Muslim army and besieged Dongola. However, he failed to conquer it, but withdrew after concluding a treaty, which established for 600 years trading relations and *modus vivendi* between Muslim Egypt and the Christian Nubia[23]. This rather long truce continued intact during the Mamluks rule of Egypt (1382 – 1517).

In 1517, however, Selim I, Sultan of Turkey, defeated the Mamluks and made Egypt a province of the Ottoman Empire. It is worth mentioning that the demographic composition of Nubia changed in favour of the Arabs, even before its final conquest.

"A strong infiltration of the Egyptians and later Egyptian and the Arab type was steadily and almost uninterruptedly proceeding in northern Sudan and the Negroes elements was correspondingly decreasing in that region".[24]

It was initially through peaceful cohabitation and Islamic missionary work that power and authority passed into the hands of the Muslims, that eventually led to their overthrow of the Christian Kingdoms. Nubia consequently transformed from *dar el harb* to *dar el Islam.*

"Once the Arabs had overthrown the Christian Kingdoms of Dongola and established themselves, they rapidly amalgamated themselves with the local Nubians and began to send colonisers further afield"[25].

In this way the Arabs contributed to the destruction of the Christian kingdom of Alwa and the fall of Soba, and in this manner the Arabs managed to complete their occupation of the north Sudan.

The Funj, an African people, emerged as a power in Central Sudan in the early 16th Century. They countered the Arab penetration further to the South. However, the Funj Kingdom became an Islamic Sultanate as a result of the conversion of its rulers, with the Funj King claiming Arab ancestry. This was

due more to Arab missionary work than war and conquest. The claim to Arab origin and the adoption of Arabic names was to ease trade with Cairo more than anything else. The Fur Sultanate in Dar Fur paralleled the rise of the Funj Kingdom in Sennar east of the Nile. Although these states were Islamic, they remained independent, resisting further Arab incursions.

It is believed that the Shilluks founded the Funj Kingdom. This is because until 1841, at the height of the Turco-Egyptian occupation of North Sudan, the Shilluks were in full control of the Nile valley up to Buga (Omdurman) and the Arabs depended on the Shilluks inhabitants for crossing the Nile. The introduction of firearms changed the balance of forces in favour of the Arabs.

The defeat of the Mamluks and the fall of Egypt to Turkish rule gave another dimension to the Arab conquest of the Sudan. By 1841, the whole of North Sudan had come under the Turco-Egyptian occupation as reflected in this report:

" ... I have granted you the government of the provinces of Nubia, Dar Fur, Kordofan and Sennar with all their dependencies – that is to say, with all their adjoining regions outside the limits of Egypt. Guided by the experience and the wisdom that distinguish you, you will apply yourself to administer and organise these provinces according to my equitable views and to provide for the welfare of the inhabitants... "[26]

The Turco-Egyptian rule of Northern Sudan was ruthless, inefficient, corrupt and oppressive, which was built on the practice and trafficking of slavery. No wonder that Mohammed Ahmed Abdullah (Mahdi), with support of the African peoples in Western and Eastern Sudan, led an Islamic revolt against this regime in 1881. The Mahdi's mission was driven by Islamic zeal. Once the Turco-Egyptian regime had been defeated and routed, the Mahdist's state embarked on raising a huge slave army for the conquest of the Christian Kingdom of Ethiopia, and the adjoining areas. This was along the lines, mentioned earlier, which the Arabs used in their conquest of North Africa, and of the Nubia. The Mahdist's state was conquered by a joint Anglo-Egyptian expedition in 1898 with the establishment of the Anglo-Egyptian condominium, which lasted until 1956.

V. The Afro-Arab Conflict in the 21st Century: Between Reality and Fiction

This sub title is neither a reflection of a racist tendency on my part, nor is its intention to generate unnecessary alarm. Nor is it also not an academic fantasy. It is a serious matter that requires responsible and considered handling. This is because, whether we like it or not, the Afro-Arab conflict in the Sudan is real. It has been going on, albeit silently, since the Arab conquest of the Christian kingdom of Nubia in the twelfth century. The world watched the people of South Sudan bleed about one and half million people to death in the seventeen years' war[27] between the North and the South. That war, like the present one, which started in 1983, is just a symptom of the same conflict.

Whether or not this war will extend to the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and to Southern Africa is what this paper is all about. My contention is that, given the present alignment of forces, and the Arab ambitions in Africa, the conflict is likely to extend to the rest of black Africa. Many leaders in black Africa today, out of liberalism, or lack of direct experience with the Arabs, or sheer ignorance, may elect to disregard this threat and look at the relations between the Arabs and Africans in purely economic terms. This

is positively dangerous, because by the time they realise the danger, they will not have prepared their people psychologically and politically for its consequences.

The present international political environment is such that an overt Arab aggression against the countries in the region may not be possible[28]. Rather, a more subtle process is at hand. In this the internal social, political and economic difficulties in black African countries are contradictions that are exploited. We have evidence that an Arab country like the Sudan has instigated internal conflicts inside its neighbouring countries like Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda.

I ground my thesis of an Arab *'threat'* to African countries during this century in past and present relations between Arabs and Africans. This relation has not been friendly or cordial to say the least ever since Arabs set foot in Africa.

Historically, the Arabs participated in the enslavement of Africans. Large numbers of African slaves were exported to the Arab world across the Red Sea from Abyssinia, Sudan, the Central African Republic and Chad, and from East Africa through the Indian Ocean into the Gulf area. But today, it is very rare to find descendents of these slaves in the Arab countries in the way they are found in the Americas and West Indies.

The reason for this anomaly lies in the Arab's non-recognition of black people as human beings. The men were castrated and the women were turned into sex machines. As a result of their involvement in the traffic of human beings, their relations with Africans smacks of an Arab sense of superiority and illustrates their contempt for black people in the Sudan. Even today, the slave legacy still persists and the Arabs pride themselves in calling their black compatriots *'abeed'* or slaves. Slavery exists today in Sudan as it exists in Mauritania, where it is official policy. The objects of this inhumanity are the black people.

On their side, the Africans have always supported the Arabs and their cause. On the political and diplomatic fronts, the African states *en masse* severed diplomatic and other relations with the Jewish State of Israel. This was done partly in solidarity with the Arab cause, and partly on the promise of *'petro-dollar'* economic assistance to the African countries. However, when the Arabs unleashed their *'oil weapon'*, the African countries were never spared the pangs of this economic war. In fact the economies of many African countries have not recovered to date as a result of the 1973 hike in the oil prices. Further, no African country can boast of having received meaningful Arab assistance without religious strings attached[29]. The establishment of the African Development Bank (ADB) did little to compensate for what these African states received from their relation with the Jewish State.

It is true that the Arabs supported African Liberation Movements in the sixties and seventies. Progressive Arab countries like Egypt and Algeria were in the forefront of African de-colonisation, within the context of the Organisation for African Unity. And the conservative Arab countries like Morocco and Tunisia supported reactionary forces in those African countries fighting for liberation. Libya later joined in this support for African liberation after the revolution September 1st 1969, which brought Col. Gadhafi to power. But all these were in the context of the ideological struggle against imperialism.

Libyan support for African liberation came against a backdrop of its designs, which

locked it up in a bitter border war with Chad. It needed a military defeat at the hands of the Chadians for Libya to drop its claims over the Ouzo strip. In 1979, on the pretext of support for the dictator Amin, Moamer Gadhafi dispatched 3,000 troops who were later taken prisoners of war by the Tanzanian army. Libya today continues to support Arab peoples in Western Sudan against their African neighbours and compatriots.

A bottled up frustration with the West, notably USA and Britain, over their support for the state of Israel, could potentially precipitate a terrorist venture on the African continent. The bombing in 1998 of the American Embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, and the aborted one in Kampala, killed fifty times more innocent Africans than Americans. The targeting of American interests in an African country is an important pointer to the manner the Arabs regards African countries.

These facts may perhaps not be sufficient grounds for the thesis I have postulated. In the absence of tangible and objectively verifiable evidence, it may be possible to dismiss this Arab *'threat'* as a political hoax. But as I said above, the Arab *'threat'* in East, Central and Southern Africa may not be frontal like, for instance, direct Arab aggression against a particular African country, except in the Sudan itself[30]. No, but the threat can come as a result of the exploitation of the internal situation in a particular country. Given the social, political and economic situation of the countries of East, Central and Southern Africa the 21st century is likely to witness ethnic, religious and civil strife in these regions. These will be triggered and fuelled by the following: -

1. The Economic Crisis and Growing Poverty in the Region

The economies of these African countries are in shambles. Economic growth is in decline in many of these countries. The state capacity to exploit the natural resource potential is minimised as a result of widespread corruption in government institutions. There is a progressive pauperisation of the rural as well as the urban population, provoking a rural to urban migration, swelling the numbers of slums and slum dwellers in the cities. This negatively affects the quality of social services these cities are able to offer. The livelihood of the people in these cities is becoming less secure, as more and more people are pushed into the periphery – into the conflict situation.

This is the result of a combination of several factors, including what Jean-François Bayart *et al* call a process of criminalisation:

"imploded under combined effects of economic crisis, [...] structural adjustment programmes and loss of political legitimacy of political institutions [...] and the political life consisting first and foremost of management of factional intrigues for personal interests..."[31].

This has triggered off bitter and lethal social and ethnic rivalries over the diminishing natural resource base as well as state power itself. The genocide in Rwanda (1994), the on-going war between the Tutsi dominated army and the Hutu rebels in Burundi, and the land/ethnic clashes in Kenya from 1992 to date, and cattle rustling as a means of asset transfer among the pastoral communities are but a few examples of this poverty crisis.

Population explosion is another dimension to this poverty crisis, which is very visible in all these countries. Population increase has stretched beyond effectiveness the already diminishing resources and services these states can provide their citizens. Crimes, diseases, especially the sexually transmitted

diseases and HIV/AIDS take their toll on the poor section of the population.

The factor of poverty crisis works itself into a process that generates internal conflicts with the subsequent weakening of the state. Thus the NGOs and relief agencies take the centre stage in the lives of the rural and urban poor, which have been left to fend for themselves. The state agencies sometimes pay little attention to the activities of these NGOs as long as they are not of immediate threat to the security of the state. For instance, relief food, economic and financial resources have become tools for Islamic proselytisation in the rural areas and poor suburbs in the major cities. This is reflected in the increased numbers of veiled women, indicative of the efficacy of the strategy, although in essence, this does not contribute in a meaningful way to poverty alleviation and eradication. What it does is that the people are energised to question the state and its religious institutions, which are not Islamic[32].

2. *Crisis of Democratic Participation in the State*

Most the conflicts in Africa today can be attributed to the failure of the postcolonial state to meet the aspirations of the people. In most of the cases, the state is monopolised by a minority on the basis of ethnicity, religion, education and economic dominance to the complete exclusion of the vast majority of the citizens. In most cases, the state has become oppressive, using brute force to quell dissidence.

The wind of change towards multiparty dispensation that swept across Africa in the early nineties has failed to sprout genuine democratic changes, which were the main expectations of the people. The frustration and anger generated by the adamancy of the ruling elite to stick to power is likely to fuel the internal factional splits and conflicts in many of these countries along ethnic or religious lines.

- In Kenya, for instance, the ruling elite, afraid of the repercussions for the crimes they have perpetrated, prefer to run down the country politically and economically rather than share power with the other factions that broke away from it in the early nineties. What is happening in Kenya today could be likened to what somebody described as a *'short cut'* to decay being undertaken by the ruling political elite. The road to a constitutional reform process has been riddled with obstacles where political violence may be the way out. The conditions for civil breakdown are being created by the irresponsible greed for power and the ruling faction of this political elite is working itself into an explosive situation, feeding on ethnic rivalry and animosities, which can easily elicit external intervention.

- The National Resistance Movement (NRM), which has controlled the state in Uganda since 1986, is increasingly coming under pressure from various quarters to allow power sharing and political pluralism. Uganda went through multi-party political dispensation in the sixties and seventies. The monopoly of power by the Northern political elite, both civilian and military, landed the country in an unfathomable nightmare. Perhaps here lies the source of Uganda's political and economic ills. But political exclusion at the present, even under the NRM model, is not a way out of the cumulative effects of misrule and dictatorship. The convening of a national constitution conference comprising all the political opinion in the country, may assist in building a national consensus around a political dispensation and perhaps map out an escape route from the wars and conflicts

that have drained the country's resources.

- The Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), like the NRM in Uganda, treads on a tightrope. The Tutsi dominated and driven political process in Rwanda will not be sustainable in the long run. The future for Rwanda lies in peaceful cohabitation of the land by both ethnic groups. The process of national reconciliation will be cemented by genuine participation by all. This will deny the enemies of Rwanda the opportunity to exploit the internal conflicts. The same could equally be said of Burundi, where a large majority of the population has somehow been excluded from political participation.

- Similarly, Ethiopia is sitting on a time bomb occasioned by one ethnic group, the Tigray, dominating the political process to the chagrin of other nationalities significantly the Oromo and the Amhara. The federation and regionalisation of the administrative authority is potentially positive, but objectives are suspect, especially if those at the helm of power in the regions play the role of apprentices or the relation between Addis Ababa and the region remain a patron-client relationship. Ethiopia has to build genuine participatory democratic institutions if it is to deny the Arabs the opportunity to destroy its centuries old sovereignty and territorial integrity[33]. In all these examples, we find that political conflicts run parallel to ethnic and religious differences.

Linked perhaps to the poverty crisis in the region and the crisis of democratic participation in the state, is the lagging social and national awareness of the people. Except in Tanzania, where a clear national consciousness has been inculcated into the mind and hearts of the people, ethnic tendencies are still dominant in most other countries. In Kenya, the promising opportunity for political and democratic transformation in the early nineties has given way to ethnicity as the basis for political organisation and action. For instance, the National Development Party (NDP) draws most of its membership from the Luo Nyanza, while for Democratic Party of Kenya (DP) is wholly a Kikuyu political establishment. This mode of political action has determined the type of alliances even at the level of the parliament[34]. The division within the opposition not only paralyses it and prevents it from putting the ruling party on its toes, but it disorients the struggle for reforms and constitutional development. This situation, if allowed to continue, can result in civil conflict or the intervention of the army in governance.

Equitable sharing of national material resources can only ensure internal political stability. This includes the state itself as a power resource. To exclude a section of the populace from effective participation in the running of the state can result in unwanted consequences. Thus the engineering for political and democratic transformation should not result in complete exclusion of the other factions. All forces struggling for change in Africa should emulate the experience of post apartheid South Africa.

3. Regional Competitions and Conflicts

The collapse of the Mobutu regime in former Zaire ushered in fresh conflicts in the Great Lakes Region driven by competition over its vast mineral resources. The conflict in the Democratic Republic Congo between Rwanda and Uganda on the one hand and Kabila, Angola, Zimbabwe and Namibia on the other hand; and the later fighting which erupted between the UPDF and RPF; the intervention of the NIF regime on behalf of Kabila, exposed a salient fact that the alliances in the

region were unprincipled and opportunistic.

The conflict in DR Congo has divided the African front that was forged against the white supremacist regime in South Africa. Zimbabwe had strong support for the SPLM/A in the eighties and early nineties. To see Zimbabwe as an inadvertent ally of the NIF regime in the Democratic Republic of Congo, simply over economic interests rather than ideological or political concerns, is a complete shift from the African liberation, which President Robert Mugabe earlier championed.

The border war between the erstwhile allies against the regime of Mengistu and their support for respective rival Warlords in Somalia has also exposed the conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia as a form of competition over resources. In this case, it is Ethiopia's access to the sea that drives that conflict rather than the disagreement over a desert border area. Access to the seaport is important for the economy, but it really touches a sensitive national nerve in Ethiopia. However, it should only be negotiated diplomatically rather than by war.

The continuation of this conflict weakens the two countries. It deflects their mutual attention from, and makes them overlook the designs of the Arabs notably Sudan and Egypt. And in the political engineering that ensues the conflict has been exploited by the NIF to break itself out of regional isolation by acting as a broker between the two countries.

This conflict, although a contradiction between governments that were erstwhile politically very close like the conflict in the Great Lakes Region has serious regional repercussions. It constitutes an avenue for external intervention occasioned by the weakness of these states. An enemy who has designs to conquer will wait for, and exploit, such weakness to its advantage. In this respect, it was imperative, in the first place, not to have allowed the political contradiction that engendered this war to develop into an open conflict. All diplomatic channels, including those under the auspices of the Organisation for African Unity, should have been utilised.

VI. What Possible African Responses to the Arab 'Threat'?

The subtitle is suggestive of an imminent *'Arab threat'* to black Africa and I am convinced that it is real. The Arabs have attempted to conquer Africa in the past. The whole of North Africa boasts of Arab nationhood today simply because it was conquered. The local inhabitants and their languages have either been erased from the face of the earth or have been Arabised. The Copts and the Berbers, the Nubians (the Halfawiyeen, the Mahas and the Donagala) and others great African civilisations that existed in the region of North Africa and the Nile valley for nearly more than seven millennia, have been reduced to relics because of this abrasive Arab nationalism.

Given the nature of the conflicts in the region and the failure of the state therein to manage them, it is more likely that the next century will witness a renewed Afro-Arab conflict of a major dimension in the Horn of Africa, the Great Lakes Region and further in Southern Africa.

This is because the Arabs have not relinquished their ambitions for expansion into, and conquest of Africa, which they believe, was frozen by the intervention of imperialism. However, unlike the seventh century conquests of North Africa, the modern day Arab ambitions are likely to be expressed in economic, religious and cultural influences.

Sometimes, force and violence, as in the Sudan and East Africa exploiting the already deteriorating social, economic and political crisis in these countries will mediate these.

The scenario for this conflict takes the Sudan as the springboard occasioned by the growing political and military prowess of the NIF government. The current war, which started off initially as a contradiction between the ruling Arab circles in Khartoum and the people of South Sudan, but which has now engulfed all the African peoples in the West, Central, and Eastern Sudan, is a phase in this Afro-Arab conflict.

As long as Islamic religion and Arabic culture remain the dominant ideological perspective of the northern ruling circle and its political establishment, reinforced with reactionary pan-Arab nationalism, there is no way Sudan can continue to be united and peaceful. Force of arms through the oppression and enslavement of its indigenous African people maintained the territorial unity of the Sudan up to this moment in time. Even with that, the political elite failed to build a national consensus, which reflects the ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic diversity of the Sudan. Thus, the conflict is likely to endure until the rights of the African people in the Sudan to self-determination and the establishment of the New Sudan as an independent and sovereign state are achieved.

The establishment of an independent, sovereign, democratic and secular New Sudan will constitute a strong guarantee for stability and peace in the region of the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes Region. This will break the link between the present NIF regime, or that of any future Arab-dominated government in Khartoum, that harbours Arab designs for the conquest of Africa, and the areas of conflicts in the region which it could exploit for its own advantage.

However, the establishment will not be sufficient to deter any Arab aggression. It also demands adequate internal political and social stabilisation in the countries of the region. This will require the progressive political forces in Africa to coalesce and work together for the common good of the continent.

This includes the following political actions: -

*1. **Strengthening of the SPLM/A and the Other African Liberation Movements in the Sudan.***

The SPLM/A has become a political and military power to reckon with at the regional level. It is part and parcel of the African liberation movement, which began with the struggle for de-colonisation. And incidentally it is an agent of de-colonisation and a weapon in the hands of the Africans in the Sudan for regaining their dignity and humanity. Its destruction at the hands of the NIF regime or any other Arab dominated government in Khartoum will leave a large hole in the African liberation movement. It is imperative and of paramount importance that the African governments in the Horn of Africa, Great Lakes Region and Southern Africa lend the SPLM/A support morally, politically and militarily.

The argument put forward by the Arabs, inside or outside the Sudan, that the conflict in the country is internal and therefore does not warrant concerted African support is positively dangerous. The African countries should not accept or buy this argument even for a moment. The various Arab dominated governments in Khartoum have never shied from demanding support from the Arab countries and governments in order to fight the African in the Sudan. In fact they have demanded support as a matter of right. Africa

must emulate this solidarity. It must wake up and consolidate itself if the foreign designs and ambitions are to be frustrated and defeated. Short of this support, the balance of forces could tilt dangerously in favour of the NIF regime and its Arab supporters.

A possible defeat of the SPLM/A in the South and the resistance of the African groups in the North, on account of not having received sufficient support to mobilise and galvanise the African people in the Sudan to resist Arab domination and oppression, shall have serious repercussions both internally to the Sudan and with its neighbours. This will enable the NIF government to exploit the vast natural resources in the South, including petroleum deposits, in order to build a strong economic base and a huge army – mainly from the defeated Africans – along the lines of Mahdist's state in the last century[35], which it can use to aggress the neighbouring African countries.

The SPLM/A and the African groups in the Sudan, and their ability to resist Arab domination, constitute the first African defence line against this Arab aggression. Once that defence line is broken, we can be sure of the results as enunciated in the words of Omer el Beshir in 1994, hoping to pray in a Kampala Mosque once the SPLA had been cleared from Nimuli.

The support for the Africans in the Sudan should be considered as part of the regional co-operation and integration in the Horn, Great Lakes Region and Southern Africa. It should translate into the establishment of a sovereign and independent New Sudan, which encompasses South Sudan (the regions of Bahr el Ghazal, Equatoria and Upper Nile), Southern Kordofan (the Nuba and Dinka Abeyei) and Southern Blue Nile (the Funj). The African people in Dar Fur have the option of joining the New Sudan if they so wish. IGAD and the East African Community are such instruments of regional co-operation and integration.

However, this would require tagging a political agenda, which unites the Africans, to what has been up to this moment an economic and humanitarian instrument. The challenge for the realisation of these lofty ideals falls on the leaders, thinkers and political activists in the region. The strengthening economic and trade relations between the countries in the region, which of necessity must involve free movement of people and commodities, will act as a safety valve in the region against external aggression.

2. Internal Social and Democratic Reforms to Accelerate Regional Cooperation and Integration

Regional cooperation and integration would require certain fundamental changes in the political systems in the region. These will allow social and democratic changes to take place in order to accommodate popular participation in the running of their affairs. Cooperation, regional, social and economic integration processes, can be meaningful in as much as they become people driven. This cooperation and integration will minimise the competition over natural resources and will add to stability in the region.

The catchwords in this respect are 'participatory democracy' and 'democratic governance' and a responsible, conscious and vibrant civil society. In the individual countries in the region, political pluralism should not necessarily be made a condition for the consummation of this process.

However, popular participation either as authentic political parties, trade unions and civil society organisations, instead of political

exclusion, could facilitate internal harmony and nation building in the region. This will definitely deny anybody speculating on the ill fortunes of the African people. Social, democratic reforms and building of national consensus will create stable internal conditions that will permit people to build a democratic political culture. A politically stable country offers fewer opportunities for adventurers.

3. De-Arabization of Islam in Africa

Islam as a religion is not a problem. It is professed by a large section of Africans on the continent. There is even nothing wrong with its proselytisation in the Sudan and elsewhere. The contradiction between Islam arises on the basis of it being a vehicle for Arab culture and values. Not only that, Islam's incapacity for reform to meet modern times, transposes archaic pre-Islamic Arab traditions and culture on a 21st century social and political reality. This is an area of inevitable conflict and can prevent cohabitation with many African peoples.

Not every Muslim in Africa is an Arab nor aspires to be an Arab. But to be a good Muslim, fluency in Arabic is a necessity. This presupposes a process of de-Arabisation of Islam along the lines of the reformation of the church in the thirteenth century, which led to indigenisation of the Christian Church and translating the Bible from Latin to the various languages. The indigenisation of Islam and the translation of the Holy Qu'ran into the various languages, will enable the people to have access to the word of Allah through their own language, as well as Islamic perceptions closer to their cultures. In this way the local languages will be able to carry Islamic values and doctrine.

De-linking Arabism from Islam will deny the Arabs the pretext of Islamising the world, while in fact it is arabisation. It is just the same method the Europeans used in the eighteen and nineteen centuries to colonise the continent under the pretext of spreading Christianity.[36] Africans need not go through this experience again. Their hard won independence and freedom should not be lost again on account of misuse of religious values and beliefs

The de-Arabisation of Islam has parallels in Islamic history itself. The fourth Khalifa, Ali, the son-in-law of the Prophet, decided that future Khalifa should come from the direct family of the Prophet, doing away with the hitherto practise of the election of the Khalifa, which characterised the Umayyad dynasty. The Umayyad institutionalised Arabism into Islam. Although non-Arabs Muslims (*muwalieen*) outnumbered the Arabs, both among the faithful and in the armies, and they dominated the Arab-Islamic empire economically and culturally until the eighth century, they were treated as slaves, violating the Islamic doctrine of equality. The growing discontent of the non-Arabs and their rebellion was responsible for the demise of the Umayyad in 750 AD. Power then passed to Khalifa Abu al Abbas, an Iraqi, thus ending the Arab domination of Islam. It was only after the de-arabisation of Islam in the eighth century that it became one of the greatest civilisations of the world. Baghdad became a world-trading centre.

De-Arabisation means indigenising Islam, which should not present a problem. Islam, in West Africa is highly indeginised and has lost much of its archaic Arab cultural characteristics. It is only now that, and because of, the influence of fundamentalist ideology that countries like Nigeria, Islamic revivalism is beginning to compete for state control. The introduction of Sharia in one of the northern states in Nigeria is an attempt by

the Muslims to monopolise the state's political power to the chagrin of the non-Muslims. A condition in which a Funj King, referred to above, claimed Arab ancestry because of being a Muslim in order to consolidate his authority, is being recreated.

The de-Arabisation of Islam would mean a complete recognition the cultural heritage of the Africans. They would be able to propagate their languages and cultural values, which they usually despise, because they have become Muslims. In the words of Cdr. Yusif Kuwa Mekki, the SPLM Governor of Southern Kordofan, himself a Muslim from the Nuba nationality,

"I only discovered that I was not an Arab in Khartoum University. All along, we have been indoctrinated that we were Arabs and the Arabs are a superior race. We were taught to despise the Nuba people; languages, cultural practices and anything that identified with the Nuba and backwardness, e.g. wrestling and drinking of 'merisa[37]*', which are central to Nuba culture were prohibited. We are now undergoing a process of self-discovery. That is why I tell the Nuba that there is nothing wrong with drinking merisa or wrestling. Even wrestling is aired on the TV world and is a source of wealth for many sportsmen and women".*

There is something in African cultures and languages that could be used to develop Islam as a faith to meet the modern aspirations of the African Muslims. The resistance to Islam in some parts of South Sudan stems from the fact that it is associated with the Arabs, who are despised as slave-traders, wanderers, intruders and enemies. The de-Arabisation therefore will serve a better purpose for Islam in Africa.

VII. Summary and Concluding Remarks

The collapse of the Soviet Union, followed by the easing of ideological tensions between the West and East and the super power rivalry, has ushered a new international political order in which the Arabs find themselves competitors for influence and domination of the world. In fact, many Arab thinkers and ideologues believe that after the collapse of the communist system, Islam is predestined by divine will to take over the leadership of the world.

As faithful adherents of Islam, the Arabs assume they are endowed with a capacity to fulfill this divine will, by war or otherwise. But, in effect, it is for their territorial aggrandisement and conquest of the world and pillage of its resources that drives them into war. It is only fortunate that they now don't possess the technology for this enterprise; otherwise the world would be really unsafe[38].

The Arab conquest of North Africa in the seventh century later extended into the Sudan. And this conflict has not really or completely died down. The de-colonisation of the Sudan rekindled Arab ambitions for territorial aggrandisement, putting them into direct conflict with the African peoples in the Sudan.

The present war in the Sudan, therefore, has become part of this wider Arab strategy to regain the past glory represented by their conquest of North Africa and part of Southern Europe. In this context, the issues in the Sudan today why the Arabs will not let the people of South Sudan go their way is not because of sovereignty or territorial unity and integrity of the Sudan. It is a question of retaining Arab dominance over the whole of Sudan and its human and natural resource, in order to exploit and use them to conquer more lands.

The ruling circles in Khartoum would not contemplate an independent South Sudan, a sentiment shared by the Egyptians and other Arabs, because it frustrates the Arab strategy and denies them expanding their influence into the rest of Africa. The Egyptian regime has already vowed that it will not tolerate another country on the Nile between Uganda and Northern Sudan, which explicitly means the Sudan must remain united, otherwise it goes to war to maintain that 'unity'.

It is the pretence under which the unity of the Sudan is upheld that engenders conflict and the present war is enduring because of this unity. If therefore the resolution of this conflict cannot be sought in self-determination of the South, then the intention of the Arab ruling circles is to continue the war and spill it over into the neighbouring countries of East, Central and Southern Africa. This, therefore, serves the Arab strategy for conquering, Islamising and Arabising Africa.

Having resisted this Arab onslaught almost silently for a long time, perhaps the South Sudanese, already showing fatigue[39], are extending the challenge to their African brothers and sisters. Whether or not the Africans will permit the Arabs to run over the continent, once their brothers and sisters in the Sudan have been defeated and conquered, is in the balance. It is now or never. It is up to the African political elite, intellectuals, thinkers and activists to take up this challenge and face it.

Africa, therefore, on the eve of the 21st century presents a dismal picture. Although, she has succeeded to ward off white man's Apartheid in South Africa, the Arabs present a formidable challenge in the north. Like our forefathers, we should not relent, but must deepen our awareness, organisational capabilities, capacity to resist and solidarity with each other. It is through regional cooperation, and social and economic integration that the African states can improve the lots of their peoples to build stronger economies capable of delivering goods and satisfying the needs of their people. This must be predicated on democracy and good governance, which will ensure internal stability and peace in the region.

In conclusion, I emphasise the assertion once more that the Arab *'threat'* to black Africa is real. Its potentials increase as you move up the African map from the South. It will be criminal for the African political leadership, thinkers, activists, and statesmen to ignore this danger because of their liberal ideas or because they can't immediately perceive it. On the contrary, the people should be prepared, through concrete political, social and economic measures that principally aim at improving the quality of life in Africa and raising their awareness and a sense of solidarity.

NOTES

1 A paper submitted to the workshop: Africa on the eve of the 21st century: Between War and Peace. Zanzibar Serena Hotel, November 8th. – 9th. 1999.

2. Contact address: Larjour Consultancy, P.O. Box 8731 Nairobi, Kenya. Tel: 254 2 711118 Fax: 254 2 724449. ochaw@iconnect.co.ke

3. A group of political parties, trade unions and regional groups formed in 1990 following the military coup of the National Islamic Front against the elected government of Sadiq el Mahdi on June 30th, 1989. The SPLM/A

joined the NDA in December 1990.

4. Cases of slavery and trafficking in slaves have been widely reported and documented. Examples of these documentation: Ushari and Baldo Suleiman. The Dhaein Massacre. Khartoum University Press. (1987), The Christian Solidarity International reports, the reports of the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of Human Rights in the Sudan.
5. Egypt, in spite of its ideological and political differences with the NIF regime, has spearheaded a campaign to prevent the conflict in the Sudan being put on the political agenda of the OAU and the UN. In addition, it is responsible for opposing and bursting the UN sanctions and arms embargo on the regime following the assassination attempt in Addis Ababa, June 1995, on the life of the Egyptian President. Iraq supplied the regime with military hardware including chemical weapons. Yemen recently (September 1999) passed over to the NIF regime in the Sudan over 200 Czechs made tanks it had purchased. Arab solidarity with the Sudan in the political, economic and military spheres has been enormous.
6. Fouad Ajami. The Arab Predicament: Arab Political Thought and Practice since 1967. Cambridge University Press. 1993. P.48.
7. Moamer Gadhafi recently confirmed this to an Arab audience in a rally in Khartoum North.
8. Sharif Harir. Arab Belt vs. African Belt: Ethno-political conflict in Dar Fur and the Regional Cultural Factors. In, Sharif Harir and Terje Tvedt (Eds.). *Short Cut to Decay – The Case of Sudan.* Nordiska Afrikaninstitutet. Uppsala. 1994. Pp.144-185.
9. Nimeri executed Mahmoud Mohammed Tah, the leader of the Republican Brothers, in 1985 on account of apostasy.
10. While there is a huge Islamic centre in Rome, near the Vatican (the heart of Christendom), reflecting the West's liberalism and ability to tolerate other faiths in its midst, a similar gesture is impossible to go by and allow the Christian church in Saudi Arabia, let alone in Mecca or Medina.
11. In an Islamic state, a non-Muslim is not a citizen but a protected person (dhimmi) on paying special tax. The social position of a dhimmi is lower than that of women and therefore such a person cannot aspire to leadership positions. Dr. Boutrus Boutrus Ghali, the former UN Secretary General, rose only to the post of a deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs in his country. He could not become full Minister, although he did perform efficiently and effectively those duties, because he was a Christian Copt. In the Sudan, George Kongor Arop, remains Second Vice President of the Republic. It is impossible for him to become the First Vice President, which would enable him assume the presidency.
12. Even the Communist Party of the Sudan, the first to recognise the historical, ethnic, cultural, linguistic difference between the North and South Sudan, attaches impossible conditions to the exercise by the South of this right to self determination.
13. In fact the initiative endorses the strategy of Hassan el Turabi for reconciliation of the NIF regime with the northern political parties in opposition, notably the Umma and the Democratic Unionist parties.
14. The NIF has been supplying logistical support to the remnants of these forces together with the Rwandan Interahamwe from Juba, flying its planes over the SPLA liberated areas in western Equatoria. Intelligence reports indicate the presence of very senior Sudanese military personnel with these rebels groups.
15. Dar Fur became part of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan in 1917 following the defeat of the Fur Sultanate and the killing of Sultan Ali Dinar in 1916. Sudan eastern borders with Ethiopia were consolidated only in 1920 in the aftermath of the British – Anyuak war.
16. The cultural and linguistic homogeneity of the north, hitherto taken for granted, is now shattered and has been exposed to question by the raging conflict between the Arab peoples supported by the central government in Khartoum on the one hand, and the African peoples of Dar Fur in the west and the Beja peoples in the east on the other hand.
17. Some African Muslims in the north have now rediscovered themselves and are working hard to re-define themselves.
18. The resolution of the SPLM's First National

Convention. Chukudum, 1994.

19. Anthony Nutting. The Arabs. Mentor. 1964. P. 59.
20. Bat Ye'or, *'The Decline of Eastern Christianity under Islam: From Jihad to Dhimmitude'*. Fairleigh Dickinson University Press. 1996, pp. 48
21. Mohammed Ali Pasha to the Defterdar, as he was leaving on an expedition to the Sudan, 23rd September 1825.
22. H. A. MacMichael. A History of the Arabs in Sudan. Frank Cass & Co. Ltd. Vol. 1. Pp. 138.
23. P. M. Holt. A Modern History of the Sudan. Weidenfeld & Nicholson. 1961. Pp. 16-32.
24. H.A. MacMichael. Op Cit. pp. 14
25. ditto.
26. Sultan Abdel Magid reporting back to Mohammed Ali Pasha, 13th February 1841.
27. The mutiny in Torit (August 1955) is considered the beginning of the war and the Addis Ababa Agreement (March 1972) between the SSLM and Nimeri, the end of that war.
28. The 'Gulf War' is a pointer in this respect.
29. Islamic cultural centres dot cities and towns in East and Central Africa as manifestation of Arab aid to these countries.
30. The defeat of the Arab dominated government in Khartoum leading to the creation of the New Sudan can easily provoke an Egyptian intervention.
31. Jean-Francois Bayart, Stephen Ellis and Beatrice Hibou, *The Criminalisation of the State in Africa*. James Curry. Oxford. 1999, Pp. 19.
32 The destruction of the Kigali Curio shops near the Gamia Mosque in Nairobi and the throwing out of business of the owners in 1998 was intended to heighten the contradiction between curio owners and the state.
33 In 570 AD, the year of the birth of Prophet Mohammed, Abraha Ashram, the Abyssinian governor of Yemen attacked Makka with the objective of bring it under his rule. Ever since the rise of Islam, the Arabs were trying, without success, to conquer, arabise and islamise Abyssinia. The Qu'ran: Surat el Fil. 105: 1-5
34. A NDP motion of no confidence against the Vice President, George Saitoti, failed to garner enough support and was therefore defeated because of ethnic machinations that brought together some members of the opposition and the ruling party to defeat the motion.
35. Khalifa Abdullahi el Tahisha drew his huge slave army from the African peoples in the West, East and South Sudan. This was partly because these peoples did not support themselves to resist enslavement because they were found hostile to each other. What is important here is that they were all used against Abyssinia in a war of conquest that led to the killing of King Yohannes IV.
36. In the words of Jomo Kenyatta, "The white man came to Kenya carrying a Bible. He then taught us to bow our heads in prayer. And while we bowed our heads in prayer, he took our land."
37. Beer brewed from sorghum or corn.
38. If one is assured of heaven then nothing would inhibit one from carrying out the will of God, including the manufacture of an 'Islamic atomic bomb'.
39. The signs of fatigue are: large numbers of South Sudanese are seeking resettlement in America, Australia and Europe, capitulation to the enemy by some senior leaders, inter-tribal conflicts and wars etc.

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Looking Backwards, and then Forwards: Africans and the 21st Century

Kwesi Kwaa Prah

Introduction

Two years ago, we were consumed by a disease called the 'millennium fever', or as some preferred to describe it 'millennium mania'. This epidemic gripped the world as we moved into A.D. 2000 forcing on many minds exercises of historical summation, which permitted observers to indulge, in modest conjectures, about the past, present and future, but also, often grandiose prognostications about the future. The symbolic significance of the millennium, many will admit, provided an intellectual excuse for the evaluation of records. The choice of records to be examined was left to the individual.

There was also a minority, which saw the millennium fever as simple-minded gullibility about a magic number introduced by Christendom. The millennium fever was also plain commercial hype, a chance for consumer society to splurge and over-indulge. But whatever we made of our times and the millennium fever, many concerned Africans regarded it as a time to take stock and define the challenges, which lay ahead of us in our quest for emancipation and development.

The west is triumphant in its supremacy of the non-western world. It is a supremacy, which reached its high-water mark at the end of the 19th century. Today, a century later, Asia is on the move, and we are entering the 21st century with Asia arguably, in the leadership of global economics and technology. Africa remains in slumber and stagnation, and no intelligent person of African descent can be acquiescent and accepting of this reality. There are signs that the old neo-colonial order is disintegrating, will ultimately yield place to a new order. African intellectuals need however to show better appreciation of the social forces and interests at play. African thinkers will need to provide answers, as to how to move forward.

Background to the 20th Century

The 20th century captures almost neatly a historically definable phase of African history. It has been dominated by the colonial experience - its installation and demise. At the beginning of this century, Africa had freshly been chopped up by various colonial powers into colonies and spheres of influence. The first decade-and-a- half saw the unfolding of vicious wars of colonial subjugation. During the next decade, while firm colonial administration was being established, nationalist impulses began to stir under the leadership of middle class African elites, the type Ayo Langley described for West Africa as 'the lawyer-merchant class'. The contradiction of this class was that educated in the western mould and ways, they sought social and economic advancement for

Africans along independent lines while at the same time they were trapped in the culture of the west and were what Kobina Sekyi in a play of 1915 defined as 'social hybrids', or people 'born into one race, and brought up to live like members of another race'.[1] If in West Africa, the period threw up figures like Casely Hayford, Attoh Ahuma, Herbert Macaulay, Herbert Bankole-Bright, Prince Bassey Ephraim and E.F. Small, in the South comparative thought was reflected by, John Dube, John Tengo Jabavu, Solomon Plaatje, Molema, and Pixley Seme, while in the East, Harry Thuku, and Jomo Kenyatta easily come to mind.

The 2nd World War saw the entrance into the political arena of new, less educated, but assertive social groups. These had links with the growing mass of proletarianized urbanites dissatisfied with colonial rule, and who demanded political freedom. Many of the leadership had expected that colonial freedom would be part of the post-war world order. This view was widespread in the colonial world. Afro-Asia moved directly after the war into anti-colonial insurgency in large parts of Indo-China and South East Asia. In Africa, the Mau Mau Land and Freedom War was the first armed confrontation of a sustained kind, which emerged in the post-second world war era. In addition to the restive urban masses were the growing number of miners and cash crop producers concentrated in the rural areas in East, West, Central and Southern Africa. As a political objective, colonial rule had not come to an end with the winning of the war by the Allied forces, as was expected by people who had made sacrifices for this, and who expected recognition for the ideals for which some were sent to war. It was the political mobilization of these social elements, which opened the way towards colonial freedom. Starting in the late 1950s the process of colonial devolution slowly wound down during the 1960s, 70s and 80s. After 1990, South Africa became the last outstanding case of settler-colonial rule in Africa. This was also brought to an end in 1994.

The historical canvas in sum reveals that, while the century started with the establishment of colonial rule, by its final decade political freedom had been achieved by colonially constructed states structured along neo-colonial lines. What such neo-colonialism meant was that while in semblance the new states of Africa enjoyed sovereignty and independence in all areas of activity, in fact, the economic, social and cultural lives of these states continued to be dominated by structures and relations put in place under colonialism. The era of Palme Dutt and Nkrumah's 'New Colonialism' has in Africa flourished for four decades.[2] The profounder meaning of neo-colonialism has not been lost on us. Krobo Edusei, ministerial *enfant terrible* of the Nkrumah regime, asked to explain what neo-colonialism meant retorted that it meant, *Kwesi Broni a kôtè kwangchen* (The white man has gone to hide at the road side – meaning, he has not really gone).[3] But challenges to the neo-colonial order may be emerging as we move further into the 21st century.

Let us retrace our steps to better understand the foundations of 20th century Africa. The era of colonial rule had been preceded by the suppression of the slave trade, both Arab and Western, in order to establish a social basis for *laissez faire* 'free trade'. For part of the 18th and much of the 19th centuries, the British, unlike Portugal and Spain, left trading to their traders. British traders exercised the powers of government. These trading companies played a key role in colonisation of America, South America, the West Indies, Africa and parts of Asia. These companies provided their own protection and were in the names and under

the flags of the colonial powers, laws unto themselves. The colonial powers intervened only when the trading companies proved unequal to the task. Following the abolition of the slave trade, British traders, for example, plunged themselves in West Africa into the palm oil trade. With the industrial revolution in Europe well underway, palm oil became a principal source for the production of soap, margarine and candles manufactured in the factories of Europe for the consumption of particularly the increasing urban populations both in Europe and the rest of the world. It is indeed arguable that it was the need for markets and a pacified consumer population capable of purchasing industrial goods in the colonial areas, which served as the key economic factor for the termination of the slave trade.

During the last two decades of the 19th century when colonial powers annexed colonies and spheres of influence, these powers to different degrees, surrounded the territories they annexed with protectionist tariffs. The economic debate of the period revolved around free trade and protectionism. Colonial annexations provided sources for the exploitation and winning of colonial produce through the sweat and tears of the colonized, who were at the same time markets for the value-added industrial goods produced in the *metropoles*. In order to have consumer populations in the colonies, which had the purchasing power and structural conditions for the purchase of industrially, produced goods, the colonized needed to be drawn into the capitalist economy as either wage earners or people capable of earning cash through either mining or the cultivation of colonial produce. Tax regimes of various sorts, like poll taxes, head taxes, cattle and other livestock taxes, and labour exactions were other instruments for driving the colonized steadily into wage labour. Three decades ago, it was suggested that, with some important differences, the trading position of the majority of under-developed countries in the post-colonial era had increasingly deteriorated, and would continue to deteriorate if trends did not change.[4] What we can today say is that these trends have not changed.

The structural and built-in disadvantages of a system in which one part of the world extracts raw materials while the other part adds value and sells to the labouring masses in both the *metropoles* and the colonies, but particularly in the colonies, was the foundation on which the current neo-colonial system was originally, at least during the last century, constructed. Inherent in this system was the pattern of lop-sided terms of trade, which operate to the present day to the disadvantage, and impoverishment of Africa and the Third World. Myrdal writes that

'.... market forces did not, as in abstract economic theory, work under free competition. There were many elements of monopoly, almost always working in favour of businesses in the metropolitan country and usually, to an extent, condoned or even promoted by the colonial government. .... Decolonization has not by itself changed much of this situation .... Because of their status of underdevelopment, these forces are adverse to their strivings for development'.[5]

The colonial powers with differing degrees of venom and ruthlessness established their hold on the lands and peoples they colonised. The barbarities of the 'Red Rubber' – King Leopold's regime in the Congo Free State – enjoy legendary notoriety in the annals of colonial history. The testimony of Morel and Casement bear this out well.[6] Basil Davidson writes that,

'what was bad in the Belgian Congo had long

been notably worse in the French provinces to the north of the Congo and Ubangui rivers. Here, in 1899, a French Government had installed a close copy of the Leopoldian System on behalf of French and Belgian capitalists, who were eager to reproduce in French territory the same opportunities for ruthless plunder which Leopold had found in the Congo Free State. These hopes were realized. By 1900 the whole wide territory of these French equatorial provinces was parcelled out among forty concession companies enjoying thirty years' charter'.[7]

The subjugation of the Baganda and the razing to the ground of Kampala is celebrated by Lord Lugard in his diaries. The sacking and looting of Benin; the destruction of Kumasi and the subjugation of the Ashanti, the brutal conquest of the Fon, Omdurman, and numerous other savage military activities by imperialist forces in Africa established western supremacy in Africa. The military technology of Richard Jordan Gatling and Hiram Maxim contributed in no small measure to this military superiority of the West over us. Genocide in South West Africa, Tanganyika, the Congo and in other pockets of Africa, marked the bloody way of the westerner in Africa and other parts of the world. The so-called 'pacification' of Africa by colonial powers was the for most part complete by the beginning of the 1st World War. However, armed African resistance sporadically continued until the Nuer rising was crushed in the beginning of the 1930s. African resistance continued mainly in the form of millenarian and messianic movements. Kimbanguism in the Congo and Chilembwe's nativised Watch-Towerism in Nyasaland are good examples. Syncretic churches came to represent nativist reaction to the colonial experience and many of these movements and formations became elements in the creation of more modern proto-nationalism.

By the end of the second decade of this century, at the close of the 1st World War, African nationalism, as a westernized anti-colonial reaction was on the move. The 1st World War, which was essentially a war of imperialist rivalry, weakened imperialism. The 2nd World War continued this process. The inter-war years saw a great deal of political ferment as westernized African elites led the way ahead of kings, chiefs, clan and lineage heads in anti-colonial politics.

In 1945, Africa as a continent, counted only four independent states, these being Egypt, Ethiopia, Liberia and racist South Africa. Twenty years later there were 35 independent states. By the 1980, over ninety percent of Africans lived in independent states. The transformation from colonial territories to political independence was for the most part totally conceded by the colonial powers, who assured of the fact that their economic interests were acknowledged by the new elites, were ready for most African countries to allow a fairly uncomplicated transition to political independence. The major exceptions were the Portuguese colonies, Kenya and the English and Afrikaans-speaking settler colonial countries of the south. In these instances anti-colonial wars had to be fought. But in no instance were these anti-colonial wars strategically and tactically geared towards the same political and economic destination as had been the case in post-Second World War South-East Asia. Initial French intransigence was only broken by the application of the charisma and authority of Charles de Gaulle, and this only after Sekou Toure's Guinea had opted for unconditional political independence.

African Anti-Colonial Nationalism

African nationalism is in many respects different from the earlier forms of nationalism which emerged before the 20th century. Together with their Asian counterparts, they shared the element of protest against alien rule. In both Asia and Africa, nationalism carried a strong dose of anti-racism. In Africa as well as Asia it bore as an ideological strand in its make-up the assertion that black or brown peoples had an indelible right to be treated as equals of white people. The colonial colour-bar and the treatment of Africans as inferior social elements even when they were educationally and economically equal to whites was crucial in fermenting the heady potion of African nationalism. Furthermore, it firmly represented an aspiration to technologically and developmentally advance out of conditions of backwardness and relative deprivation. Very importantly, while the earlier nationalisms of the western world were drawn mainly from emergent productive capitalist classes, the ascendant social classes of African nationalism were dominated by small producers, small-holders, westernized clerks, teachers and professional groups in short – petty, bourgeois elements. While the former were as productive, acquisitive and accumulative as well as consumptive, the dominant groups which ushered in nationalist power in Africa had little or no capital bases and were clearly more consumptive than accumulative. It is however arguable that, although the roots of African nationalism have been factorally diverse, it was socio-economic grievances which galvanized the process at crucial junctures. Cocoa trade and disease in the Gold Coast, copper prices in the Congo, cotton problems in Uganda and exploitative wage labour conditions were all examples of these factors.

The Elites

One of the significant results of the colonial experience in Africa is that it created a new set of dominant elements, a minority, who unlike their predecessors were products of the colonial order, and were economically and culturally creatures of colonialism. The colonial process produced elements educated in western schools. Most (except in the Muslim areas) converted to Christian religious practice, spoke English, French or Portuguese, and cultivated western tastes in all areas of cultural life. These were some of the cultural ingredients for the social hybridity to which Kobina Sekyi referred. Social success and upward social mobility was largely dependent on the extent to which they had adapted to westernism in cultural practice.

From the early stages of the western encounter, with the passage of time and the consolidation of the colonial order, the value system of the new order came to totally eclipse the pre-colonial, pre-capitalist social system. Imitation and mimicry of the westerner became part of the social diacritical signs of the elite, which in close concert with the westerner in Africa controlled the social order.

In service of the colonial order, such types, although frequently ridiculed by the westerner, fitted and served well in the colonial scheme of things. The elements were the archetypal 'black skins, white masks' made infamous by Frantz Fanon.[8] In the imagery of Shakespeare, they were the Calibans of Prospero's magic.

But if such types suited the workings of the colonial order, under the changed circumstances of independence, they became strategic misfits whose tragedy was that they were yesterday-men who had inherited states with objectives, which were totally different from those for which these elites had been formed and oriented. The neckties they wore

in the heat of the African sun, the 18th century European wigs the lawyers and judges wore, the French wines which were drunk at the high tables of their university refectories, the fascination with British, American and metropolitan French accents, the stretching and hot-combing of the hair of women to make them look European, the bleaching of black skins to acquire lighter skin colour, went hand in hand with the denigration of traditional African practices and customs.

The elite has been defined as 'those persons who were western-educated and wealthy to a high degree relative to the mass of the population'.[9] In a study produced during the early 1960s, a minimum annual income limit of 250 pounds sterling was given as a guide.[10] The African elite has always represented a very small fraction of the population. While differences existed in terms of their relative sizes as one moved from country to country or region to region, they remained a small minority. Lloyd observed that,

thus the West African states have a long history of educational experience. In both the former British and French colonial territories Africans gained early political training in their legislatures .... Nigeria today (1960s), has nearly 2000 lawyers in private practice and 600 indigenous doctors, in the Eastern and Western Regions, as in Ghana, over three-quarters of the senior posts in the civil service are held by nationals.[11]

In contrast, in French West Africa, even in the late 1950s, few Africans could be found occupying higher positions in the bureaucracy. Frenchmen held senior positions, which required only secondary education. In Tanzania, there were less than a hundred graduates in 1964.[12] The relative paucity in numbers of African elites has been remarkable. Lloyd noted that precise estimates of numbers of elite members, using the criteria of varying levels of education and wealth, have been difficult to make for African states. During the early 1960s, Senegal, with a population of 3,000,000 had about fifty civil servants with a salary of over 2,400 pounds per annum and another 275 earning between 1,200 pounds and 2,400 pounds. The next lower category of civil servants earning over 850 pounds per annum numbered 1,600. In private employment there were 350 Senegalese with a mean income of 850 pounds per annum (as against 1,600 expatriates in the same category). In Western Nigeria, if taxation were trustworthy, only 2 per cent of the adult men earned above 500 pounds per annum. In Zambia only 1,000 persons had twelve years of primary and secondary education, and 2,6 per cent of the adult men had eight or more years of schooling – the equivalent of a full primary education. In Uganda only 5,000 men earned above 300 pounds per annum. In South Africa, with a then population of nearly 11,000,000 Africans, there were only thirty African lawyers and 100 African doctors (with an annual increase of twelve to fifteen a year), and Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) then had only five African doctors, four lawyers and a few administrative officers. Ethiopia had an intelligentsia of 1,000 university graduates, two-fifths trained in the United States and one-fifth in Britain.[13] By the middle of the 1960s, Chad, a country of 3 million people had only 140 people with higher education. At the time of Congo's independence from the Belgians, you could count Africans with graduate level training on the fingers of one hand. It was these minorities who inherited the colonial state. With flags and national anthems to support their make-believe sovereignty, they faithfully carried on as they had been taught, maintaining carbon-copy western sub-cultures in a sea of tradition-bound mass cultures, from which they have

been alienated.

I am in agreement with the African-American artist Leroy Mitchell when he writes that; 'in the 20th century there have been very few persons of African descent who have been able to free themselves from the vestiges of inferiority left by slavery and colonization. Certainly, education alone has not done it ...'[14] This is a fact which many do not readily admit, and which is invariably dismissed outright by most of us when confronted with the question. A number of observations on this would be useful here. The fact that Africans relate to other peoples, particularly to westerners from inferior postures, can be hardly surprising given the fact that for centuries we have been so ruthlessly exploited and enslaved, first by Arabs and subsequently by westerners. Arab slavery has continued into the 20th century and continues to linger in places like the contemporary Sudan and Mauritania. Half a millennium of western slavery and other forms of economic exploitation have left their mark on both slave-master and slave. It was the British colonial governor Sir Alan Burns who with imperial frankness suggested that 'perhaps the most serious failing of the educated Negro, so far as the advancement of his own race is concerned, is his lack of the will for cooperation, the inability to follow for long a leader of his own colour, and the jealous vanity which prompts him to criticise and pull down his brother Negro who has ascended a few rungs higher than himself on the ladder of culture and progress'. In the same text, Burns quotes William Plomer to the effect that in South Africa (but this could be well generalised), 'it has nearly always happened that when one Bantu attains a position where he could use power for the benefit of his race he is either pulled down by the jealousy and faction of his fellow-countrymen or abuses the power he has obtained, for the sake of fraud or tyranny or excess'.[15] Africans need to confront these realities dispassionately and frankly if this syndrome is to be eradicated.

Complicating this further, is the existence of an elite which while supposedly serving as a reference group and leadership for the African masses, in reality, is groomed and contented with imitating the westerner in almost every way possible. This confirms western superiority in the eyes and minds of the masses, but also likewise confirms western superiority in the mind of the westerner. It is hardly possible to treat a person who too readily yields the palm, and who, without fail imitates whatever you do as an equal.

What all this implies is that the contemporary African elite is incapable of leading Africans out of the syndrome of inferiority into fully-fledged self-assertiveness and socio-cultural development. Fanon realised this some forty years ago and his verdict remains outstanding. The argument is indeed, a long-standing one. The nationalist Kobina Sekyi in a letter written to the editor of *The African Times and Orient Review,* (October -December 1917) made the point that 'on the one hand we have the progressive aggressiveness of European industry, and on the other hand we have the complacent decadence of the subject peoples, who believe that by imitating Europe they will raise their respective nations to a level of power, or of efficiency, similar to, if not the same as that of Europe'.[16] Another leader of African opinion in the early part of this century, Attoh Ahuma, makes similar observations.

'The average West African of the Molluscan Order is a clever imitator of everything the Whitman thinks, and does, and says, particularly in the outward appearance and observance. If he doffed his coat and went about in his shirtsleeves in broad daylight, by

reason of our intolerable tropical heat, his Native understudy faithfully followed suit; if, in the cool of the evening, he discarded his headgear, the backboneless myrmidons did likewise. As he lands in the latest things in vogue, his echo takes full notes, and in less than seven weeks, like a puppet or marionette, he sports the identical style and fashion. Thanks to the letters C.O.D., facilities are afforded the young upstart to gratify his unworthy ambition. What the Whitman eats, he eats; what he drinks and smokes, he drinks and smokes, thereby securing what, in his deluded opinion, are considered the Hallmark of respectability, civilization and refinement. If his lord and master holds a cigar in a peculiar manner, it is copied; his gait, mode of expression, his expletives, smiles, laughter and other mannerisms and peculiarities, are all taken in wholesale, and reproduced with the fidelity of an Edisonian Phonograph. These are the things the black wretch in his Bœtian ignorance and folly, regards as signs of perfect manhood – this thin veneer of polish – and there the lesson ends'.[17]

The elite about which these observers wrote have not in substance changed in orientation. They have consistently reproduced themselves and expanded in numbers, in absolute numbers but not in relative terms. If the African elite as it is currently oriented cannot lead Africa forward, where do the answers lie?

The Way Forward

It is 20th century sociological wisdom, since Gaetano Mosca and Vilfredo Pareto's work, that leadership and elites are abiding features of societal organization. All societies, in as far as they have stratificational features, are dominated by leading groups. Be that as it may, what Africa requires is therefore a new elite with a new and different orientation; an orientation which is not bent on the mimicry of the present, a *counter-elite* which is not alienated from the aspirations and culture of mass society. An elite which does not turn its back on the tradition-bound culture of mass society, but rather accepts that as a premise and builds on it. Like the Japanese writer Amar Lahiri wrote many years ago about Japan;

'... the application of western methods did not obliterate or outshine the true native quality and the native culture and understanding. Because Nippon did not assimilate western ideals along with her adoption of western technique, she was able to maintain her traditional character and qualities in toto and, therefore, the urge for modernization was motivated by the sincere desire of the people to produce their own culture in an international form ...'.[18]

Central to this idea is the need to develop education in the linguistic usages of the masses. To do this we need first to disabuse ourselves of the idea that Africa is a Tower of Babel in which thousands of languages are spoken. The implication of the idea of Africa as a Tower of Babel is that there are too many languages for Africans to be able to work in their languages, therefore they must work in colonial languages. The work that we have been doing in CASAS suggests that this is a myth which helps to preserve the cultural and linguistic hegemony of colonially introduced languages in Africa. My finding is that, as first, second and third language speakers, 75 percent or more of Africans speak no more than twelve core/root languages.[19]

If the total population of Black Africa is between 550 and 600 million, the Fula, Pulaar, Peul. Tuculor, Fulful, Fulbe, Fulani cluster of mutually intelligible dialects alone would account for about 50 million, Hausa and its varieties bring up another 40 to 50

million, Oromo, Amharic, Igbo, KiSwahili, Yoruba and Bambara would produce at least another 35 million in each instance, the Nguni dialects, the Sotho-Tswana, the Akan, the Eastern and the Western inter-lacustrine Bantu languages and Luo are between 30 and 35 million per set.

In as far as African development is concerned, the upshot of these facts are that the harmonisation of African languages which show high levels of mutual intelligibility would greatly facilitate the economies of scale in the development of educational, media and cultural materials which could go a long way in strengthening the basis of society for the cultural and social development of Africa. Furthermore, it is the only way of culturally empowering the masses of African society. It is the one way, we can remove the cultural cleavage between the elite and mass society. It provides the key to the methodology of eradicating the stigma of inferiority which the colonial experience has invested in African languages. Indeed, African languages provide the key to African advancement and development.

Africans need to work together in order to deal with the language question. What the logic of the harmonization and standardization of African languages leads directly to is the question of African unity. Africa has no chance of progress without unity. And the respect, which Africans seek, will not be forthcoming until Africans are united. In my view, African unity can only be built on democratic units which celebrate cultural and ethnic pluralism in a non-hegemonic arrangement. It is through the struggle for democracy that the basis for unity can be found. Africanism must be won through Africanist practice structured through democratic institutions. Related to this, is the question of the African diaspora.

Africans in the diaspora were forcibly removed from Africa. Remarkably, the whole subsequent history of African nationalism has been directly linked to the diaspora. Much of the principal ideological architects of African nationalism have either been directly drawn from the diaspora, or such diasporal elements have profoundly influenced the thinking of African politics on the continent. The relations existent between China and her diaspora, European states today and people of European decent elsewhere, India and her diaspora, international Jewry and Israel, needs to be equally affirmed for Africa and Overseas Africans. I am thinking here, particularly of rights which must be extended to the African diaspora - national and citizenship rights. This ultimately makes full sense only in the context of a unified Africa constructed along pluralist organizational lines. I have elsewhere made the point that the right to African citizenship on demand for the diaspora must be conceded.[20] We know that most diasporal Africans have no wish to return to the continent. But the right to return is a right of the African nation, and belongs to Africans everywhere. It is their right. I am inclined to think that Africans in the diaspora are unlikely to gain equality until Africa is united and on the way to technological and socio-economic advancement. In much the same way that overseas Chinese have contributed greatly to the emergence of China as an economic and technological power, the African diaspora could do the same if the permitting conditions are created. We do well to remember J.E. Casely Hayford's point made in *Ethiopia Unbound* (1908) that; A ....the average Afro-American citizen of the United States has lost absolute touch with the past of his race, and is helplessly and hopelessly groping in the dark for affinities that are not natural, and for effects for which there are neither national nor natural causes. That being so, the African in America is in a worse plight than the Hebrew

in Egypt. The one preserved his language, his manners and customs, his religion, and household gods; the other has committed national suicide, ... it is not so much Afro-Americans that we want as Africans or Ethiopians, sojourning in a strange land, who, out of a full heart and a full knowledge can say: If I forget thee, Ethiopia, let my right hand forget its cunning!'. Casely Hayford takes the argument in the opposite direction for full effect and writes that; ' ... how extraordinary would be the spectacle (if), ... having imbibed all that is best in Western culture in the land of their oppressors, yet remaining true to racial instincts and inspiration, customs and institutions, much as did the Israelites of old in captivity! When this more pleasant picture will have become possible of realisation, then, and only then, will it be possible for our people in bondage metaphorically to walk out of Egypt in the near future with a great and a real spoil'.[21] What Casely Hayford did not realise in his time however, is that, the pitfalls of the American experience is now present on the African continent, and is being propagated, without much thought, by an elite which generationally reproduces itself by educating its offspring increasingly away from its linguistic and cultural moorings. On both the African continent and in the diaspora, conscious effort will need to be made this century to strengthen the cultural and historical linkages, which define the uniqueness of the African experience.

Random Observations

Africa's advantage is that it is in global terms at the bottom of the heap in as far as development and democracy are concerned. What this implies is that enhancement of its advancements in these two areas of social life adds to the long-term advantage of humanity as a whole. But Africans must be the instruments of such change in Africa. The forging of social tools and their use to effect such change rests with African ingenuity. This will require single-mindedness of purpose and the creation of a counter-elite which will question the premise of the post-colonial state, its neo-colonial character, its barren, uninspired, unproductive and consumerist culture; its politically predatory character, the comprador syndrome which induces leading social elements to pillage the state and bank the loot in Swiss banks. The theft, disgraceful as it is, is not even put to productive enterprise as has been the case in many parts of post 2nd World War Asia; that sort of economic patriotism has been missing in the behaviour of African elites. They have accepted the economic confines of flag and anthem and allow less movement of labour and capital among themselves than was the case under the colonial regime. The excuse of sovereignty has become a convenience of the attachment of human rights by the state, and its rationing in the relationship between government and civil society.

Post-independence African states have been remarkably unable to sustain democratic practice. During the late 1960s and 1970s in particular, democratic politics was frequently usurped by one-party state structures and military regimes. Coups became, for a period, the dominant mechanism for governmental change. The resultant military-bureaucratic states represented a narrowing of the basis of governing elites, a trend which tended to proliferate as the resource bases of African states shrunk in the face of declining economies. African elites have become renown for the kleptocratic ethos most have cultivated and maintained. However, since the 1980s, democratic pressures have continued to steadily build up. Today, military regimes are out of favour, but, the culture of kleptocracy has not seriously shown signs of diminishment.

Part of the reason for the fragility of the post-colonial state has been that cultural and ethnic features of African societies have too often been treated as anathema, which need to be stamped out in the quest for unified polities. Instead of giving such features democratic form and content, they are forcibly swept under the carpet or denied by pronouncement and fiat, only for them to resurface again as persistent social features, which will simply not disappear, and which have more resilience and life than is simply imagined. We need to be able to turn the tapestry of Africa's ethno-culture to our democratic and developmental advantage and not treat them as signs of primitivism and backwardness.

A lot lately has been made of the upsurge of demand for debt cancellation for the poorest countries of the world. If and when this happens it is likely to be a carrot and stick arrangement much like Bretton Woods institutions currently practice; support based on IMF conditionalities. 'You do what I want and I give you more debt cancellation, and financial support'. Of course debt cancellation is most welcome. Most societies of the poor Third World are net exporters of capital and spend sizable proportions of their national earnings on debt payments. Any relief is useful, but what is really wrong is the system, which makes the poorest of the earth increasingly indebted to a rich few; a rich few who ensure diminishing prices for primary commodities and increasing prices for industrially-based value-added products. It is within this system that 'modern slavery' is constructed.

What many Africans, both on the continent and in the diaspora, need to understand is that colour and biology are no bases for defining African nationality. There are many, in especially Northern and Southern Africa, whose colour would be an African defining attribute in the North American context, but who on the continent would not regard themselves as African. Most Northern Sudanese Arabs and many Mahgrebi could physically be compared to African-Americans. But while African-Americans in nationalist thought generally acknowledge their African roots, South African coloureds or North Sudanese, latter-day Nubians, prefer to see themselves as Arabs or in the South, 'Coloureds'. There are also even light-skinned people, some white, who regard themselves as Africans. Being African needs to be divorced from colour, without denying that the overwhelming majority of Africans are black, and very black at that.

Africanness is a historical and cultural phenomenon and process. Africans are contemporary people who are historically and culturally rooted in Africa. Africans find in Africa, sentiments of identification and linkage to Africa now and in the past. This acknowledgement is uncontested, but it is a past about which intelligent Africans are critical; a past, which must be regarded with a critical gaze and sober appreciation. In the post-colonial era, in particular, romanticization of the past, imaginary idyllic conditions of a by-gone age and a tendency to attribute 'prime evil' to colonialism and the westerner has been the stock-in-trade of political ideologues rationalizing or fantasizing solutions to Africa's developmental backwardness under populist concepts like, Kagisoism (Botswana), African Socialism (Ghana, Kenya, Guinea), Ujamaa (Tanzania), or Humanism (Zambia).

In as far as relations with non-African minorities in Africa are concerned, it is worth noting that Africa has culturally from the depths of time integrated migrant peoples and cultures of various sorts. This phenomenon continues to the present day. Being an African

is therefore an inclusivist idea and process. Africans exist and are also in the making. Africanness is more history and culture than biology; more a development of culture on historical premises, rather than a fixed biological product arrested in space and time.

This new century will see the rise of Africa. But this rise is unlikely to occur without considerable ingenuity, sacrifice, pain and suffering. What we are currently witnessing is the disintegration of the post-colonial state and the cruel wars which are tied to this process. Two-thirds of Africa is embroiled in wars of various sorts. At no time in Africa's history has war on this continent been so generalised. Some of these wars are civil wars while others are interstate wars.

In a recent issue of *The Mail and Guardian,* it was observed that in the 12 months to August 1999, 10 international wars and 25 civil wars were being fought. While globally, there may be slightly fewer internal conflicts they have certainly become more intense. Eleven of the civil wars running out of control last year were in sub-Saharan Africa. About 60% of the deaths from armed conflict also occurred in the region. These included an estimated 15 000 in Ethiopia and Eritrea, 9 000 in the Democratic Republic of Congo and 9 000 in Sierra Leone. Arms exports to the region nearly doubled over the year as different factions fought not only over territory but also for valuable mineral resources. Three-quarters of the countries in sub-Saharan Africa are engaged in armed conflict or confronted by a significant threat from armed groups. Military expenditure in the region totalled $ 11 billion last year, if military assistance and funding of opposition groups and mercenaries are taken into account. Excluding South Africa, spending on arms in sub-Saharan Africa increased by 14% at a time when the region's economic growth rose by less than 1% in real terms.[22]

Africans want peace, but it is questionable if western inspired ideas on peace-keeping and the military structures for peace-keeping are advised purely by altruistic considerations and geared towards the long term interests of Africans. Peace-keeping as purely military exercises without bold and creative political solutions become crude contrivances for maintaining the status quo of neo-colonialism. Peace is crucial for Africa's advancement, but it requires structural changes in inter-state relations in Africa and not simply a question of forcibly guaranteeing the inviolability of state borders and the suppression of all contrary historical tendencies.

The road to peace can only be achieved through unified African efforts involving democratic social elements and groups working in concert for peace. The colonially created borders which are supposed to define nation-states do not coincide with the actual sovereignty and power of African states. The notion of globalization which is, more or less, in practice a euphemism for western hegemony has come to mean the dissolution of the sovereignty of African states, and through the ideology of privatization sponsored by the World Bank and IMF and their backers, African economies are being increasingly denationalised and sold to international finance. All this is being accelerated in this post-Cold War era by the emergence of a uni-polar world dominated by the United States and her European allies. Compounding this is the fact that the economic debt trap, which has crippled African economies, has led to a situation in which African states cannot economically manage or maintain economic control over their ostensible territorial backyards. Warlords and brigands have in many areas gained the upper-hand over legitimate governments both

politically and economically. Warlords and ostensible governments struggle for control over gold, diamond, and oil resources in order to prosecute meaningless wars of attrition against their competitors, while the civilian populations suffer barbarities and dehumanizing humiliations of the most horrific kinds. All this attests to the demise of the post-colonial or neo-colonial state in Africa. My view is that, in the long run, the post-colonial state cannot be saved.

It is however important that we do not continuously blame others for our own ineptitude. The western encounter has two faces, one which undermined African humanity, and the other which introduced technology, science and modernism into African society, even if this was done in an inappropriate fashion which has attempted to by-pass African culture and knowledge, as a point of departure. In any case, the colonialists have in direct form left Africa for almost a half-century. Although neo-colonialism is a reality with which we live today, it is possible to throw off this yoke if Africans are prepared to work together and treat each other as people with histories, cultures and interests which transcend the record of the colonial encounter.

Africa will need, this century, to treat as a matter of priority, the forging of strategic links with the East Asia. This will be crucial for Africa's economic and technological advancement. Current evidence suggests that scant attention has so far been placed on this issue, as Africans are psychologically, economically and politically still beholden to their former slave and colonial masters.

NOTES

1. Basil Davidson, *Modern Africa*. (Longman. London, 1983. p.31-32.)
2. See Palme Dutt, *The Crisis of Britain and the British Empire*. (Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1957 edition. p.156-161.) See also, Kwame Nkrumah, *Neo-Colonialism*. Panaf Books, London. 1968.)
3. I was told this by Akwasi Aidoo, February 20th 1998. Edusei was a colourful and curiously loved figure of Ghanaian politics under the Nkrumah regime, sometimes as a figure regarded with comic relief. Although he had very poor western education he was profoundly gifted in his own language Akan. He is unfairly described by James Cameron as a 'fantastic Ashanti demagogue'. See, J. Cameron, *The African Revolution*. (Thames and Hudson, London, 1961. p.89.)
4. Gunnar Myrdal, *The Challenge of World Poverty*. (Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1970. p.280.)
5. Ibid. p.279.
6. See E. D. Morel, Red Rubber, The Black Man's Burden, Leopold's Rule in the Congo. (London. 1905.) Denis Gwynn, *The Life and Death of Roger Casement*. (Jonathan Cape, London, 1930.)
7. Basil Davidson, *The African Awakening*. (Jonathan Cape, London, 1955. p.84.)
8. F. Fanon. Black Skins, White Masks. Harmondsworth. Penguin Books. 1958.
9. P. C. Lloyd, *The New Elites of Tropical Africa*. (Oxford University Press, London, 1966. p.4.)
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid
12. Ibid. p.5.
13. Ibid.
14. Leroy E. Mitchell, *Africa Come Back*. (Ghana Publishing House, Tema, 1988. p.62.)
15. Alan Burns, *Colour Prejudice*. (George Allen and Unwin, London, 1948. pp.137 and 138.)
16. Kobina Sekyi, "The Future of Subject Peoples", in *The African Times and Orient Review*. (October - December. 1917.) Quoted here from J. Ayo Langley, *Ideologies of Liberation in Black Africa. 1856 - 1970*. Rex Collings. London. 1979.

17. S. R. B. Attoh Ahuma, *The Gold Coast Nation and National Consciousness*. (Liverpool. 1911.) Quoted here from J. Ayo Langley. ibid p.170.
18. See Amar Lahiri, *Mikado's Mission*. (The Japan Times Press, Tokyo, 1940. p110.)
19. See K. K. Prah, *African Languages for the Mass Education of Africans*. (DSE, Bonn, 1995.)
20. See K. K. Prah, *Beyond the Color Line*. (Africa World Press, Trenton, New Jersey, 1998. p.105.)
21. J. E. Casely Hayford. Quoted here from J. Ayo Langley. Op cit. p.206.
22. See Richard Norton-Taylor and Owen Bowcott, "Deadly Cost of New Global Warfare". In, *The Mail and Guardian*. Vol 15, No. 43, October 29 to November 4. 1999. p.20.

Some Reflections on Expanding Sino-African Trade and Economic Cooperative Relations in the New Century

(A point of view from a Chinese scholar)

Zeng Qiang

Introduction

Human society has entered a new century and a new millennium as well. Confronted with the impending waves of economic globalization and an unjust world order, China and Africa are faced with the responsibility of speeding up their respective economic development. As the largest developing country and the largest developing continent in the world respectively, China and Africa should strengthen their trade and economic cooperation on a comprehensive scale, which is the optimum strategic option for both parties. It is of vital importance for both sides to realize their common economic development goal in the 21st century. Therefore, we should look upon Sino-African relationships from a grand strategic and cross-century perspective.

As both China and Africa belong to the Third World and have similar historical experiences of oppression and exploitation by colonialism and imperialism, we have had every reason to develop close relations and support each other in the struggle against neo-colonialism and hegemonism and in our common drive for development. The past 50 years or so have witnessed great growth of firm and friendly relations between China and African countries. At the turn of the century, China and Africa further strengthened their political and economic relations with one another. One may have seen frequent exchanges of visits by high level personnel from both sides and the successful convening of the China-African Cooperation Forum last October in Beijing, all of which have provided a solid footing for the Sino-African partnership to grow in the new century.

As the new century is unfolding, China and Africa need to further consolidate their strategic partnership so as to create a favorable environment for their common goal of development. Though the Sino-African political relations are of great importance, I am going to confine my discussion only to how to improve China's trade and economic relations with Africa in the new century, which is no less important.

Striving to Improve China's Trade Relations with Africa

China's relations with Africa can be traced back to the 10th century BC, when China

started indirect trade with Egypt. In the Ming Dynasty (from 1368AD to 1644AD), the great Chinese traveler Zheng made seven voyages abroad, of which three reached the eastern coast of Africa. The founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949 opened a new chapter in Sino-African friendship. The past 50 years or so have witnessed great development in Sino-African relations, both political and economic.

Since the establishment of normal trade relations in early 1950s, Sino-African trade relations have experienced great development. From 1950 to 1991, the annual trade volume between China and Africa increased greatly from US$12m to US$1.4bn. Since 1991 when China carried out the strategy of market pluralism, Africa has become one of the key markets that China seeks to explore. As a result, Sino-African trade relations have improved further ever since. In less than 10 years from 1991 to 1999, the annual trade volume between China and Africa increased nearly five times from US$1.4bn to US$6.48bn. In 2000, Sino-African trade volumes exceeded US$10bn mark for the first time in history (US$10.5bn). As far as trade increase is concerned, we have really gained a marvelous achievement in expanding trade with Africa. But if a thorough analysis is made, the findings will reveal that there is much to improve in China's trade relations with Africa.

Now the outstanding problems that exist in China's trade relations with Africa are as follows:

a) Trade volume between China and Africa is relatively small. Take the trade volumes of 1998 and 1999 for example, which accounted for only 1.7% and 1.8% respectively in China's total foreign trade, while it registered about 2% of Africa's total import and export volumes. This figure does not comply with the good political relationship and mutual economic complementarity between the two sides. China and Africa need to further tap their trade potentials.

b) Trade imbalance has become increasingly prominent. Since China established trade relations with African countries, she has been enjoying a big trade surplus except for one or two years. Since the 1990s, with the rapid expansion of trade with Africa, trade surplus in China's favor has rocketed from US$0.56bn in 1991 to US$1.73bn. In 1998, China's trade surplus even exceeded US$2.58bn, accounting for nearly half of the total bilateral imports and exports that year. The huge trade surplus hinders expansion of bilateral trade relations.

c) Trade structure needs to be improved. The export products of China to Africa are mainly textiles, garments, small hardware and light industry commodities, whose added value is rather small. Though the percentage of machinery and appliances with high added value has increased from 36.2% to 39.5%, it is still very small in proportion.

d) Trade coverage is not wide enough. The trade volume between China and fourteen African nations accounts for 80% of China's total trade volume with Africa. In 2000, China's trade with South Africa was about one-fifth of her total trade volume with Africa.

e) The quality of product is not absolutely guaranteed. Although China's commodities vary both in quantity and category on African markets, quite a few of them are "cheap but not elegant." This

produces a negative impact on the overall reputation of China's products on African market.

Then, how to better China's trade relations with Africa? The writer of this paper believes that the focus should be laid on objectively analyzing and recognizing the specific features of the African market and making a comprehensive plan for trade relations with Africa.

With 53 independent nations and an area of 30m square kilometers, Africa has a population of over 700m. Besides, it is abundant in resources and well-known as the "storehouse of natural resources" of the world. Since 1994, the overall political situation in Africa is tending towards stability with a good momentum of continuous economic growth. From the long and developing perspectives, Africa is in indeed a large market with great potentials. With the steady economic growth and increase of living standards, the market scale will undoubtedly increase accordingly. However, we should clearly recognize that the current African commodity market is still very limited and the Western countries have held over 65% share of it for a very long period of time. In recent years, such Asian and African countries as India, Malaysia, Singapore, Korea South Africa and Egypt have also expanded their export to Africa. The basic characteristics of the current African market are large in potential, limited in reality and intense in competition. Based on the above analysis, we should pay attention to the following issues in our trade with African countries:

I. Getting actively involved in African markets, while avoiding the tendencies of seeking short-term successes and quick profits.

On the whole, Africa belongs to a resource-based economy, which is chiefly relying on exporting agricultural and mineral primary materials and importing manufactured goods. At present, more than half the export incomes of fourteen African countries come from a single primary product; over twenty African countries rely on export earnings of two or three primary products. Therefore, most African countries cannot spend more than what they earn by exporting primary products. Recently, the substantial decrease of the price of primary products on international market has exerted a negative impact on the export income of African countries. The decrease of export earnings seriously restrains the growth of the import capacity of African countries. Currently Africa's import market capacity maintains at the level of over US$100bn. Although African economy has taken on a momentum of sustained growth in recent years, this kind of growth is basically one of a gradual recovery nature and at a rather slow pace. As a result, the import market of Africa will not expand rapidly in the short-term. It is estimated that it will remain in the range of US$100bn to US$150bn for some years to come.

In view of this objective reality of the African market, we should take the following aspects into serious consideration when planning our trade with Africa:

a) Guarding against the unrealistic idea of substantially expanding trade with Africa in the short-term. We should expand our market share in Africa one step at a time, based on good quality and reputation.

b) Arousing the enthusiasm of Chinese enterprises to go to Africa, striving to push a number of large-scale enterprises with good reputation, products of well-known brand and great competitiveness to Africa, so as to get into the mainstream of

the African economy and set up a good image of Chinese entrepreneurship.

c) Actively making adjustment in our export product structure so as to try to increase the proportion of machinery and electrical appliances and products with high added value and, at the same time, do a good job in relevant services such as after-sales service, maintenance and supply of spare parts.

d) Governments at all levels should guarantee the quality of the enterprises, which wish to go to Africa and prevent notorious enterprises or individual businessmen from going to Africa in order to stop products of bad quality flooding into the African market.

e) The quality of export products is the key to open and occupy markets abroad. We should do whatever we can to make our products inexpensive, elegant, practical, good quality and diversified, and export products, which truly represent China's craftsmanship to African market.

(f) Increasing import from Africa in an appropriate proportion so as to reduce the trade deficit on the African side. This will not only be conducive to resolving trade imbalances but also conducive to the expansion of trade volume between China and Africa. I am very pleased to see that China's import value from Africa last year surpassed that of exports by over US$500m.

II. Aiming at regional markets and striving to expand trade coverage in Africa.

Confronted with the ever-growing trend of economic globalization, African countries are demanding unity and regional integration so as to overcome the negative factors such as small economic scale and market capacity. Since the 33rd OAU summit held in 1997, every following OAU summit has put the issue of speeding up the construction of the African Economic Community at the top of its agenda. In July of last year, the 36th OAU summit was held in Lome, Togo. The representatives of this summit signed the "Draft Charter for the African Union", putting the integration of the African economy a step further. The fifth special OAU summit held in Syrte, Libya last March has brought the African Union a step forward. At present, the required two-thirds approval has been obtained. Now, we are expecting the formal commencement of the African Union. Meanwhile, the ten major African regional economic organizations are speeding up the construction of their regional integration. Before the founding of the African Economic Community, these regional organizations will be the chief players in the African economic arena. In order to promote China-Africa trade and economic cooperation, the Chinese government has set up eleven investment and trade promotion centers in Africa since 1995. These centers are located in Egypt of North Africa, Mali, Guinea, cote d'Ivoire and Nigeria of West Africa, Cameroon and Gabon of Central Africa, Tanzania and Kenya of East Africa and Mozambique and Zambia of Southern Africa. Currently, these "centers" have opened for business one after the other, providing such services for Chinese and African enterprises as consulting, allocating goods, acting as a go-between and seeking business partners etc. These centers have played an active role in promoting Sino-African trade and economic relations. However, there are some shortcomings with regard to the geographical distribution and function of the centers, which need to be improved.

I. *The establishment of the centers should*

be in line with the development of African regional economic organizations.

When establishing such high level trade and economic institutions as the centers, we ought to take into account the balance of their geographical distribution as well as the comprehensive conditions of the countries in which they are to be set up, with the radiation capacity to the neighboring countries in particular. As far as the current situation is concerned, the distribution of the centers is not ideal. Some centers are closely adjoined. Others are not good with regard to the comprehensive conditions of the relevant African countries. We have not set up any center in such countries that have superior comprehensive conditions and radiation capacity as South Africa. We ought to make adjustment to the distribution of the centers in accordance with the characteristics of the development of regional economic organizations in Africa so as to make the centers play their full role of "fanning out to the region" and distributing Chinese goods to every corner of Africa.

II The function of the centers ought to be enriched.

African petty businessmen usually order small amounts of goods and are accustomed to making a deal after seeing the goods, and paying on delivery or after sale. This adds difficulty to trade with Africa. When these centers are established, they do facilitate export to Africa in providing service of allocating goods. If the centers can provide more convenient services in account-settlement, market survey and analysis, and legal consulting, I believe that our trade with Africa will move a step further.

Increasing Investment in Africa

Africa is not only a commercial market with huge potentials, but also an investment market that needs to be fully tapped. Compared with trade, investing in and being directly involved in African economic construction plays a more conspicuous role in consolidating and strengthening China-African friendly and cooperative relations. And this is most welcomed by African countries. Recently, as the overall political situation in Africa tends to be stable, most African countries put economic development as their top priority on their agenda. They are now carrying out an opening up policy, trying to improve their investment climate, actively attracting foreign investment and striving for technological transfer. Many African countries are eager to enhance cooperation with China in the fields of agriculture, processing, manufacture and mining, and in the metallurgic and service industries. It is the right moment for Chinese enterprises to invest in Africa.

Although many Chinese enterprises have begun to invest in Africa at the present stage, few of them are large-scale enterprises. With the deepening of China's reform and continuous development of economic globalization, "going abroad" to develop an export-oriented economy has become the major task in Chinese business circle, which everyone should have to face squarely. But investing in Africa is not an easy job. It needs to be strategized as a whole with every detail carefully studied and planned in order to maximize the favorable factors and minimize unfavorable ones and in mutual interest. In short, investing in Africa should bear Chinese trait and in the fields where China has relative advantages. Such cooperation should open new channels for South-South cooperation.

I. Agricultural cooperation has a bright future.

With a vast land area, Africa is rich in natural resources and has a solid basis for agricultural development. Currently, most countries in Africa are still agricultural countries with a

high population proportion engaged in agriculture. Many countries have a vast but thinly populated area. The cultivated land area accounts for a very small percentage of their total arable land area, with some countries accounting for 10% to 20%. Although Africa has favorable conditions for developing agriculture, its backward production technology, extremely low productivity; low capacity to cope with natural disasters as well as regional and local wars has resulted in food inefficiency. Furthermore, most African countries are food deficient, relying heavily on outside assistance. Of 86 food deficient countries in the world, Africa makes up half the figure. Of 33 nations that are most in need of food assistance, there are 13 in Africa. According to a report by the FAO, there are over 20 million people in Africa needing urgent food assistance.

According to recent World Bank statistics, about 45% of the African population (around 340 million) live below the poverty line, while the poverty proportion in the sub-Sahara Africa is as high as 51%. In order to eliminate poverty, African countries have put forward a set goal to reduce half of its poverty population by the year 2015. To get rid of poverty, the first thing to do is to provide enough food and clothes. Therefore providing enough food for its people is the big challenge that every African country has to face in the new century. China is a big agricultural country. Though its arable land accounts for only 7% of the total arable land in the world, it feeds a population that accounts for 22% of the world's total. China has many strong advantages in intensive cultivation, agricultural irrigation, seed breeding, cultivation techniques, prevention of plant diseases and pests, and the development and application of medium and small-scale farm tools. All of these are very helpful to African countries to develop their agriculture. China and Africa need to explore ways of cooperation to boost Africa's agriculture and relieve the pressure of food shortage.

My suggestion is: the Chinese government and enterprises can select some countries with better basic conditions to set up food production bases either by leasing or contracting or even purchasing local land. These bases will be run by Chinese managers and administrators and worked by local labor. We can also think of starting joint ventures in agricultural development or combine aid programs with food production. The food thus produced can be sold in the local market. In times of natural disasters, the food produced there can also be given to the disaster stricken countries as assistance. Such cooperation in agriculture can produce other benefits:

a) Through the construction of food bases in Africa, we can promote diffusion of our farming techniques and farm tools in Africa, such as well-drilling techniques and equipment and irrigation techniques.

b) Apart from food production, the bases can also plant various kinds of cash crops, engage in animal husbandry and process agricultural sideline products, all of which can help diversify the local economy.

II. Actively participating in the development of African processing and manufacturing industries.

Since independence, African countries have successively adopted "import substitution" and "export-oriented" strategies in the hope to set up their own national industrial systems. Because they deviated from Africa's reality, both policies did not produce satisfactory results. Recently, African countries have universally emphasized the processing of primary products from agriculture and mining

in order to add new value to their products and encourage domestic enterprises to develop a manufacturing industry that uses local raw materials that can be sold in local markets. Some countries even set up export processing zones to absorb investment from home and abroad by providing preferential investment policies.

China is a developing country that also needs large amounts of funds to develop its own economy. As a result, it is hard for China to invest a lot of money in Africa. Therefore, Chinese enterprises at present stage ought to take technology and equipment investments as the key form of investment and money investment as an auxiliary one. That is to say, we should invest in the form of our well-developed technology and equipment in Africa and cooperate with local partners in utilizing local resources and exploiting the local market. Some of the products can also be exported to the European and American markets via African countries. This is a mutually beneficial cooperative way, which is conducive to African economic development, creating more jobs for African countries and African industrial development on one hand. On the other hand, it can motivate the export of China's technology and equipment and semi-manufactured goods. This is a form of win-win cooperation.

At present, Chinese enterprises can consider the following three forms of investment in processing and manufacturing industries in Africa:

a) Transferring production or assembly lines to Africa and selling their products in the local market. Those production lines transferred to Africa to produce TV sets, motorbikes, electric home appliances, small-scale mechanic and electronic products and farm tools have achieved remarkable results, not only increasing job opportunities but enriching local market as well.

b) Transferring well-developed technology and equipment to Africa and assisting African countries to develop local resources. For instance, China is relatively advanced in technologies in textiles, papermaking, construction materials, timber processing, furniture making, plastic products, food processing and food preservation. The equipment of the above fields is also suitable to the concrete needs of African countries. Their products can occupy a great share in African markets.

c) China's competitive enterprises are encouraged to actively participate in international competition by setting up branch companies in the export processing zones of some African countries with better overall conditions. This can expand our participation in the world economy and accumulate experiences for more enterprises to go abroad later as well.

III. Increasing investment in resources exploration and tapping in Africa.

China is a resource-rich country, but on a per capita base it is very poor. With economic development accelerating, China's need for strategic resources grows at a surprising rate. Last year, China's oil import grew by 91.9% and iron ore import by 26.6%. As Africa abounds in resources, cooperation between China and Africa in this aspect has great potentials, which should not be neglected.

Facing up to the Failure of "Racial Democracy" in Brazil

Hisham Aidi

What do the Brazilians who call themselves "prieto," "pardo" and "mestico" have in common? Despite a dizzying array of options when it comes to racial classification, all would be considered "black" by US standards. A DNA study by Brazilian scientists found that 80 percent of the population has at least some African ancestry, and fully half of the nation's 165 million inhabitants consider themselves to be of African descent. Brazil, the largest country in South America, is home to the largest black population outside of the African continent.

But despite the widely held and consciously promoted view of Brazil as a "racial democracy," vast inequalities exist between the country's white minority and the mixed and black majority. Afro-Brazilians live in appalling conditions often concentrated in impoverished, crime-ridden favelas (slums) of Brazil's large urban centers; very few Afro-Brazilians are in government, whether in the legislature, state bureaucracy or the military. Afro-Brazilians have also long been excluded from the civil service and other professions, with newspapers advertising private sector jobs stipulating "good appearance," a code word for "white." And only two percent of Brazil's 1.6 million college students are black. In an effort to address the racial disparities, Brazil's government (led by sociologist/ president Fernando Henrique Cardoso) recently initiated legislation to create a groundbreaking affirmative action/racial quotas program that would guarantee blacks 20 to 25 percent of the positions at universities, in the civil service and even on television programs.

The Racial Equality Statute, currently being debated in the Brazilian congress, also attempts to rectify the under-representation of Afro-Brazilians in the government (less than 5 percent of Brazil's mayors, governors, senators and members of congress are black) by insuring that political parties allot 30 percent of candidacies for public office to blacks.

The proposed bill is widely seen as the product of pressure from Brazil's quilombos, communities of Afro-Brazilians who occupy villages originally founded by runaway slaves. Quilombos, numbering an estimated 1000, have been fighting for ownership rights to the land they have inhabited for years and now spearhead Brazil's black consciousness movement.

Afro-Brazilian leaders often find themselves fighting two battles — one against inequality and another against the notion that Brazil does not suffer the same kind of racial acrimony

that afflicts the United States. Spurning the myth of racial democracy, blacks here speak of exposing Brazil's "racismo cordial," or polite racism.

According to a study published in the newspaper Folha de Sao Paulo, 89 percent of Brazilians said they believed there was racism in the society, but only 10 percent admitted they themselves were racist; 87 percent of those surveyed, however, manifested some sort of prejudice in agreeing with some popular racist statements and admitted having exhibited some racist behavior in the past. Nearly half the Afro-Brazilians surveyed agreed with popular statements such as "Good blacks have white souls."

Critics point to Carnival, Brazil's famous pre-Lenten celebration, as a forum for more explicit manifestations of the racial tensions that exist below the surface of Brazilian society. In the informal segregation of Carnival troupes and samba schools, as well as lyrics of popular carnival songs like "O Teu Cabelo Nao Nega" (Your Hair Can't Deny It) and "Nega do Cabelo Duro" (Hard-Hair Blackie), racial stereotypes and questions of identity are played out openly.

The proposed legislation could also serve to bring into the open issues formerly obscured in Brazilian society. "I see this as a positive development," said Michael Hanchard of Northwestern University, author of Orpheus and Power, a book about Afro-Brazilian movements. "The Brazilian government is at last acknowledging the existence of long-standing inequalities based on racial and phenotypic distinctions. Brazil [in terms of race] has long been considered a special, atypical case; racial distinction has long been considered an American peculiarity. This development is an acknowledgment of the needs of Afro-Brazilians, who are represented in areas of cultural and corporeal expression, but hardly represented politically.

"This is a positive first step, but it will come with a set of problems," Hanchard continued. "First, unlike the United States, there is no 'one-drop' rule, so how does one determine if people are considered black or 'pardo' or 'prieto'? Also, you have conditions of inequality affecting all Brazilians. How should this program be made to provide social access for all?"

"There is a consensus in Brazil that those who should benefit from an eventual affirmative action program for 'blacks' should be those who had self-identified themselves as 'preto' or 'pardo.' But this is the only consensus in this issue," said Professor Antonio Sergio Alfredo Guimaraes of the University of Sao Paolo, a prominent Afro-Brazilian activist and one of the brains behind the racial quotas initiative. "There are two main arguments against affirmative action in Brazil. First, people argue that because everybody has some black ancestry, there is no way to control 'free riders' and opportunists. Second, people argue that we are a poor country and it is not fair to make the life of poor whites even more difficult."

Another point of opposition often heard warns that importing American-style affirmative action programs will not work in the Brazilian context. Some have charged reverse discrimination, while others have said that Brazil's racial situation is not amenable to American solutions. Others have taken issue with the use of the term "affirmative action." Manolo Florentino, a history professor at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, stated that "it is necessary to be prudent in importing explicitly American guidelines," cautioning that the proposed legislation could further inflame racial tensions.

Others dismiss such warnings as politically motivated excuses. "When it's something that benefits the elite, they don't think twice about imitating it," Raimuno Santos, a Roman Catholic friar and educational lobbyist, told the New York Times. "But now that we are talking about importing something that benefits the population of African descent, they say they are against it."

Americans have long been fascinated by Brazil's racial tranquility and apparent absence of racial conflict, despite centuries of white domination. After a trip to Brazil in 1914, President Teddy Roosevelt wrote an article titled "Brazil and the Negro," observing that both the US and Brazil had "mixed" populations, and commented on "the tendency of Brazil to absorb the Negro...these white men draw no line against the Negro."

But with that relative tranquility has come a weak and slow-growing black consciousness movement in Brazil. Sometimes its growth was thwarted by outside forces, as when the government in 1937 outlawed the Frente Negra Brasileira, a black political organization created in 1931. The Movimento Negro Unificado (United Black Movement), inspired by America's civil rights struggle and Black Power Movement, emerged in the 1970s but dwindled soon thereafter — though not before proclaiming November 20, the anniversary of the 1695 death of legendary quilombo leader Zumbi dos Palmares, as a National Day of Black Consciousness, an event recognized with increasing participation in recent years.

In his book, Making Race and Nation, Anthony Marx compares the powerful black movements in America and South Africa to the relatively timid mobilization of blacks in Brazil. In the US, Marx argues, Jim Crow provided a target for black protests. In Brazil, "with no clear target of state ideology and segregation policy to organize against — no apartheid or Jim Crow to challenge or reform — little Afro-Brazilian protest emerged, and racial conflict was largely avoided despite considerable socio-economic inequality."

According to Marx, Brazilian elites deliberately avoided creating an American or South African-style system of legal racial domination after witnessing the large slave revolts in the US: "They [Brazilian leaders] were eager to submerge potential racial conflict under the myth of 'racial democracy'...rather than reinforce past images of racial inferiority and domination." While the US used past discrimination to justify new systems of segregation and exclusion, post-abolition Brazil chose to create an ideology of "racial democracy" and to avoid legal distinctions based on race.

Myriad racial categories also hamper Afro-Brazilians' ability to mobilize. A 1974 census presented 134 categories, ranging from "bem-branca" (real white) to "bailano" (ebony). In the most recent census only 6 percent of Brazilians classified themselves as black, while 40 percent preferred the term "pardo" ("brown") – and others chose one of the 100 different terms to describe their skin tone: "criolo," "moreno," "mulato", "mestico."

In addition, Afro-Brazilians struggle against a dominant history that paints Brazilian slavery as relatively benign, at least compared to slavery as practiced in North America. Theories advanced in the 1930s by noted Brazilian sociologist Gilberto Freyre contended that because of certain Catholic and Portuguese cultural influences, the institution of slavery in Brazil recognized the slaves' humanity, allowed them to marry, own property, and even buy their own freedom. Recent historians, however, note that

Portuguese slavery was decidedly pernicious and cruel; marriage among slaves was rare, property held by slaves was often appropriated, and according to one historian, "Mortality among slave children was estimated to be about 80 percent, with slaves working in the mines generally surviving only for seven to ten years."

Proponents hope the racial quotas bill under consideration will debunk these ideas of "benign slavery" and "racial democracy" once and for all. As Father Alexander Coelho, a quilombo leader told the BBC, "When we started to talk about race, we were accused of bringing racism to Brazil. But the facts show otherwise. Black women especially are marginalized ... most of the poor neighborhoods are black, and there's no racism here?"

Ethiopia and the Black Diaspora: The Career of Dr. Malaku Bayyan

Bahru Zewde

Greek in origin, the name "Ethiopia" has served for many centuries as a generic appellation for the darker races of the less known African landmass to the south of Egypt. It has also often had a particular resonance among Africans and peoples of African descent. This phenomenon has two origins. Firstly, it had its genesis in the Bible, more specifically in the oft-quoted lines: "Ethiopia shall stretch forth her hands unto God". Not only have these words been enshrined as a national motto in the country that has now officially adopted that name, but they have also inspired amongst the downtrodden and the oppressed courage and faith in ultimate redress.

As it turned out, it also came to be identified historically with a country that was among the first to embrace Christianity, in the fourth century AD. As Africans who embraced Christianity discovered the glaring discrepancy between what was preached and what was practiced under white colonial rule, they began to seek alternative frameworks for the faith they had come to adopt. That was the genesis of the independent church movement that was particularly active in southern Africa. Not surprisingly, this movement came to be known by the term "Ethiopianism". A dramatic climax of this mass movement was the famous uprising of 1915 in present day Malawi led by John Chilembwe, which combined both religious and political motifs.

This brings us to the second, and political, basis of the resonance associated with the name Ethiopia. It arose from the unique status that Ethiopia came to acquire as the only African country to safeguard its independence from the colonial onslaught by force of arms. At Adwa in 1896, Ethiopian troops led by Emperor Menelik II scored a decisive military victory over Italy. That victory was important not only for Ethiopia but also for other Africans and peoples of African descent. It showed that white rule was not the norm, as it had seemed to appear by the last quarter of the nineteenth century. It sowed the seeds of hope for future liberation from white colonial or supremacist rule, as the case might be.

Although it took more than half a century, that hope was not in vain. Colonial rule did come to an end. Likewise, its worst manifestations — apartheid in South Africa and the color bar in the United States — have also now become things of the past, notwithstanding the lingering effects and scars. It is a measure of the powerful political symbolism exercised by the independence of Ethiopia that the flags of many independent states of Africa, beginning with the pioneer state of Ghana, who attained independence in 1957, show a variation of one

kind or another on the Ethiopian tricolor (green, yellow and red). It is also perhaps not an accident that the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa, became in 1963 the venue for the historic conference of African heads of states that saw the signing of the charter of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), which continues to have its headquarters in Addis.

The OAU was the culmination of the Pan-African movement that had its genesis in the first quarter of the twentieth century. It was spearheaded by such luminaries in the history of African-American liberation as William Du Bois and Marcus Garvey. For some decades, it remained an African-American movement. But, as the emerging leaders of Africa — Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya and Kwame Nkrumah — joined the movement, it broadened to include the African homeland. And the thrust of its objective shifted from repatriation of the Diaspora to liberation from colonial rule itself, and eventually some form of continental unity.

Malaku Bayyan (1900-1940) stands out as the one Ethiopian who not only identified to the highest degree with the aspirations of the African Diaspora but also expended considerable energy in channeling its latent solidarity with the Ethiopian cause when the country fell under Fascist Italian rule in 1936. Malaku[1] belonged to a highly committed and articulate generation of Ethiopian intellectuals whose exposure to modern education had forcibly brought home to them the incongruence between the independence of their country and its backwardness. Determined to avert the twin dangers of internal disintegration and external invasion, they recommended an array of reforms ranging from improving the lot of the peasantry to separation of church and state.[2]

Two members of that generation had laid the foundation on which Malaku built the impressive African-American solidarity with Ethiopia that manifested itself in the late 1930s. The first of these was *Kantiba*[3] Gabru Dasta, who had developed a very close identification with the African-American cause since his first visit to America in 1919. Gabru had spent a good deal of his life abroad, either being educated under missionary auspices or serving in various missionary posts from Jerusalem to Zanzibar. Gabru led a second official Ethiopian mission to the United States in 1930. He was accompanied by Malaku, who had briefly come to Ethiopia after finishing his education in the United States. An important outcome of the mission was the securing of an American financial advisor for the Ethiopian emperor.

The strong links that Gabru developed with the African-American community are evident in a letter that he wrote to a certain Edna Jackson of Buffalo, New York. Responding to her expressed interest to emmigrate to Ethiopia, he wrote: "I hope God will protect all my brethren over there, until deliverance comes. I wish all who can come would come 'ere it be too late. Yours for the Race, Kantiba Gabrou". Gabru also leased his land in the outskirts of Addis Ababa to a R. W. Platt, whom he calls "my Afro-American friend".

The second was *Hakim*[4] Warqenah Eshate (alias Dr. Charles Martin). As someone who has spent a major portion of his formative period in white society, Warqenah was sensitive to the problems of racial discrimination. He had been picked up at the age of four from the battlefield at Maqdala (1868) by an officer of the British expeditionary force that had come to Ethiopia with the objective of punishing Emperor Tewodros (r. 1855-1868) for daring to hold Europeans captive. Warqenah's alias actually derived from the officer who adopted and

educated him, first in India and then in Scotland.

In 1927, Warqenah, accompanied by Gabru, had occasion to visit the United States to conduct official negotiations with an American company for the construction of a dam at the mouth of Lake Tana, with the objective of regulating its waters. He took that opportunity to visit the black community in Harlem, an event that was reported in the *New York World* of November 20. Not only did Warqenah convey to the community greetings from *Ras*[5] Tafari (the future Emperor Haile Sellassie, then still heir to the throne), but he also expressed interest in attracting African-American skill to Ethiopia. He had plans to recruit over fifty professionals but could not succeed in attracting even one.

Malaku was well placed to broaden and deepen this interest in and commitment to the African-American community of his illustrious predecessors. A relative of the emperor, he was one of the first three young Ethiopians to be sent to the United States for study. The royal patronage that they enjoyed earned them an audience with President Harding on their arrival and the close interest of his successor, President Coolidge, in subsequent years. They enrolled in Muskingum College in central Ohio in the early 1920s. Intimidated by their unfamiliar names, their fellow students conveniently labeled the three Ethiopians Luke, Mark and Matthew. Two of them, Malaku and Bashahwerad, managed to complete their studies successfully and even went into graduate studies at Ohio State University, the former specializing in chemistry, the latter in commerce and journalism.

Bashahwerad returned to his native Ethiopia on completion of his studies. He was instrumental in attracting a number of African-Americans skilled in music and various crafts. Malaku remained behind to continue his studies, relocating himself to Howard University in Washington DC, where he obtained a medical degree. But it was more than a degree that he acquired in Howard. He also got his wife, an African-American girl working at the Registrar's office. The choice involved a major decision, as he had to abandon his Ethiopian fiancée, who happened to be the daughter of the foreign minister, Heruy Walda-Sellassie, also the most prolific intellectual of that generation.

Like his colleague, Bashahwerad, Malaku also succeeded where Warqenah had earlier failed: drawing African-American talent to Ethiopia. Perhaps the most celebrated of these African-Americans was Hubert Julian, one of the most flamboyant aviators to fly the Ethiopian skies. Known as "the Black Eagle of Harlem", he had made a daring attempt to cross the Atlantic aboard an aircraft that he had baptized "Ethiopia I". The failure of that mission did not deter him from performing some breath-taking parachuting stunts to his Ethiopian audience. Decorated and richly rewarded though he was for these feats, a nearly fatal accident during a ceremony honoring the emperor's coronation incurred royal disfavor and his immediate dismissal.

His more sedate compatriots offered less spectacular but more meaningful service. These included: Colonel John Robinson, otherwise known as "the Brown Condor of Ethiopia", who served as instructor in aviation; John West, who served as a public health organizer and later earned an MD in Howard and was member of the Advisory Board of the Ethiopian World Federation founded by Malaku; and Cyril Price, an educator.[6]

But Malaku's, as well as his country's, real

test was yet to come. In October 1935, Fascist Italy, in a bid to erase the shameful memory of Adwa forty years earlier, opened a two-pronged military offensive on independent Ethiopia. Without any hesitation, Malaku rushed home to do his share in the defence of his country. He served in his professional capacity as a physician in both the southern and northern fronts. When Fascist victory became inevitable, he accompanied the emperor into exile in England. From there, he was dispatched to the terrain with which he was so eminently familiar, i.e. the United States.

Far from being cowed by the onslaught of Fascist arms that he had witnessed at first hand, he was bursting with energy and confidence when he arrived in New York City on 20 September 1936. In the first public address that he gave at the Rockland Palace, he asserted emphatically: "Ethiopia was not conquered and will never be conquered". He continued: "our soldiers will never cease fighting until the enemy is driven from our soil". Writing with even greater confidence in 1939, as the nation-wide resistance to the Fascist occupation picked up momentum, he was more assertive in his predictions: "It is now plain to the world that Ethiopia shall not suffer very much longer. We will not only drive every Italian from our country, but will also drive them out of every other part of Africa in the near future."[7] Given the fact that the Fascist occupation of Ethiopia was to terminate two years later and that it was indeed to signal the end of the Italian colonial empire in Africa (including Eritrea, Libya and Italian Somaliland), these words were to have the ring of prophecy.

Buoyed by such optimism, Malaku launched a vigorous campaign of solidarity with the Ethiopian cause. His target naturally was the African-American community. His major weapon in this respect was a weekly paper that he set up in January 1937, *The Voice of Ethiopia*.[8] An organization known as the United Aid for Ethiopia co-ordinated the collection of funds, primarily earmarked for the Ethiopian refugees scattered all over the world. In 1938, this was replaced by the Ethiopian World Federation: "An Organization Dedicated to the Cause of Right, Justice and the Independence of Ethiopia", as one can gather from the official letterhead. The Federation had as its President Dr. Lorenzo H. King, pastor of St. Mark's Methodist Church in Harlem. Malaku served as First Vice-President and his wife Dorothy Bayen as Executive Secretary. The Advisory Board included in its membership such eminent personalities as Dr. Arthur Schomburg, after whom the famous Schomburg Center in Harlem (New York) was to be named.

But these achievements in the realm of infrastructure belied the enormous difficulties that Malaku and his colleagues faced in their task. To begin with, the United States had not yet fully recovered from the Depression. As the ones who were naturally most hard-hit by it, members of the black community were hardly in a position to raise substantial funds for the Ethiopian cause. Malaku also had to struggle against the vested interests of a number of organizations and individuals who had been collecting funds earlier and saw the establishment of an official body like the Federation as a threat to their activities.

More unfortunately, Malaku was embroiled in a vitriolic and acrimonious polemic with the renowned African-American leader, Marcus Garvey, who had then been deported to England. The controversy presumably arose when Garvey wrote that the black community were under no obligation to come to the aid of Ethiopians as the latter did not consider

themselves black, let alone showing any concern for other blacks. According to Malaku, Garvey had even gone further and trivialized the national motto (which incidentally had also been adopted as the logo of the Federation) by writing: "Probably it is through Italy in Abyssinia that Ethiopia shall stretch forth her hands unto God".

This aroused Malaku into a spirited defence of his country's record as well as a denunciation of Garvey as an instrument of "Fascist and Catholic propaganda" and "a victim of partisan bribe". More soberly, he wrote:

In these trying circumstances of racial history, when the sacred and natural heritage of your racial brothers is ravaged by a militant usurper ... anyone who would subvert the interest of the whole, whether by a cold indifference, plain self-interest, or injudicious aspirations, at once becomes guilty of the most consummate hypocrisy and treachery to the group.[9]

In the end, the fate of Ethiopia was determined on the battlefield in Ethiopia itself. In May 1941, the Italians were driven out of Ethiopia, much as Malaku had predicted. Unfortunately, he did not live to see that day. He had died of lobar pneumonia on May 5, 1940, a year earlier almost to the day before the liberation of his country.

Emperor Haile Sellassie, who had always been fond of Malaku and had watched his indefatigable spirit with keen interest, dedicated to his memory a ward in one of the hospitals of Addis Ababa. But few people are aware of the spirit and commitment embodied in that name.

NOTES

1. Ethiopians do not have a surname; instead they use the first name for both formal and informal identification. The second name is a father's name rather than a surname. Also, owing to the confusion that has always surrounded the transliteration of Ethiopian names, Malaku transliterates his second name as "Bayen", a form that is not adopted here as it is quite at variance with the Ethiopian sound.
2. My book on these intellectuals, entitled *Pioneers of Change in Ethiopia: The Reforming Intellectuals of the Early Twentieth Century*, (Forthcoming). It is being co-published by James Currey Publishers, Oxford and Addis Ababa University.
3. Title equivalent to Lord Mayor.
4. An Ethiopian equivalent of Dr. (physician).
5. The highest of political-military titles commonly used in Ethiopia.
6. For more on African-American immigrants to Ethiopia, see William R. Scott, "Going to the Promised Land: Afro-American Immigrants in Ethiopia," paper presented at the Fourteenth Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, Denver, Nov. 3-6, 1971.
7. Malaku E. Bayen, ed., *The March of Black Men - Ethiopia Leads* (New York, The Voice of Ethiopia Press, 1939. p.7-8.)
8. It is of some interest to note here that the name of that paper was later continued in one of the papers that appeared in post-Liberation Ethiopia. It is not known, however, whether the continuity was conscious or accidental.
9. *The Voice of Ethiopia*, January 1937. The polemic continued into the next issue (3 February, 1937).

William Esuman–Gwira Sekyi (Kobina Sekyi) of Ghana, (1892-1956): Theory of Politics, Development and Cultural Identity

Jabez Ayodele Langley

Introduction

For a number of important reasons I would be remiss if I did not bring an African perspective to bear on a conference on Philosophy and Race and on the contribution of Professor Alain Locke, a true renaissance man and one of the leading lights of the Harlem Renaissance, to the freedom, and literally and aesthetic achievements of the African American. The subject of this paper, William Esuman-Gwira Sekyi or Kobina Sekyi as he was popularly known by his contemporaries in the Gold Coast (now Ghana), was like Alain Leroy Locke born in the latter part of the nineteenth century. He was exposed to English education from the age of eight in Cape Coast in the south of present Ghana in a missionary school run by the Rev. W.T. Balmer, among whose "Faithful Eight" he was numbered. According to his thinly disguised autobiographical essay "The Anglo Fanti," which was serialized in West Africa in 1917 and published in Nancy Cunard's Negro Anthology (1932), he was brought up and educated an Anglophile, came to school in woollen suits and wing collars, and looked down on things African. By the age of 18, he was sent to England to study engineering like his uncle J.B. Esuman, but appears to have changed to philosophy and law. He enrolled in the English Department for his first honors degree but according to one of his letters, was persuaded to enroll in the Philosophy Department by a fellow student from Nigeria (perhaps Delo Dosumu) who had recently graduated from the Department. By the time he graduated from King's College, London University, in 1914 and returned to Cape Coast where he reimmersed himself in Akan-Fanti culture, he had become disillusioned with English culture, and with capitalism and imperialism, as is clear from the poems he wrote while in England notably "The Sojourner" in three parts and the more philosophical "Concerning Man's World". Part I and II of "The Sojourner" namely: "The Loud Interval" and "The Lucid Sustained" in England show the development of his philosophical critique of Western civilization and the change in his political outlook while a student in London.

W.E.G. Sekyi was a contemporary of Professor Alain Leroy Locke. Like him he was trained in the philosophical discipline of

the West, and like him he developed a system of value relativism and a theory of race consciousness and cultural nationalism ('race manhood' or 'Africanity' as he called it) as a political ideology and an African aesthetic to combat colonialism and the racism that went with it.[1] Like Professor Locke, Sekyi was a "philosopher, critic and spokesman," and both felt they were called upon to guide the destiny of the black race through values, culture and education. They also felt called upon by virtue of their intellectual gifts to undertake this mission of political salvation and redemption of the race at a particularly crucial and dangerous time when it was clear to all that President Woodrow Wilson's *Fourteen Points* did not apply to Africans and Africans in the Diaspora and that far from fighting the Great War to "make the world safe for democracy", racism and colonial exploitation continued unabated. Above all, both philosophers regarded African history, culture and art as important sources of race, pride, political action, artistic inspiration and creativity. Separately, both men developed an ethical theory of development and cultural relativism grounded in the African past ("ancestralism") and its cultural legacy. While both men were "cultural cosmopolitans" with universal literary and philosophical tastes, they distinguished the cultural universals (or the arbitrary and subjective universals thereof) from the particulars and defended what may be called "cultural dualism"[2] on behalf of Africans and people of African decent. In both cases they were ahead of their time because the majority of their contemporaries swam with the imperial or dominant tide either out of opportunism or ignorance.

Sekyi, like Locke took personal interest in the struggle of Africans abroad in the 1920s and 1930's. He followed and commented on Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League in the United States which had branches in South and West Africa, and wrote poems and articles for its journal, "*The Negro World*".[3] Two chapters of Sekyi's unpublished manuscript *The Parting of the Ways* (1923) are devoted to an analysis of Garvey's UNIA. He has a copy of Garvey's *Philosophy and Opinions* and some copies of *The Negro World* newspaper. Both he and Professor Locke were in touch with the French African and Caribbean political and literary groups in Paris in the late 1920s and early 1930s.

Professor Alain Locke was a member of the American Philosophical Society and many other professional societies. Sekyi was a member of the Aristotelian Society, the Philosophical Society of Kings College, London University, and the British Ethical Union some of whose distinguished members included: Professor Albert Murray (classicist); Professor Harold Laski of the London School of Economics and Political Science; J.A. Hobson of *Imperialism* (1902) fame, and leading sociologists such as Professors L.T. Hobhouse and Graham Wallas. Sekyi was particularly fond of the growing number of literary clubs in Ghana in the 1920s, 30s and 40s and enjoyed being invited to address them on topics ranging from techniques of good writing to political and philosophical issues. Among the latter, his most famous series of public lectures which, were serialized in the local newspapers, were "Thoughts for the Reflective" and "The Meaning of the Expression Thinking in English", both dealing with the political development of the Gold Coast and with the contact with Europe that culminated in the British annexation of the Gold Coast in 1900.

Like Locke, Sekyi believed in the wisdom and guiding power of the African ancestors, and in

the importance of a people's development being anchored in their history and cultural heritage. He believed this cultural framework was important for the socialization of the youth, and the internalization of Western education and science without the uncritical consumption of their deracinating elements. He believed that development anchored in one's culture would arrest the atrophy of indigenous institutions that was beginning to affect his society and other African societies under alien rule. In his *New Negro*, Locke attempted not only a cultural and social documentation of the New Negro, but also argued that he was focusing anew spiritually and culturally on the black man and developing "a renewed race spirit that consciously and proudly sets itself apart".[4] For Locke, the task of the New Negro was to discover and define his culture, and his philosophical and aesthetic mission was to aid this effort through "the building of a race and defining of a culture".[5] Indeed, one of Locke's students used the term "ancestralism" "to describe the totality of Locke's race-spirit concept, which was grounded in Locke's profound respect for the African past and for the folk spirit developed in the American South."[6] Despite the apathy and ambiguity among many African-Americans, Locke and some of his contemporaries, including W.E.B. DuBois, regarded Africa as a powerful political symbol and aesthetic inspiration. The image of Africa also came to symbolize the racial identity and the cultural inheritance of the New Negro, who had a distinctive racial and cultural contribution to make to the world.

Having introduced the subject of this paper albeit via some comparison with his contemporary Alain Locke, and outlined some of their similarities of philosophy on the question of race, culture and freedom, let me now consider W.E.G. Sekyi's philosophy of racial identity, and authentic, sustainable African development.

* * *

William Esuman-Gwira Sekyi or Kobina Sekyi as he was popularly known, was born in Cape Coast on November 1, 1892. He was educated at Richmond College of West Africa, later named Mfantsipim School, at Cape Coast, the University of London and the Inns of Court (Inner Temple) where he studied philosophy and law respectively. He combined a successful legal practice with journalism, intellectual pursuits unusual in the Africa of his day, and nationalist politics from 1910 to 1954. During the period he was an active member of the Gold Coast Aborigines Rights Protection Society (GCARPS), a member of the Cape Coast **Oman** Council, Achimota Council and the University College of the Gold Coast Council. Throughout his public career spanning forty-six years, he wrote prodigiously on political, legal constitutional and literary subjects, often giving talks to schools and the growing number of 'literary clubs' in the country. He was in delegations to London to protest against acts of the colonial government, appeal cases to the Privy Council or participate in campaigns against foreign monopoly of the cocoa trade. He also served on various commissions of inquiry and constitutional commissions, of which the Coussey Constitutional Commission was the last, declining all fees and sitting allowances.

Brought up as an 'Anglo-Fanti',[7] Sekyi was to develop into one of the most brilliant political thinkers of his time in Africa, and a leading and respected member of the National Congress of British West Africa in the 1920s and of the Gold Coast nationalist intelligentsia. His eloquence in Fanti and English was legendary. As his contemporary, the scholar and politician Dr J.B. Danquah put

it in his obituary: "In his writing he was classic and his English was as high as Latin." He saw himself not as one of Plato's philosopher kings (for he neither believed in party politics nor sought political office) but as 'guide, philosopher and friend' of his people and as a defender of indigenous institutions and values of the rights of the individual against the colonial power. To this end, he was un-compromising in his rejection of party politics which he considered an alien importation that would not take roots on his country's soil, and refused to join Kwame Nkrumah and the opposition to Nkrumah's Convention People's Party, arguing that the experiment with the Westminister model was unsuitable for the political development of the country. The rest of this paper analyzes his philosophy of racial identity (or "race manhood") as he called it, and his ethical theory of the State, and of political and socio-cultural development, which he argued was altogether different from the dominant imperialist paradigm of the time. The conclusion discusses the significance of his ideas for African political and social thought and for the development of contemporary Africa.

Sekyi's Theory of History

Like the classical political philosophers he had studied, Sekyi was deeply concerned about forms of government, man and society, and about political and cultural processes that, with suitable modifications, could be adapted to the traditional Akan-Fanti system of government for modern purposes. There is some evidence that he envisaged an elective scheme or representation in the context of a federation of traditional states, similar to the Fanti Confederation Scheme of the 1860s, which, under the leadership of King Ghartey IV of Winneba, was an ambitious program of modernization within the traditional Fanti political and social system. King Ghartey IV, as Magnus Sampson observed, 'tried to do for the Gold Coast in 1867 what Meiji did for Japan in 1867'.[8]

To reconstruct and adapt the traditional system, however, Sekyi needed not only a model but also a theory of history and a theory of cultural, social and political development. The philosophy on which this theory was based was his theory of evolution or development and his concept of duty or political and social obligation based on naturalistic ethics. These ideas were in the tradition of British, European and American philosophical and sociological thought of the time. What is new about them is the way Sekyi Africanized or indigenized them in a brilliant and original manner to develop a theory of indigenous African development, law and sovereignty, and of individual rights and political obligations.

Sekyi viewed history as a cycle of evolution from a primitive society of hunters and gatherers to an agrarian and industrial society, and in terms of the rise and decline of nations. For him, nations declined partly because of the ascendancy of the nation-state, industrialization, capitalism and imperialism, and the social deprivation and moral decay which he viewed as an adjunct of this process, unlike John Stuart Mill and contemporary nineteenth century philosophers who saw them as incidents of growth and not a mark of decline. This thesis is a recurring theme in his writings, beginning with the earlier pieces in 'Morality and Nature' (1915) originally a paper read to the Philosophical Society of King's College, London; *The Relation Between State and the Individual Considered in the Light of its Bearing on the Conception of Duty* (1918) and his poems, particularly 'The Sojourner' and 'Concerning Man's World' both written between 1915 and 1918.

It is doubtful if Sekyi's theory of history was influenced by Marxist theory even though he may have read some literature. It is more likely that his thinking was influenced by the historians of classical antiquity, and by Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau and contemporary historians, playwrights and social critics like J.A. Hobson author of *Imperialism: A Study* (1902), George Bernard Shaw and Oswald Spengler, author of *The Decline of the West*. He rejected the unilinear theory of history and development and the universalization of the historical experience of Europe as the model to be replicated or followed elsewhere, and criticized fellow Africans who endorsed or recommended the model. For him, there was no such thing as universal history, or the history of non-European peoples, particularly the African people being considered 'irrelevant' or nonexistent, since each people and culture had its own genius and unique contribution to world civilization. In fact, evidence from his private papers clearly shows that he was a precursor of Cheikh Anta Diop and other leading historians of the African past in his efforts to collect materials on the subject, as evidenced in his files on C. Seligman's *Egypt and Negro Africa* and on *Africa Ancient Discoveries*. His poem "Concerning Man's World" also contains a stanza asserting the African origin of civilization.[9] His project on the history of the various states, including the Ashanti Confederacy, is based almost entirely on oral tradition, including customary law. He was uniquely placed to undertake the project giving his interest dating to the foundation of the Cape Coast National Research Association in 1914 and his intensive study of the oral history and traditions of the Fante, which, in fact, inspired his 1918 Ethics MA thesis on *The State and the Individual*. In this he was following in the tradition of John Mensah Sarbah's *Fanti National Constitution* (1906) and *Fanti Customary Law* (1897) and J.E. Casely Hayford's *Gold Coast Native Institutions* (1911), although he seems to have had a more ambitious legal and political book in mind.[10] He was also in touch with Dr Carter Woodson, the editor of the Journal of Negro History and the father of African American history on the possibility of contributing an article on the Akan-Fanti people but the project did not materialize.[11] He acquired knowledge of customary law and local history from **Akyiami** (linguists or spokesmen of the Paramount Chiefs), Paramount Chiefs such as Nana Bassayin, **Omanhin** of Wassaw Amanfi, lawyers such as S.H. Brew also known as Prince Brew of Dunquah who was one of the architects of the Fanti Confederation, Chiefs such as his grandfather Kofi Sekyi, Esuon Wiredu of Bisardzi, Yamoah III of Arkra, Sam Amissah, and **Tufuhim** George Moore of Cape Coast. His Gold Coast history project includes files on:

a) The history of Anomabu: The formation of the town of Anomabu.
b) The Negro's belief in **Onyakopon** or paramount God.
c) The Constitution of the Ashanti Kingdom.
d) The origin of Wassaw (traditions).
e) The history of Elmina (the opening of Lagoon Benya).
f) The history of Tekyiman.
g) The arrival of the Mfantis on the coast.
h) Tribal characteristics.
i) The emigration of the people of Akyem Busume.
j) Some important characters in Fanti history.
k) The origin of the Oath of the **Omanhin** of Cape Coast.[12]

Another file on the Ashanti Confederacy is also contained in his papers.[13] The valuable materials in these files have been used by

scholars to reconstruct the early history of the Fanti.[14] The ambitious oral history project of the Fante states he worked on but never completed for publication has now been realized by one of Ghana's leading historians.[15]

According to Sekyi, the political uses of history or its instrumental value lay in using it to develop national and political consciousness and pride in one's culture. He also viewed history as a means of guiding youth and of transmitting cultural values and enhancing cultural identity in a period of political, cultural and economic change brought about by the imposition of colonial rule. He and the Cape Coast nationalists maintained to the end that the Gold Coast had never been conquered and that the declaration of colony status in 1901 was a usurpation of Fanti sovereignty (based on the Bond of 1844 signed between the Fanti Confederacy and the British) and an interruption of the natural evolution of the Fanti state system. According to this view of Ghanaian history, the political history and development of Ghana would very likely have been different from the rest of the British colonies in Africa.

Sekyi used the weapon of theory to buttress his radical conservatism in his struggle against colonial rule. As noted earlier, after his 'Lucid Interval' when he returned to Cape Coast before continuing his legal studies and earning as Master's degree in philosophy, he developed a moral, political and legal philosophy of the state and the individual which strongly influenced his thinking on law, political and social development. His theory of development cannot therefore be properly understood if the three stands of ethics, law and politics are considered in isolation.

The ethical basis of his political and social theory is his paper 'Morality and Nature' and his thesis on *The Relation Between the State and the Individual Considered in the Light of its Bearing on the Conception of Duty.* Three earlier articles, the 'Essentials of Race Manhood', 'Education in British West Africa' and 'The Future of Subject Peoples' must be read in conjunction with the *State and the Individual* and 'Morality and Nature'. At the time he wrote, much of ethics and sociology was written in the context of evolutionary naturalism, in spite of G.E. Moore's criticism in *Principia Ethica* (1902) and Sidgwick's skepticism. Charles Darwin, L.T. Hobhouse and Herbert Spencer continued to exercise a powerful influence on sociology and ethical theory. Sekyi's argument in 'Morality and Nature' should therefore be seen as his criticism of aspects of evolutionary theory which tended to justify the political subjugation of Walter Bagehot's 'Unfit Men and Beaten Races', the European conquest of Africa, and the imposition of colonial rule on the continent and elsewhere on the basis of theories of racial superiority derived from supposedly scientific facts. The first part of his critique can be said to constitute his scientific interest in evolutionary theory. The second part, contained in the 1918 manuscript and in the 1915-17 articles may be seen as the socio-political extension of, or corollary to, the first part and constitute his *moral or philosophical interest* i.e. his consideration of what constitutes the basis of morality, law, sovereignty, political obligation, and political and social development, from an African point of view.

Sekyi's naturalistic ethics begin with the subjective view that 'one can never be moral without conforming strictly to Nature'. In this subjective sense 'natural' is taken to mean the original or essential, as opposed to the acquired, artificial, conventional or accidental, similar to the Stoic attempt to derive positive rules of life in 'conformity to nature' and their

definition of morality as 'right reason in agreement with nature', the latter being a permanent and unchanging standard or norm by which the worth of positive law would be judged. Nature he defined as the totality of things not rational in the sense in which we speak of the human animal as rational as well as all rational beings in the universe.[16] He criticized J.S. Mill and T.H. Huxley for positing a gladiatorial theory of Nature and accused them of applying moral predicates to Nature and judging natural processes according to an ethical standard of right and wrong. If Mill and Huxley accepted that rational agents and their morality are the products of the cosmic process, he argued, then they were inconsistent in branding Nature criminal and non-moral.[17] In his view, they had failed to prove 'the relation of the ethical order of rational agents to the ultra-ethical order of the cosmic process'.[18] Having derived morality from nature, Sekyi questioned whether man with all his scientific and technological achievements had any claims to a theory of morals formulated independently of Nature, and criticized L.T. Hobhouse, then a professor of sociology at London University as an exponent of the latter view in his theory of development. If, he asked, man merely represented a stage in evolution, should he insist on establishing and imposing universal standards? Was he not committing the naturalistic fallacy of deriving what ought to be from what is, such as imposing a universal or unilinear model of development on non-European societies, particularly Africa which was regarded as a continent with no history or accomplishments of its own? His central argument here was that it was one thing to talk about evolution in a neutral or scientific manner but quite another to talk as if evolution necessarily tended in a direction one ought to rate as good. Even if, as a matter of contingent fact, evolution did make for progress, and is therefore good, it would, in his view, be wrong to equate the evolved with the good or the good with the evolved. The English philosopher, Bertrand Russell put the argument forcefully:

If evolutionary ethics were sound, we ought to be entirely indifferent as to what the course of evolution may be, since whatever it is thereby proved to be the best. Yet if it should turn out that the Negro or the Chinaman was able to oust the European, we should cease to have any admiration for evolution... [19]

Sekyi's derivation of the 'good' or morality from nature is not without its philosophical difficulties, and some contemporary philosophers were by no means agreed as to the derivation of 'good'. Henry Sidgwick, for example, did not think that morality could be based on nature: "There is still much controversy" he argued, "as to the precise content of the notion of 'good' ... It is a controversy which ethics has got to work through, and in the settling of which it cannot derive any material aid from sociology". In his view, morality can only be derived from nature "if we introduce a theological significance into our notion of nature attributing to its design and authority".[20] To which Sekyi might have replied that his conception of state and society differed from what he viewed as the artificial development of the state in European thought and practice in that it was an organic whole whose constituent parts were held together not by force or the threat of force but by an internal force, virtue or *custom* associated with the evolution of the Akan-Fanti social and political system.[21] He would certainly have agreed with Sidgwick that it was the role of ethics to establish principles and morality and the concept of the good by virtue of man being first and foremost a social animal. In other words, the concept of the good could not

be explained by reference to supernaturalism or religion but by naturalism. Sekyi's naturalistic ethics thesis was the "the concepts and principles of morality derive their whole meaning from the nature and needs of man as a social being."[22] Thus, Sekyi saw philosophy as a practical activity, as "man's greatest gift" and as "impartial thought of Man and Mortality"[23] that is of value to society because it examines the intellectual and moral basis of human existence and applies critical thought to human welfare.[24] For Sekyi, therefore, ethics was the philosophical basis for the reordering of society and the intellectual framework for the anti-colonial struggle that lay ahead.

In his theory of development, Sekyi distinguished between the social process, the civilization sequences among all societies, as in the development of pre-political society into family and kinship organizations, the political community and the state. He developed these ideas in detail in *The Relation Between the State and the Individual*, showing the evolution of law and the state as a result of increased stratification. He described the evolution of the modern state as the result of increasing artificiality, the creation of new economic and social classes, and the development from customary law to statute law, and law as the command of the sovereign, with the subsequent distinction between the state and society and the resulting conflict of duties in that situation, which he compared to the situation created by the imposition of colonial rule.[25] The 'civilization process' consists in the accumulation of technical knowledge to exploit natural resources and to promote industrial development. In Sekyi's view, in Europe this stage of development was characterized by imperialism and war. He believed that scientific and technological knowledge was transferable but that the 'culture process' was not. Anticipating the German sociologists such as Alfred Weber,[26] he argued that culture was unique and incommunicable and unlike science, incapable of universal validity. The casual laws of science had no applicability to the realm of culture as the latter did not follow any unilinear progression but defied the determinism of science and technology. Uncritical importation would lead to 'denationalization' and development failure. This line of reasoning is evident in his criticism of the Western model of development recommended for Africa in Duse Mohamed Ali's *The African Times and the Orient Review*[27], to which the editor replied that Sekyi "having stated what should not be done should go on and inform us what he believes that we must do to be saved".[28]

Sekyi dedicated the rest of his life to the problems of African development in general and the development of the Gold Coast in particular. In his legal battles with the colonial government, in writings and lectures on the law, and in newspaper articles on politics, education and culture, he made it his mission to educate, to provoke thought and raise national consciousness and pride in indigenous institutions especially the institution of chieftaincy, and their relevance to the present and future development of the country. He did not reject the benefits of British colonial rule except where certain laws and activities undermined traditional institutions and values. He believed that modernization or development should be based as far as practicable on the culture and institutions of the people, not the other way round, if the process was to take root and be sustained and internalized by the people who are supposed to be both the means and the end of development. For social, political and economic development to be sustainable and internalized, and not lead to what he called 'denationalization' and confusion, he believed

the process should be internally located and generated and guided by African values. Careful study of his two poems – the autobiographical 'The Sojourner' and the more philosophical 'Concerning Man's World' – leaves one in no doubt about the profound impact of life in England on the development of Sekyi's ethical theory of the State and political and social development, especially his ideas on 'progress' and 'civilization', on culture and development, on the disparity between modern man's technological evolution and his social evolution. That experience reinforced by the 'lucid intervals' rediscovering his culture and identity with the help of the philosophical legal and sociological training and education he was acquiring at university and the inns of court created a compelling need to undertake a philosophical examination of the Akan-Fanti polity and culture to see if, notwithstanding the socially corrosive impact of alien rule, the permanent and unchanging elements and operative principles of that polity could be found, salvaged or readapted, which might have a bearing on the future of the Gold Coast society, and indeed of African society, and act as catalysts of beneficent evolution and progress.

Sekyi's ethics thesis for the MA degree in philosophy can be understood as the philosophical basis of his reinterpretation of the Akan-Fanti scheme of governance showing the place of man in it, the moral basis of the political order; legitimacy and obligation, and the restoration of a stable political evolution for the country based on Ghana's cultural patrimony. To provide this framework, he had to de-center the dominant imperial (Western) culture and represent the Akan social system and oral tradition which he learned from **Akyiami** (linguists), in the philosophical framework he developed in *The State and the Individual Considered in the Light of Its Bearing on the Conception of Duty* (1918) which differed in material respects from the evolutionary ethics of the time. The problem of race was important to him and his African contemporaries in the British colonies because race was so deeply woven into the very fabric of imperialism and colonial rule and was firmly entrenched as an instrument of power, privilege and control. Although always denied, race was always a key factor in the mechanics of colonial rule, right up to the decolonization period.[29]

Sekyi was born in 1892, four hundred years after Christopher Columbus "discovered" America, and the year New Yorkers dedicated a statue to Columbus. He was a schoolboy at the height of British imperialism and when Ashanti was declared a Protectorate of the British Crown in 1900. He was the grandson of Chief Kofi Sekyi and on his maternal side was descended from a family of merchants, lawyers, journalists and men of public affairs with a tradition of writing books on law and politics. He was also born in Cape Coast which was famous for its schools, nationalist agitation, and as the seat of the Gold Coast Aborigines Rights Protection Society which was established in 1897 and was still in existence (at least on paper) when he died in June 1956. For him and his fellow patriotic intellectuals, then, the burning questions at the end of the World War I in 1918 were: white (British) racism and the paternalistic and condescending forms it took in the British colonies, including his country, and the related question of African identity and future development. Sekyi was perhaps the first Western educated African to develop a philosophical framework for analyzing these problems and finding an African solution to the colonial crisis of identity, values and development. What follows is a summary of Sekyi's ethical theory of development in which was embedded his ideas of a moral

society, duty, political legitimacy and authentic development from which he never wavered, despite the invitation of younger politicians such as Dr J.B. Danquah, Dr Kwame Nkrumah the first President of Ghana, and Dr Kofi A. Busia, Prime Minister under the Second Republic, who believed that the British model of parliamentary democracy they had inherited would work in an independent Ghana.

Sekyi's ethics thesis is in three parts. Parts I and II deal generally with the relation between the state and the individual and the development of the concepts of duty and obligation in this context from the pre-political (family) group to the primitive State and the election of the sovereign. At this stage, governance is based on memory and tradition or custom, not law, and political obligation is based not on legal compulsion but on "natural and free obedience". Although the concept of duty or obligation becomes modified as the state develops and as the sovereign and his councilors begin to specify the ends of government and how these are to be attained by the social group, the stage is now set for potential conflict of social and political duties. The conflict is not real because the sovereign is still revered and obeyed partly out of habit and partly because of that indefinable attribute, mystery or superstition (Thomas Hobbes's "spirits invisible") of the sovereign. When the state begins to be ruled by the will of the sovereign, and law conflicts with custom and morality based on custom instead of supplementing it, the traditional moral sanctions and customary practices erode and "obedience to law begins to be more commendable from the point of view of political prudence than obedience to mere morality or custom unsupported by law ... Disobedience of law begins to be rarer than disobedience of morality. In time even honesty and kindred virtues become matters of policy".[30] Political obligation now becomes a problem as a conflict of loyalties becomes inevitable.

Sekyi concludes Part I with an account of the development of the state to the stage of absolute monarchy in which the monarch, having abused his power, is removed by the nobles and replaced by a constitutional monarch with limited powers, or by a democracy at the one end, or revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat at the other end of the political spectrum.

Part II discusses the central question: What is law and why must I obey it? Here again Sekyi, arguing from his evolutionary ethics and organic concept of the state, distinguishes between law and morality. Law he defines as the command of the sovereign based on the rule of compulsion, and as the creation of the state in its artificial stage. Obedience to law is based on punishment that deters. For this reason, Sekyi argues, the law is outside the person who obeys. Morality, on the other hand, is not outside the person who is moral since it is never possible to elude morality. For this reason, obedience of the moral law is not influenced by the deterrence of punishment:

It is clear, then, that the ethical idea of duty as a course of action followed ... not for a reward or in order to avoid punishment or pain, is possible only where the moral law prevails, that is, by individuals who acknowledge the moral law. When, therefore, the state is ruled by law it is only those who are still under the social influences that can do their duty in the strict meaning of the expression. I have endeavored to show that this is entirely due to the highly artificial nature of the state in its later development.[31]

Part II constitutes Sekyi's conclusions about

the "ethical development of the state" based on the analysis in Parts I and II, and his attempt "to determine the true line and character of human progress".[32] The main conclusions of Part II are: The development of the Western nation-state is "the development of artificiality" and cannot, therefore, be seen as man's progress since "the object of that progress must be to make him less and less a man, to divest him gradually of his human nature and make him entirely artificial ... a product, so to speak, of his own impulsive activity ... Clearly, the development of the State cannot be rightly conceived as involving the progress of man."[33] On the contrary, argues Sekyi, it is the rise of that group or class of persons created by law as distinct from morality that takes place during the later development of the state: "the class of persons who are protected by law although they defy the moral law and obey law itself only in order to avoid being punished".[34] In such a society and government, the 'moral' man is at a complete disadvantage in this 'immoral' society. To borrow the title of one of Reinhold Neibuhr's books, a "Moral Man and Immoral Society" develops at this stage in the growing artificially of the State which, in Sekyi's view, is sometimes referred to by those who do not see far enough as an "Improvement in Nature" but is "in reality nothing other than the supplementation of Nature made defective through human short-sightedness."[35] Here Sekyi is reiterating the theory about race and ethics he had been developing between 1913 and 1918 namely: they develop along autonomous lines anchored in their history and values so long as they follow a development trajectory based on the so-called universalism of Western culture and development experience, which was but another vehicle of Western dominance. Ethics or moral philosophy, then, is the basis of Sekyi's social and political philosophy or racial and cultural identity. As Professor Wiredu so rightly observed: "Ethics ... may quite naturally be considered as a preliminary to political or, more broadly, social, philosophy, which is concerned with the fundamental problems of the social institutionalization of the concept of the good. Social philosophy is, indeed, the crown of all philosophy."[36] In the words of Professor Jowett ... ethics, law and political development are "the warp and woof which run through the whole texture"[37] of Sekyi's political and social philosophy for the reconstitution of the Akan-Fanti body politic to enable it to "resume its interrupted advance towards modernity by normal adaptation to its modern milieu and surroundings."[38] As his son, who read classics at Cambridge University and had a distinguished diplomatic career, noted in a letter to the author :

I have in my possession a collection of his manuscripts in prose and verse, and I have so far managed ... to establish a chronology, thus making it possible to trace the development of his thinking as far as it can be traced. I think, 1910. In so doing, I have come to the conclusion – for instance, based on the evidence of some early verses and master's thesis – that during his university career he developed a moral and political philosophy of the state and the individual which seems to have colored all later political ideas and ideology ... It seems to me the three strands – philosophy, politics and law – interweave and reinforced each other and cannot really be studies in isolation from each other.[39]

As already noted, Sekyi's derivation of morality or the good from nature flows from this naturalistic ethics or naturalism as opposed to religion or supernaturalism. It is clear from his note on religion at the end of his thesis on *The Relation Between the State*

and the Individual Considered in the Light of its Bearing on the Conception of Duty (1918), that religion for him, and in traditional Akan-Fanti, practice has a purely utilitarian function[40] as 'an aid to social uniformity' and for reinforcing reverence for kingly (or chiefly) authority.

By the time he returned to Cape Coast in 1918 (according to his autobiographical poem, "The Sojourner" has was "home again, restored to mental health" after his sojourn in England), Sekyi had ceased to be an "Anglo-Fanti" and had become a Fanti traditionalist and Gold Coast nationalist. With his philosophical and legal training he was regarded as 'an invaluable national asset' and a 'desirable recruit' into the ranks of the nationalist intelligentsia for the current and future struggle against British colonialism.[41] No sooner had he been anointed by the elders than he was writing on "Christians and Fanti Festivals"[42] in the columns of the *Gold Coast Leader*.[43] The article was criticized by some of his contemporaries, notably the Reverend Gaddiel Acquaah of Mfantsipim School, who Sekyi described as "a most rabid Christian", while describing himself as "a very extreme Rationalist". Sekyi was accused of ingratitude to the Christian missionaries who educated him and of advocating to return to **Nanaamism** or the **Nanaam** cult, and to what the revered Aquaah called the "Rum and Gin" theory of Akan-Fanti society. He in turn reiterated his theory of religion in *The Relation Between the State and the Individual*, and dismissed the reverend gentlemen with the remark that "philosophy is not something which can be represented and criticized off-hand by theological fledglings".[44] On religion in general, Sekyi believed that all imported religions were inimical to Africa's development.[45]

As a philosopher trained in the philosophical discipline of the West, but also with a deep understanding of the Akan conceptual scheme, Sekyi viewed his role as philosopher in the tradition of Plato's philosopher kings:

It must be borne in mind that the bloody revolutions of the old days are now obsolete: these are the days of bloodless revolutions, and the leaders of such revolutions are thinkers, realizing the Platonic dream of the time when kings will be philosophers and philosophers kings. The kingdom of the philosopher is not a kingdom built on arms: it will be a kingdom of righteous thought, logical all the way, not afraid to draw inevitable conclusions even as to the demerit of the best beloved, where such demerits exists.[47]

Sekyi also believed that philosophy could help Africans and people of African descent to reclaim what he called their "African soul", "Black soul" or "Africanity",[48] following Edward Blyden, Rev. Mojola Agbebi (alias D.B. Vincent), Bishop James Johnson (Holy Johnson) and J.E. Casely Hayford (W.E.B. DuBois also spoke of the 'souls of black folk' in his book of the same title, (1902)). Sekyi believed that his cultural reclamation would help them realize their true line and path of development as a race, and find salvation for the black race which by the end of the first decade of the twentieth century was, from the perspective of Sekyi and his African and African American contemporaries, in danger of dying under the most brutal forms of colonialism and racism. The DuBoisian Pan African Congress from 1900 to 1945, the Harlem Renaissance and Negro movement, the early nationalist movements in West and South Africa and parts of East and Central Africa in the 1920s, and the literary and political activities of Africans and West Indians in France in the 1920s and 30s should be understood in this racial and anti-colonial

context. Indeed, in verses 13 and 14 of "Concerning Man's World" Sekyi was bold to claim Philosophy for the Black Race:

Man's greatest gift, sublime Philosophy, I
worth a thousand such as he can show
Of his devices for his comfort ...
Philosophy alone can reconcile
Thy life to Nature and to Death, and give
Thy stateless soul content ...
Philosophy is often manacled
With dogma's trammels. The Cartesian Doubt[48]

Is many a time itself bespectacled
With lurking prejudice, that looks without
On men and things, and on Causality
and reason, and from hen doth instant bound,
with one wild leap, to Immortality!
Then let thine own philosophy be sound
And free from superstitious preconceits.

Philosophy is but impartial thought
On Man and on Mortality. It treats
of Life and Death – all else it holds as nought
This is the teaching of Philosophy:
"If thou should'st live, be thou prepared to die!"

In his poem interestingly titled "Mirage", written in the same post-war period, Sekyi addresses Africans and Black people in general, and makes it clear that Africans must learn to think for themselves, and that they should rely on their own efforts and not expect sympathy or support from the white man because this was a delusion.

In Part III of *The State the and Individual* (1918), Sekyi does not quite succeed in his thesis that what he called the artificial state, i.e., the modern nation-state or post-Westphalian state that evolves from the primitive State is morally and socially inferior to the organically evolved State whose law is moral because it is based on Nature and Custom. Instead, he launches into an argument against the doctrine of immortality of the soul, which he tries to link to the argument that if "morality is essentially purposive and must always involve self-consciousness", then it should be considered an experiment by human beings in their efforts to establish a way of life without discord. For this state of affairs to endure, he concludes, it must be based on the continuation of the species.

Sekyi did not mention Europe's African colonies by name or African Americans specifically, although he addresses them as "African" or "Negro", but the thrust and direction of his thesis is clearly pro-African and anti-colonial. It is also pro-development and pro-progress without being pro-Western. It has taken the Western World five centuries since the voyage of Christopher Columbus[49] to understand the difference. Even when the difference is finally recognized, Western scholars such as Professor Huntington persist in treating Africa as "the other". Thus he classifies the main civilization as ... "seven or eight major civilizations: Western, Confucian, Japanese, Islamic, Hindu, Slavic-Orthodox, Latin American and possibly African Civilization".[50] The adverb 'possibly' is heavy with prejudice and doubt, making Africa, as George Lamming said of Shakespeare's Caliban. "... the excluded, that which is eternally below possibility ..."[51] To illustrate his philosophy of political and social development, sovereignty, law and individual rights, which were treated more abstractly in *The Relation Between the State and the Individual*, Sekyi followed in the tradition of J. Mensah Sarbah and J.E. Casely Hayford in his description of the traditional Fanti political and social system, which is summarized below.

For Sekyi, the Akan-Fanti polity was an extension of the extended family or clan. 'Family' and 'State' were not differentiated in kind but only in degree, in a loose federation of states dating from the migration of the Fante from the north-west and the consolidation of the Fante states of the coast in the eighteenth century, where they came into contact with the European trading settlements.

The social organization of the Fante was similar to that of the Asante in three important respects: The **Abusua** or matrilineal clan, the **Asafu** or patrilineal military company which had important military, civic and religious functions in the political and social system, and the traditional religion based on the veneration of the ancestors. In the Akan system, eight exogamous matrilineal and patrilineal clans constituted the major units of society and the matrilineal clan on which lineage was based. Following Sarbah, Sekyi defined family as all persons descended from one female ancestress. The family thus constituted something like a corporation within which all duties and rights including property rights, were collective, with the family elders settling all disputes and having custody of property. Political structure and authority reflected the social organization of lineages into villages, towns and states, with the king or chief at each level assisted by a council. National identity and social cohesion were cemented by the traditional religion, shrines of the chief traditional deities being located at **Mankessim** ('the big city').

Sekyi's more empirical account of the Akan-Fanti system is provided in T*houghts for the Reflective* (1947) where he makes use of Sarbah's *Fanti National Constitution* chapter 1 on the 'Origin and Government of Akan Communities' and discusses the military states of Denkyira and Ashanti as well as various forms of federalism, republicans and elective monarchical systems within the traditional state system. A similar account appears in his *The Social System of the Peoples of the Gold Coast* (1918), which seems to be an earlier draft of his thesis *The Relation Between the State and the Individual.*

With regard to the accountability and limits of the exercise of power by the ruler, Sekyi argued that the traditional Akan-Fanti concept of kingship differed from the European and Asiatic concept of kings as absolute rulers. The Akan-Fanti conception was that the king was the highest public servant in the state (**Oman**). He was an elected constitutional functionary, not a legislator, who must govern according to customary law, which Sekyi described as 'the highest form of law'. The ruler's relationship to his 'subjects' was like that between a father to his children or grand children, there being no corresponding word in Akan-Fanti usage for 'subject'. The people are sovereign and the king is himself a 'subject'. Hence the use of the appellation **nana** or **nananom** (plural) for both king and 'subject'. In the traditional political system, checks and balances consisted of 'a perpetual opposition' in the Council of State of the **Oman**, the **Asafu** or military companies as well as constitutional conventions such as the one in use in Elmina state: **Ehin no ni man** meaning that the ruler is merely the representative of the sovereignty of the people rather than their sovereign or master.

Although there was a traditional distinction between **mpenyinfu** and **mbrentsie**, i.e. between those who were members of the **oman** or state council and those who were not, his did not correspond to the European distinction between commoners and peers: 'the king himself is a subject of the state, a servant of the state who is created and can be deposed by the state without recourse to an

extraordinary or revolutionary act.' The Fanti proverb **Oman ye nsu na ehin nyi adwin a edam**, meaning 'a state I, or is comparable to, a body of water, and the king is the fish (or gem) in it', illustrated the constitutional position of the king. Moreover the king or chief is bound by his oath of office – during his occupancy of the stool or throne. Paramountcy, Sekyi described as an "indefinable attribute of rulership", noting that there was a difference between the paramountcy of the stool and the paramountcy of the stool in relation to land. Blackstone's chapter on English tenures in his *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, he argued, did not apply to the Akan-Fanti doctrine on the king's paramountcy over land. Quoting Sarbah's *Fanti National Constitution*, Sekyi noted that whereas in the Fanti system allegiance is personal, it was both personal and territorial in Ashanti, and that a ruler was not necessarily the owner of any land in his jurisdiction. It was unusual for the principal stool in a state to own all land, for the ordinary state of affairs was one in which every family had its own land. Even in relation to common land, it could not be argued that they were owned by the stool, "for it is the people who can own such lands, and the principal stool or its occupant is the trustee of such lands for the people ..."[52]

On the question of sovereignty in the traditional political system, Sekyi's view was that African ideas of state sovereignty 'differ fundamentally' from the European which deriving from the feudal system were based on loyalty to an individual ruler 'instead of being based, as our institutions are, on loyalty to the people as a whole'.[53] In his view, unlike the European conception of sovereignty which originated from a Hobbesian state of nature characterized by the "war of everyman against everyman" that ended only when out of "fear of violent death" men obey the laws of nature (self preservation) and transfer their 'rights' to a civil power for mutual protection, the traditional African state was conceived as a living organism and personality and not as an artificial or abstract entity. It was based on the notion of "transferred common power" in the personality of the sovereign or Chief, on ancestor worship and on symbolism of the Stool, which embodied the state as an organic whole in the interests of society. Thus, the king, Chief or **Ohin** becomes the custodian of the common sovereignty of the people and is therefore not the African tyrant of popular imagination in the eighteenth and nineteenth century who "utters oracles and governs. ... with a more Despotic Sway"[54] but a limited constitutional monarch bound by his oath of office and by customary law. As a leading African jurist said of the French jurist Leon Duguit whose theory of law and government was remarkably similar to Sekyi's:

Duguit readily admits that customary law is law. Indeed, his sociological evaluation of human groupings as well as his theory of government are concepts which all the main types of African societies can claim for their own. The king or chief and his council of elders are looked upon only as constitutional functionaries who must govern in strict accordance with the traditional norms of political and social behavior. The chief is father of his people who, in their turn, are expected to maintain the social equilibrium by performing their civic duties ... no one, not even the king or chief, was allowed to disturb the social solidarity.[55]

With regard to the rights and the status of individuals in the Akan-Fanti polity, Sekyi treats these in detail in *A Comparison of English, Gold Coast and Akan-Fanti Laws Respecting the Absolute Rights of Individuals*; *Custom and Law in West Africa*, and in *The Study of Our Institutions*, in respect of the law

of succession, the status of women, criminal summons or warrants and land rights. Sekyi's treatment of these rights of African customary law can usefully be compared with the Nigerian jurist T.O. Elias on the subject.[56]

For Sekyi, the most important political symbol in the traditional polity was the Stool (or throne), meaning all the principal Stools originating from the Golden Stool of Ashanti, which symbolized not only Akan-Fanti sovereignty but also "the emblem of national unity ...[and] the container of the national **sunsum** or spirit".[57] It was the living, unwritten constitution and the outward and visible manifestation (the 'plastic theory' as one authority has described it) of the Akan-Fanti system of government. The only other visible expression of sovereignty and nationhood with which he could meaningfully compare the Stool was the Holy Crown of St. Stephen of Hungary. For him and his countrymen, the Stool symbolized the transmission of authority from one ruler or **Ohin** to the next and the political legitimization of the new ruler, which was accomplished through the religious rites and ceremonies connected with the annual Stool festivals. The symbols and rituals also re-affirmed the continuity of the State or **Oman** as the representative of the common sovereignty.

Sekyi's uncompromising defense of the relevance, validity, and rationality of indigenous values and institutions, and his strong defense of them against foreign influences, especially alien rule and Christian missionary influence (which he thought had undermined traditional religion and loyalty to indigenous institutions, was denationalizing the people of the Gold Coast and undermining 'race manhood'),[58] was based on his strong belief that associational life and indigenous institutions are essential to the maintenance of civic culture, for guiding the development of Akan-Fanti society and for steering the society through economic and social change in terms that were meaningful to the people in internalizing change without disrupting the social order. In light of the social and economic changes then taking place in the country, he believed that indigenous institutions constituting the ancestral *res publica* should be strengthened, revitalized and adapted to the new environment since their integrity was being eroded in the clash with an alien culture and a powerful and often culturally insensitive and arrogant colonial bureaucracy. He also believed that traditional values should be strengthened concurrently with improvements in education adapted to African circumstances and racial autonomy to avoid the kind of British colonial education designed to ensure the Africans' "amenability to imperialistic regulation and control" by adapting Western education selectively to "the expansion of the native system of education so as to equip the young native to react in the traditional manner to the previously unknown circumstances of contact with Europe which has all but completely changed their environment".[59] For those reasons, Sekyi was of the view that:

Our children must be taught to read and write, without doubt; but they must also be taught to think. They must study science and its application in the arts and crafts; but neither the one nor the other should be subordinated to the ends of trade. They require first to be proud of themselves, of their nation, of their race. The foundation of stability is self-respect, individual, national, racial. Whatever we do, we must bear in mind that our end is national development as a means to racial unity.[60]

The importance Sekyi attached to the integrative role of culture, indigenous

institutions and traditional values in the development process was finally given official recognition in 1937 in a *Memorandum on a Proposed Institute of West African Culture* at Achimota College composed by the Principal of the College, H.V. Meyerowitz, E. Amu of Achimota College, Dr. Meyer Forte (Institute of African Languages and Cultures, London), Professor F. Clarke and Dr. W.B. Mumford (University of London Institute of Education) with the support of the Colonial Office Advisory Committee on Education. Whether Sekyi was consulted by the authors of the memorandum is not clear, although the project is one he would have supported wholeheartedly. He was a member of the Council of Achimota College. What is clear is that his ethical theory of African-oriented development anchored in traditional value of African aesthetics runs through the memorandum. The memorandum referred to the problem of adapting African education "to African tradition: political, economic, religious, cultural' in a period of transition". The chairman of Achimota Council felt that "the whole question is so profound in its relation to the complicated situation in the Gold Coast that nothing short of an almost revolutionary approach to the subject will be of any real value". The memorandum expresses concern about the negative impact of modernization on African society and about the:

Premature desertion by the African of ancient practices and traditions which have not only served to give unity and cohesion to this society, but have in them elements capable of indefinite development and of assimilation of those European ideas and usages which now exercise a strong attraction.

The memorandum also made the important recommendation that one of the major functions of African culture in the future would be "to receive the historic institutions of Europe, and after a period of assimilation, to return them with a new and vivid light upon their significance". Because of the gradual transition of the Gold Coast from an agrarian society to a semi-urbanized one with a westernized social division of labor and a monetized economy dependent on world markets, the memorandum identified a certain malaise and the anxieties of modernization such as the future of children and their education, and the beginnings of conflict between the traditional extended family and the emerging nuclear family in the Gold Coast. The memorandum observed similar conflicts in the area of religious and ethical ideas. One of the causes of this malaise and uncertainty associated with the transition to a monetized economy was the decay or absence of effective integrative mechanisms in the society. Consequently, a reconciliation had not yet been effected between the economic and social systems of West Africa. Africans, the authors noted, wanted the best of both worlds; clinging to the fundamentals of their traditional ways of life while assimilating European ideas and techniques. The malaise would continue unless there was a program of cultural adjustment and the articulation of a new philosophy of the transition. The memorandum concluded with a very Sekyian prescription of cultural awareness and the relevance of indigenous institutions as effective vehicles of social, economic and political development suited to the needs of the people: "a society must know itself if it is to progress."

Conclusion

Kobina Sekyi died on June 2, 1956. The obituaries, while paying tribute to his patriotism, moral courage, vision and greatness of spirit, were ambivalent in their assessment of Sekyi as a political leader but unanimous in praising him as a great thinker

and patriotic statesman. J.B. Danquah referred to his stubborn and unrealistic belief in the apostolic succession of the Gold Coast Aborigines Rights Protection Society and to his Olympian contempt for the wily politicians whose ambition, Sekyi suspected, was to win power and oppress their own people. The Convention Peoples Party (CPP) owned *Ghana Evening News* praised fierce nationalism and high political principles, in contrast to other politicians. It pointed out, however, that Sekyi had ceased to be an effective political force around 1949-50 partly because of the arrival of Nkrumah and partly because of his inability to see eye to eye with the youth and the "very abstract" nature of his political ideas. To most of his contemporaries, however, Sekyi's greatest contribution to modern Ghana and to Africa was in the realm of ideas. To Danquah he was the last of the great patriotic intellectuals of the Gold Coast and a "perpetual question mark to the running politicians and unproductive intellectuals" of the country. Joe Appiah, a leading nationalist politician and a contemporary of Kwame Nkrumah, compared him to Socrates, while Sir Edward Akuffo Addo and the later Professor K.A. Busia both former Heads of State of Ghana, emphasized the importance and relevance of his ideas to Africa. In F.L. Bartel's assessment, "He (Sekyi) made his greatest and finest contribution as a leader of thought. Aggrey inspired. Sekyi made people think. The people of this country owe their advance to independence to the thought which Sekyi provoked. And yet he claimed no credit for it".

Kobina Sekyi's writings compel us to re-think not only Ghana and African history but also the neglected role of culture in development, and the role of philosophy in African society and in the African Diaspora. As this paper has attempted to show, this rethinking is not only interesting because of the African perspectives involved but also because of the inter-disciplinary perspectives Sekyi brought to bear on the subject of development and culture which, as indicated in the conclusion of this paper, are more relevant than ever to Africans and people of African descent on the eve of the twenty-first century. We can conclude this discussion with the observation that a study of Kobina Sekyi's thought establishes him as a precursor of Leopold Sedar Senghor and the Negritude philosophy school, and as perhaps the first African trained in the philosophical discipline of the West to put philosophy to the service of Africa and the liberation of Black people in general. But he was more than a precursor. He was also one of the earliest leaders of African thought to see through the limitations of Western civilization and point the way forward to Africans and people of African descent, emphasizing the capabilities and potentials they can bring to the world of peoples and cultures, and to the rendezvous of the History that white mythologists of empire claimed as their monopoly.

NOTES

1. For an excellent analysis of the use and color as instruments of imperialism and colonial rule see Christopher Fyfe (1996); "Race, Empire and Decolonization in Africa", paper presented at the University of Edinburgh Center of African Studies Conference on Rethinking African History, Edinburgh, 22-23 May, 1996.
2. James B. Barnes "Alan Locke and the Sense of the African Legacy" in Russell J. Linnemann (ed); *Alain Locke: Reflection on a Modern Renaissance Man*; Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University, pp. 100-108.
3. Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League to Kobina Sekyi, February 20, 1922, Private Letters, 1922. Acc. No. 571/64. Also Duse Mohammed Ali to Kobina Sekyi, Private Letters, Acc. No. 571/61, March 2 and August 19, 1922; Kobina Sekyi to Duse Muhamed Ali, Private Letters, Acc. No. 571/64; July 12, 1922.
4. Locke, quoted in Russell J. Linnemann (ed) op. cit. p.100.
5. Russell J. Linnemann (ed) op. cit. p.100.
6. Ibid. footnote 2, p. 100.
7. For Sekyi's thinly disguised autobiography as well as his study of the colonial acculturation process, see his 'The Anglo-Fanti', which was serialized in *West Africa* (London), 25 May – 12 September, 1918 reprinted in Nancy Cunard's *Negro Anthology* (1932) and his satirical play 'The Blinkards' (1914) depicting 'Anglo-Fanti' society at Cape Coast.
8. Magnus Sampson, *(1937) Gold Coast Men of Affairs*, quoted in Fyfe, Christopher, H (1972) *Africanus Horton*, 99. I am indebted to Christopher Fyfe for correcting me on this point. Horton himself contributed to the ideas for the modernization of the Gold Coast in Chapter 10 (which is entitled "Self-Government of the Gold Coast. Kingdom of Fantee") and Chapter 16 of his book *West African Countries and Peoples* (1868). See *West African Countries and Peoples* with an Introduction to Professor George Shepperson, Edinburgh University Press, 1969. With regard to the Japanese modernization experience, it is interesting to note the references to 'Japanism' in the Gold Coast Press in the 1920s and 30s. More specifically, see J.M. Sarbah, (1906, 240-42) and G. Metcalfe, (1964-46).
9. Sekyi's Paper, *Egypt and Negro Africa*, Acc. No. 372/64 and *Africa, Ancient Discoveries* in Acc. No. 554/64. Sekyi followed in the tradition of Edward Blyden and J.E. Casely Hayford who made ideological use of the African past but made no systematic study of it.
10. L.E.V. McCarthy to Sekyi, 17/12/38. Sekyi Papers Acc. No. 378/64.
11. Sekyi to Carter Woodson, 14/10/20, Acc. No. 571/64, Sekyi Papers.
12. *The History of Various Tribes*, Acc. No. 554/64. Sekyi Papers.
13. *The Ashanti Confederacy*, 1931 – 1935. Acc. No. 362/64. Sekyi Papers.
14. J.R. Sanders, (1980). *The Political Development of the Fanti in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries: A Study of a West African Merchant Society*. Ph.D. Thesis, Northwestern University and "The Expansion of the Fanti and the Emergence of Asante in the Nineteenth Century"; *Journal of African History*, 203, 349-64 quoted in Kofi Baaku (1991) 'Kobina Sekyi of Ghana: An Annotated Bibliography of his writings', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 24, 2, 375-76.
15. J.K. Fynn (1987); "The Political System of the Fanti of Ghana During the Pre-Colonial period" *Universitas* (University of Ghana, Legon), vol. 9, 108-20; *Oral Traditions of the Fante States*, 8 vols (Legon, 1974, 1976) 1983.
16. Morality and Nature, op. cit. p. 55.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid. Sekyi's criticism of Huxley seems to be supported in W.F. Quinlan, (1915), *The Moral Theory of Evolutionary Naturalism.* (Yale University Press, p90-92.)
19. Bertrand Russell. *Philosophical Essays* quoted in A.G.N. Flew (1967). *Evolutionary Ethics*,

London, Macmillan. p. 44.

20. Henry Sidgwick: *Miscellaneous Essays and Addresses.* (London. Mcmillan and Co. Ltd., 1904. p.263.) The argument is stated in detail in Ch. XI 'The Relation of Ethics to Sociology'.
21. See J.K. Fynn, and J.R. Sanders. op. cit., and Sekyi's theory summarized in this paper.
22. Kwasi Wiredu. *Philosophy and an African Culture.* (Cambridge University Press, 1980. p.171.)
23. Kobina Sekyi. 'Concerning Man's World', poem, circa 1914.
24. Kwasi Wiredu. op. cit. p. 62.
25. Compare Sekyi's theory for example, with M. Fried (1960) "On the Evolution of Social Stratification and the State" in Stanley Diamond (ed) *Culture in History.* (Columbia University Press, N.U.) and Field, M. (1965), "Anthropology and the Study of Politics" in Sol Tax (ed) *Horizons of Anthropology.* (Allen and Unwin, p181-90.)
26. Raymond Aron. *German Sociology.* The Free Press of Glencoe, 1964. p43-51.)
27. Kobina Sekyi. "The Future of Subject Peoples" in *The African Times and Orient Review* (London), October-December 1917, p. 78, 94, 109-110.
28. Duse Mohamed Ali, *The African Times and Orient Review*, op. cit.
29. Christopher J. Fyfe (1996): "Race, Empire and Deconolonization in Africa", Paper presented at the University of Edinburgh Center of African Studies Conference on Rethinking African History, Edinburgh, 22-23 May, 1996.
30. W.E.G. Sekyi. *The Relation Between the State and the Individual Considered in the Light of Its Bearing on the Conception of Duty.* Ethics Thesis, MA Degree in Philosophy, University of London, 1918, p. 14.
31. W.E. G. Sekyi, op. cit. p. 22.
32. Ibid. , p. 1.
33. Ibid., p. 23.
34. Ibid., p. 43.
35. Ibid. , p. 24.
36. Kwasi, Wiredu. op. cit. p.172.
37. B. Jowett, Introduction to *The Republic of Plato*, for Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1888, P. viii.
38. Nana Nketsia IV, Chairman's Remarks on the Occasion of the Sekyi Exhibition, Ghana National Archives, December 9, 1993.
39. Personal communication from Henry van Hein Sekyi.
40. W.E.G. Sekyi: *The Relation Between the State and the Individual* (1918): 'Note on the Social Function of Religion', 33-35 for a discussion of the Akan concept of existence and *Particulars: An African Perspective.* (Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1996. Chapter 5.)
41. *Gold Coast Leader*, October 5-12, 1918, p. 5.
42. Ibid.
43. Ibid.
44. *Gold Coast Leader*, December 7, 1918. p.6.
45. A.R. Nayyar, (B. Phil.) To Kobina Sekyi, October 21, 1921 – "I am not inclined to favor any religious propaganda which has its source outside Africa, although I would listen to any religious addresses".
46. W.E.G. Sekyi. *Thoughts for the Reflective*, 1923.
47. W.E.G. Sekyi. "The Future of Subject Peoples", *African Times and Orient Review.* London, 1917. p.110.)
48. For an analysis of the African concept of existence and critique of the Cartesian 'coito' in African philosophy and literature, see Kwasi Wiredu, *Cultural Universals and Particulars: An African Perspective.* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, 1996. P.152-126; 140-141) and Achebe Chinua, *Hope and Impediments: Selected Essays.* (New York, Doubleday, 1989. P.50-52.) For a post structuralist interpretation of Carteianism and logocentrism in the context of the development of capitalism, colonialism and the resistance of "the other to colonialism" including the rewriting of history from the point of view of the oppressed, see Couze, Venn, "History Lessons: Formation of Subjects, (Post) Colonialism and an Other Project" in Bill Schwarz (ed): *The Expansion of England : Race, Ethnicity and Cultural History.* (New York, Routledge, 1996. p32-60.)
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F.Z.S. Peregrino (1851 - 1919): An Early Pan-Africanist

Q.N. Parsons

Summary
The career of F.Z.S. Peregrino provides an example of the pan-Africanism that developed within the African Diaspora of the later nineteenth century. It came to fruition in the 1900 Pan-African Conference, but almost lapsed thereafter.

He was born in 1851 at Accra, and went to England in his adolescence. He became an ironworker in the industrial North and Midlands. In about 1900 he emigrated to Pittsburgh, and subsequently lived in New York State. Peregrino crossed the Atlantic again for the 1900 Pan-African Conference. This Conference inspired him to go to South Africa as an agent of pan-African ideas. Based in Cape Town, he immediately began publication of the *South African Spectator* in 1900. He provided support and hospitality for visiting Afro-Americans and African dignitaries, but by 1903 had publicly disassociated himself from 'seditious' Ethiopianism. Thereafter he became closely identified with the limited Coloured electorate in Cape politics. He also developed a policy of friendship with and assistance for African rulers of the Interior. Meanwhile Peregrino continued as South African correspondent of institutions of a pan-Africanist type overseas.

Peregrino's espousal of 'middle class' values, and of the principle of gradualist African participation within the framework of European colonial rule, became sharper in his latter years. He died in Cape Town during 1919, the year of the first Pan-African Congress in Paris.

F.Z.S. Peregrino (1851 - 1919): An Early Pan-Africanist[1]

There has been much academic concentration on Pan-Africanism of the type associated with the 1919 and subsequent Pan-African Congresses. There has been less study of the 'pan-Africanism' of the first and only Pan-African Conference, held in London during July 1900.[2] Many of the circumstances and personalities surrounding it remain obscure. The proceedings of the 1900 Conference were briefly reported in the Press. Its Chairman, Bishop Walters, wrote an autobiography;[3] famous delegates included Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois. But even the convener, Henry Sylvester Williams, awaits biographical study — as do other delegates, especially those of African rather than New World birth. This paper sketches out some details of the life of a delegate to that 1900 Pan-African Conference, F.Z.S. Peregrino, born in West Africa and dying in South Africa with many years in Europe and America in between.

Francis Zaccheus Santiago Peregrino was born in 1851 at Accra.[4] The origins of his

names are a mystery.[5] He came from a Ga family. He claimed that his father was a tobacco manufacturer and that his grandfather had been a fine Arabic scholar who also spoke good English. He said that an uncle of his had been for fifty years one of first Christian ministers of the Gold Coast, and added: "I am supposed to be an Episcopalian".[6]

At about the age of fifteen, F.Z.S. Peregrino left the Gold Coast for England, where he was to stay for twenty-three years. An outline of his residence in England is traceable through marriage and birth registrations. We first find Peregrino in the industrial Midlands. At the age of 26, on 22nd October 1876, he married Ellen Sophia Williams, at Tipton Parish Church in Staffordshire. She was the 22-year old daughter of a local miner, and was not literate. On November 29th she gave birth to their first child, Francis Joseph Peregrino, while they were living in the poor Ladywood area of nearby Birmingham. In the birth registration F.Z.S. Peregrino was described as a warehouse clerk; this implies that he had received a rudimentary clerical education since his arrival in England. In the marriage registration, however, Peregrino was given as an ironworker. It must have been the latter profession that took him to Derby, where Isabella Helen was born in 1878, and then to Gateshead near Newcastle where Louis George H. Peregrino was born in 1881. By 1886, F.Z.S. Peregrino had risen to the skilled position of iron-roller at Bolton in Lancashire, where his daughter Ruth Sophia was born on the 24th January in that year.[7]

Around 1889, his thirty-ninth year, F.Z.S. Peregrino arrived in the United States of America. He remained there eleven years. His skill as an iron-roller in smelting would account for his emigration to the heavy industrial area of Pittsburgh in Pennsylvania — no doubt via a migrant ship from Liverpool which was near Bolton. For some reason he subsequently moved to New York State. The only know incident of his life in that State is that he once visited Amerindian reservations near Black Rock, but from knowledge of his later career certain conjectures can be made about Peregrino's American experience ... Firstly that he realized an identity with pan-Negro or pan-African ideals, which were burgeoning especially after the 1895 International Exposition at Atlanta.[8] This identification may have begun in Pennsylvania, where Peregrino noted there were 'a great many negroes'.[9] Secondly, that he gave up industrial employment when he moved out of Pennsylvania, and engaged himself in journalism of some form in New York State — possibly in the Negro press, maybe in editing as well. Thirdly, that he was quite a prosperous man by 1900 — enough to undertake two long sea journeys, obtain a new home, and set up a publication entirely from his own finances. Fourthly, that Peregrino's experience in America was such that he could reconcile himself to *not* returning there in 1900. Peregrino set sail from America in 1900 with the specific purpose of attending a 'Pan-African Conference' that was to take place in London.[10]

The 1900 Pan-African Conference was held at Westminister Town Hall, London, between 23rd and 25th July. The Conference had been convened by Henry Sylvester Williams, a lawyer born in Trinidad and educated at Dalhousie University in Canada, who was practising in London and travelled widely in Great Britain and Ireland making contacts with black students.[11] The Pan-African Conference was timed to coincide with the 1900 Paris Exposition, which drew American Negro exhibitors across the Atlantic.[12] It also occurred at a time of fervent British public interest in Africa over the events of the Anglo-Boer War.[13]

Speeches made at the Pan-African Conference generally reflected an informed Afro-American reaction to European Imperialism. Strong attack was made on 'the desire of the English capitalists to re-enslave the black man, especially in South Africa.'[14] Speakers were not content to go no further than raise British jingoistic support by deploring Boer atrocities against the 'Natives' of South Africa. A delegate from Dominica singled out the degradation of African labour by exploitative British combines in Rhodesia and Natal, and also decried racial discrimination in British Africa as a whole.[15] Sylvester Williams condemned the compound-system of labour management which had been developed in the Kimberley diamond-fields.[16] These sparks of militancy and awareness of labour-capital relations in the 1900 Conference were encouraged by the Chairman, Bishop Walters of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, as a newspaper report shows:

The Chairman said that some people might think the statements of the last speaker very severe, but they must remember that [this] Conference meant agitation, and why not? All through the ages anything accomplished by the people had been brought about the agitation. The Negroes had at last awoke, and they had to speak out.

Walters' remark from the Chair was followed by the eulogy of a West Indian student at Edinburgh University, called Meyers, for Negro progress in Universities and Colleges. The next speaker was W.E.B. Du Bois, then a professor at Atlanta University, who was reported as reminding the delegates that the Conference was being held "at a most crucial time in the world's history. They were coming rapidly to the question as to what was to be the relation of the white races and the underdeveloped coloured races".[17]

The 1900 Pan-African Conference, by its concern for African brethren in South Africa, seems to have moved the conscience and imagination of F.Z.S. Peregrino. And when the Pan-African Association was formed as a result of the Conference, he would have seen that only one resident officer could be appointed for the Southern African field — Natal.[18] There were unfilled posts for Cape Town, Rhodesia, Orange River Colony and the Transvaal. A postscript to the Conference's *communiqué* added on these vacancies: "the General Secretary will be glad to know of persons who are willing to fill the position(s)".[19] It seems that it was in order to fill the Cape Town vacancy that F.Z.S. Peregrino sailed so soon to South Africa. In response to questioning by white officials three years later, Peregrino said: "I did not leave America with a view to coming to South Africa at all. I went to London to attend the South African Pan Congress (sic), and spent four months in London altogether, then I made up my mind to come here."[20]

Even after Peregrino had sailed, Southern Africa continued to exercise the conscience of the General-Secretary of the short-lived Pan-African Association, Sylvester Williams. He also subsequently went to South Africa to continue his legal career and political practice — and maybe to fill the Orange River Colony and Transvaal vacancies?[21]

F.Z.S. Peregrino arrived in Cape Town on about November 15th in the first year of the twentieth century. He at once set to work to produce a periodical expressing a pan-Africanist outlook. On December 1st, 1900, the first number of the *South African Spectator* appeared — edited, published and entirely financed by Peregrino. Producing this journal once a month, he made his home in Cape Town.[22] Already by March and April 1901 the *South African Spectator* was tackling

with some gusto the racialism of the emergent white trades-unionism at the Cape. Responding to a boycott of non-white labour by an 'English' [white English-speaking] plasterers' union, Peregrino advocated the formation of opposing trade unions — to combine Coloureds, Malays, Blacks and even Afrikaners, against the European ones.[23]

Peregrino became host to visiting black Americans, such as missionaries of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the sea captain Harry Dean.[24] Such men were helping to infuse a pan-African political outlook into the contemporary, largely ecclesiastical, 'Ethiopian Movement' of South Africa. Dean arranged for "my old friend F.Z.S. Peregrino" to be the Cape Town host of the A.M.E. Bishop Levi Coppin who was arriving from the U.S.A.[25] In August 1901 a group of African kings and chiefs, gathered from all over Southern Africa at Cape Town to greet Prince Edward, heir to the English throne, were given a reception by the A.M.E. — Coppin, Peregrino and Dean all being present to lead the singing of "Ethiopia, stretch forth their hands".[26]

Peregrino's *South African Spectator* was at first very vocal in its defence of the A.M.E. against the intolerant slights of the white colonial Press. Through his prestige as an editor, Peregrino in a short time established a niche in the multi-racial Cape society — as an intermediary between members of the non-white élite and Imperial British officials at Cape Town.[27] For example, it was his representations that enabled African delegates from the Transvaal for the December 1901 A.M.E. Conference at Cape Town, to evade official quarantine regulations that had barred their way south.[28]

But Peregrino lost sympathy with the cause of Ethiopianism and the A.M.E. Church in 1903. Though he had praised Bishop Coppin in print so highly in 1902,[29] he broke with Coppin over the question of 'loyalty' to the British rulers of South Africa. Peregrino said that Coppin should have roundly disciplined three African ministers for their anti-colonialist talk. By October 1903, F.Z.S. Peregrino was giving evidence to a government commission, appointed to enquire into the 'Native Question', against the A.M.E. for lax supervision of "reckless and foolish" junior ministers.[30]

Peregrino's evidence before the 1903-5 South African Native Affairs Commission is interesting in that it expresses his views at a seminal stage in his career. One could say he was ceasing to be American and becoming South African in his approach to pan-African problems; becoming a middle-aged Cape Liberal, comfortable in circumstances, accommodationist and anti-revolutionary in attitude. Though one must remember that he may have been intimidated into this stance by the all-white, official nature of the Commissioners. They treated him primarily as an American Pan-African expert, asking him about the A.M.E. and about black American colonization schemes for South Africa.[31] But Peregrino was anxious to stress his commitment to "the interests generally to the black people, and also of the coloured people". He also proclaimed his loyalty to the colonial Caesar, to the gradualist principle in African political and social advancement. He disassociated himself from "advice to the Natives — in particular the raw Natives — which is not altogether right ... that this is their country, and that they have a perfect right to this country".[32]

African education, Peregrino the self-made man told the Commission, must be "Industrial; teaching the natives to work." In saying so, Peregrino conformed to current

educational theory for the lower classes in the British Empire and America. But the idea of "industrial education" in South Africa could as well go along with white settler methods for inducing and maintaining a pool of semi-skilled African labour. So Peregrino added a most significant rider to his contention, which took Liberal educational theory to its logical extension — "that by raising the standard of the living of the natives themselves you will at once find a market for their skill ... Let every man be *self-sustaining*, that is the process of education."[33]

On the question of laws restricting liquor from Africans, Peregrino took an empiricist line. Whereas, he said, only three years before he had been opposed to all such 'class legislation' on principle, he had now been convinced by his observations of the contemporary scene that, for the present, liquor laws had to be different for black and white communities.[34]

As for African political prospects, Peregrino expressed a firm faith in the gradual extension of the Cape Franchise with the growth of an educated and civilized élite. "I have never believed in the indiscriminate enfranchisement of ignorant and savage people." He cited Reconstruction U.S. Negro enfranchisement for his example. But, mindful that his words were being recorded for posterity, Peregrino eagerly added: "The evidence that I am giving here is from a strong sense of duty, and I do not wish it to go on record that I am merely against the people of my own race." He proudly told the Commissioners of his Gold Coast origins.[35]

It should be remembered that F.Z.S. Peregrino's first three years in South Africa had been years of political flux. There was no clear-cut pan-Africanist approach. The various strands of African nationalist activity were no more united than the British and Afrikaner nationalisms that were in open war over their conceptions of 'South Africa'. There was a complex web of antagonisms and alliances of surviving tribal particularisms. There were a few cultural-political parties among the non-white intelligentsia, but of limited effectiveness.[36] There was the amorphous 'Ethiopian Movement', effective in propaganda but not in organization, which was the nearest phenomenon to a general sub-continental nationalism in linking old particularist African aristocracies and new bourgeoisie. It was even equated with Pan-Africanism by one white observer in 1905.[37] But from 1904 especially, the 'Ethiopian Movement' was weakened by dilution of leadership and the decline of the unifying A.M.E. Church.[38]

1904 saw the implementation of Peregrino's faith in Cape Liberalism rather than Ethiopianism as the means for African political advancement. He formed The Coloured People's Vigilance Committee, of which he was the General-Secretary. This body supported the Progressive Party in the 1904 Cape elections[39] — it was therefore possibly an association of Coloured (Eurafrican) electors in Cape Town who held the limited but 'liberal' parliamentary franchise of the Cape Colony. In the 1908 Cape election Peregrino supported the South African Party, because it was being led by a most prominent Cape Liberal, John X. Merriman.[40] In this he was at variance with another non-white political association, also based on Cape Coloured support but then more outward-looking — the African Political (later People's) Organization, which supported the Progressives in 1908.[41]

While the A.P.O. was making (unsuccessful) contacts with other political associations of the new African élite, particularly in the

Eastern Cape,[42] F.Z.S. Peregrino made contact with the old African élite of the Interior. In 1908 Peregrino appeared one-and-a-half thousand miles north in Barotseland (Bulozi in south-western Zambia), in most interesting circumstances that indicate the survival or revival of his pan-continental ideals of African advancement. Modernizing nobles of the Lozi under King Lewanika in Barotseland had imported the A.M.E. as a state-institution in 1903. But this primarily educational venture to strengthen the state against colonial rule had failed by 1905 due to scandalous A.M.E. financial failure at Cape Town.[43] Peregrino stepped into the breach which the failure of Ethiopianism had left. "I am a black man", he introduced himself, "and have acted for years between the black man and the Government in Cape Colony with much success."[44]

Peregrino's stay started "an era of petitions" important in Barotseland's political history. He was most influential, at least in style if not in content, in drawing up a petition from the Lozi to the Colonial Office dated 20th August 1906. The petition objected to the colonial administration of Barotseland by a Chartered Company, the British South Africa Company, which was also the government of Southern Rhodesia. A recent historian of the Lozi nobility has called this document "the Peregrino petition"[45]. Peregrino was also largely instrumental in persuading the council of Lewanika's *kuta* (court) to accept a "Proclamation of the Abolition of Slavery" for the Barotseland subject-peoples in July 1906.[46] Peregrino returned home to the Cape at the end of the year.[47] Cape Town was the South African headquarters of the British South Africa Company; it was also the residence of the High Commissioner who was the paramount colonial authority for British South Africa including Barotseland. Together these agencies effectively neutralized the legal rights of representation that Peregrino claimed on Lewanika's behalf.[48]

Probably as a result of a second advisory tour to Barotseland that Peregrino made in 1910,[49] King Lewanika became Honorary President of the Negro Society for Historical Research. This pan-Negro and pan-African cultural body was founded in April 1911 by J.E. Bruce, the journalist of Yonkers in New York, and later prominent Garveyite.[50] Its membership included two sons of Lewanika as well as important names in pan-Africanism — Blyden, Casely Hayford, Agbebi, Du Bois and Duse Mohammed Ali. F.Z.S. Peregrino was a member; so was Thomas I. Peregrino of Cape Town.[51]

F.Z.S. Peregrino was led, by reasons unclear, to make connection with African rulers other than Lewanika who had survived European Imperialism with some power. In August 1911, Peregrino wrote to the great Christian King Khama III of the Bamangwato in the Bechuanaland Protectorate (Botswana). Khama had been Lewanika's mentor at the time of the Scramble, and occasional correspondence had continued between the two men. But when Peregrino wrote to him from nearby Francistown, a centre on the railway from the Cape to Barotseland, Khama replied:

> Dear Sir,
> I am in receipt of yours of the 5th inst. I note you wish to come and see me someday but I am sorry I cannot allow you to do so.
>
> Yours truly
>
> *Signed* Khama (per G.K.S)[52]

Khama had been forewarned of Peregrino by a brother Tswana Chief, Lekoko Montshiwa of Mafikeng over the border in South Africa,

who had written to him for advice after Peregrino had made an approach.[53] Why had Peregrino visited Mafikeng? Did he meet Lekoko's sophisticated relations, the Molema family (into which Sol Plaatje married), who were prominent in the movement towards a Native National Congress of South Africa?

The question of Peregrino's relation with the Native National Congress (later A.N.C.), which was in the process of formation from regional Congresses in 1911, must remain open till more research on the early movement is produced. But provisionally we may take it that F.S.Z. Peregrino, like J.T. Jabavu, did not find himself in sympathy with the young nationalists of the N.N.C. who were trying to work outside the narrow, white-dominated, parliamentary system of the new Union of South Africa. Only the Cape Province in which Peregrino and Jabavu lived had an African franchise; the other three provinces barred Africans.

Peregrino did not seem to find his involvement in South African party politics incompatible with his continuing pan-Africanist activity. He was the South African distributor of Duse Mohammed Ali's *African Times and Orient Review*,[54] at the same time as he was a political agent in recruiting the Coloured vote of Cape Town — for the Progressives this time, now called the Unionist Party.[55] It may be that Peregrino came under the political patronage of J.W. Jagger, free trader and philanthropist, "the mouthpiece of commerce".[56] Jagger was Unionist candidate for Cape Town Central where the Coloured vote counted. In high-flown rhetorical style, not unlike some contemporaneous West African journalism, Peregrino produced a propaganda pamphlet for the Unionist candidates in the 1915 South African election. It was the time of the Great War so in his pamphlet, addressed to the Coloured voters, Peregrino stressed Empire patriotism (the British Flag, which "knows no colour, race or creed") in favour of the "essentially British" Unionist Party against the Afrikaner parties, the Bond of Botha and the Nationalists of Hertzog.[57] But the prime reason that Peregrino gave for voting for the Unionists may strike the modern reader as odd:

Because they are the followers of CECIL RHODES, who championed the cause of the COLOURED PEOPLE OF SOUTH AFRICA, and who insisted on EQUAL Rights for ALL Civilized Men. [58]

Opposition to the Bond and the Nationalists was understandable, but it was in his condemnation of the British-dominated, Labour Party, that Peregrino showed perception in interpreting the future of South Africa. In 1901 he had attacked the 'English' trade-unions; in 1911 the printers' strike (n.b. he was a publisher himself) had pressed home on him "the principles of white labour" — that white labour would exclude non-whites from trade-unions and from the franchise in the Cape just as was done in the Transvaal.[59] Peregrino pithily, ironically as it turns out, summed up the predicament of the non-white voter with the Cape franchise:

Where is your Home? South Africa. Have you anywhere to fly when this country has become a Hell for you? No! Then see to it you don't commit a political suicide.[60]

Despite his own proletarian background in the most industrialized areas of the most industrial countries in the world, Peregrino's interest in the Black and Coloured Labour of South Africa was that of paternalist management. He ran an employment agency in Cape Town for Coloured domestic servants and tradesmen, charging a registration fee of one

shilling per head.[61] In about 1917 he published his research into African labour conditions around the Rand which, if his publication of 1918 is taken as a guide, would have been more a catalogue of good conditions provided by the mining companies than a chronicle of employee grievances.[62] He was himself an employer, through his continuing proprietorship of the *South African Spectator*,[63] and probably engaged in other commercial ventures —— such as the British Boot & Shoe Repairing Co. which had the same P.O. Box number as Peregrino's employment agency in Cape Town.[64]

It is difficult to perceive F.Z.S. Peregrino's old radical fire during the last years of his life, when he was in his late sixties. From his position as privileged intermediary between black and white, he appears to have degenerated to the position of little more than a placeman of the white power-structure. His last publication, *His Majesty's Black Labourers* of 1918, was written for the government to encourage recruitment for the South African Native Labour Corps. An initial detachment had already been sent to the War overseas, but the military authorities were disappointed by the lack of African response to serve His Britannic Majesty as non-combatant labourers in the mud of France.[65]

Peregrino dedicated his appeal "To the Chiefs, Headman, the Clergy and Other Native Leaders in South Africa". The pamphlet lacks editorial discipline in the order and subject of its paragraphs; it is liberally spiced with mottos such as "If any man will not work, neither *should* he eat"[66] Its literary style is flamboyant even in reference to mundane matters; there are long descriptions of the stores and the liquor regulations at the transit-camp of Rosebank outside Cape Town.[67] There is scarce mention of France; there is almost nothing about the organization, training or living conditions at Rosebank. The pamphlet is frank propaganda, in English and Sotho and Zulu languages, aimed at the African leaders who managed the labour supply.[68] However a lively old Peregrino shines through a complex web of acquired views and prejudices, as can be seen in one characteristic passage:

The Black man is philosophic, and adapts himself to circumstances, hence the absence of anarchists, regicides, and other such pests among them even during chattel slavery in another hemisphere, and his capacity for adaption is reflected in and illustrated at the Rosebank Camp. His demeanour towards his superior officers, his manners of approach, his knowledge of when, and how to salute would satisfy the most captious martinet, and many there are of the superior race who, despite more favourable ancestry and longer training, would do well to emulate and take a lesson or two of this man, who, yesterday a semi-savage and wholly removed from all refining influences, has so easily ascended from those terrible depths today, and to such sublime heights.[69]

F.Z.S. Peregrino died in 1919, his sixty-ninth year. He had lived a full life, extraordinary in the range of his experiences, his contacts, and his many abilities. His career is an outstanding example of the African Diaspora of the nineteenth century — a diaspora promoted by imperial communications, whereas the slave-trade had promoted it earlier, that was not only inter-continental but intra-continental. Peregrino was a product of pan-Africanism in the most literal sense of physical travel. He was also an exponent of a 'pan-Africanism' in ideas, which pre-dates the Pan-Africanism associated with the post-1919 DuBoisian Pan-African Congresses, and which is as yet insufficiently studied. It was an ideology

which one may summarize as seeking not the old Africa, which was conceived of in terms of mutually hostile units, but of a new Africa — united by a self-conscious pan-African elite in both eastern and western hemispheres, Western-educated and espousing Western (especially English-language) democratic ideals.[70] The pan-Africanism associated with the 1900 Pan African Conference differs in degree from the more socialist Pan-Africanism of the DuBoisian Congresses, by being more frankly élitist and bourgeois,[71] but not necessarily any less outspoken in its day.

Even if it did not take root, this was the early ideology of pan-Africanism that F.Z.S. Peregrino in 1900 took to South Africa. In 1924 a usually perceptive missionary journal, published at Lovedale in Cape Province, was not fully informed when it remarked:

The Pan-African Movement ... is the black man's challenge to the white man's dominion. It is true that here in the Union we have hardly, as yet, been touched by that movement, the centre of which is in the United States and which is only beginning to extend the tentacles of its propaganda to the African continent.[71]

NOTES

1. This paper was given at the Commonwealth and American History Seminar, Department of History, Edinburgh University, 12th January 1970. [Editor's note: this previously unpublished paper is published three decades later as unrevised juvenilia by permission of Prof. Parsons now at the University of Botswana. It is dedicated to his then Supervisor at the University of Edinburgh, George 'Sam' Shepperson, now retired as William Robertson Professor Emeritus in Commonwealth & American History].
2. I utilize the distinction between Pan-Africanism and pan-Africanism as in G. Shepperson: 'Pan-Africanism and "pan-Africanism": some historical notes', *Phylon* (Atlanta, Ga.) Vol. xxiii, no. 4, winter 1962, pp. 346-58.
3. Alexander Walters, *My Life and Work.* (New York, 1917.)
4. Date given by E. Rosenthal (comp.) *South African Dictionary of National Biography.* (London, 1966. p.208)
5. The names could be Afro-Brazilian, more identified with "the emerging bourgeois and petty-bourgeois society of Lagos" than with Accra. C.f. G. Shepperson, "The African Abroad or the African Diaspora", p.152-76. In T.O. Ranger (ed). *Emerging Themes of African History.* (London. 1968.)

6.a) Peregrino's evidence before the *South African Native Affairs Commission.* Cape Town. 1904. Vol. ii. p.325-6. (Hereafter *SANAC*)

b) *Somerset House* (Registry of Births, Deaths & Marriages for England and Wales), London. Marriage Certificate of F.Z.S. Peregrino. 22 October. 1876.

c) Who was his uncle? The first African Christian minister on the Gold Coast, Philip Quaque, would seem to have been too old to be Peregrino's uncle. The uncle could therefore have been one of Quaque's juniors in the (Episcopalian) Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. The uncle might even have been a white missionary — though photographs of F.Z.S. Peregrino indicate that he had a dark complexion himself. Or, unlike Peregrino, the uncle may not have been an Episcopalian. (There has recently been a leading Ghanaian Methodist by the name of Peregrino-Aryee.) C.f. J.H. Brewer The Ordination of Philip Quaque *Bulletin of the Society for African Church History.* Vol. i, 1964, pp. 89-91. C.f. photographs in W.H. Ferris, *The African Abroad.* (New Haven. Comm. 1913. p.822.) & F.Z.S. Peregrino, *His*

Majesty's Black Labourers. (Cape Town. 1918. p.30.)

7. *Somerset House.* London. Registration of birth and marriages. Peregrino said he had spent 11 years in the U.S.A. prior to 1900, and 23 in England prior to that; this dates his arrival in America c.1889 and in England c.1866. *SANAC.* Vol. ii. p.323 & 326. Peregrino's mobility was not unprecedented for a Gold Coaster. A Nzima boy, born about 1703, was taken to Germany at about the age of four; he became a lecturer in Philosophy at the Universities of Wittenberg, Halle and Jena. See, N. Lochner Anton Wilhelm Amo: A Ghana Scholar in Eighteenth Century Germany. *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana.* Vol. iii. 1958. Part 3. p.169-79.
8. *SANC.* vol. ii. P.323-24.
9. G. Shepperson, "The African Abroad", p.169. A recent socialist-oriented account states that in 1909 Peregrino claimed to have sat with the master minds of socialism in Europe and America. H.T. & R.E. Simons, *Class and Colour in South Africa, 1850-1950* (Harmondsworth, 1969. p.155.)
10. *SANAC,* vol. 11, p.
11. I. Geiss, The Development of Pan-Africanism in the Twentieth Century Edinburgh, seminar paper, May 1966, p.4 — citing George Padmore. Sylvester Williams 1868-1911 was a strong advocate of the rights of the "British Negro". After the 1900 Conference he was General Secretary of the short-lived Pan-African Association and Editor of its journal, *The Panafrican.* He continued his legal career in South Africa, became a councillor for 1906-7 of the Marylebone Borough in London, lectured in Liberia during 1908, returned to Trinidad and died there on 26th March 1911. C.f. H.S. Williams *The British Negro: A Factor in the Empire.* (Brighton, Eng., 1902.) G. Shepperson The African Abroad p. 169, Liberian National Bar Association to F.O., r. 16th June 1908, Public Records Office, London, F.O. 367/85, *Metropolitan Borough of St. Marylebone* Minutes of Proceedings, vol. ii, Nov. 1906-Nov. 1907, *Africa and the World,* Sept. 1965 p. 10.
12. I. Geiss, seminar paper, p.4. For example one delegate to the Conference, Professor Calloway of Washington, was "Government Commissioner to the Negro section of the Paris Exhibition". (*Scotsman,* Edinburgh, 25 July 1900, p.9.) There was also an African exhibition of sorts in London, a Rhodesian version of Buffalo Bill's 'Wild West Show' called 'Savage South Africa', with Ndebele warriors and families under strict compound control on exhibition. King Lobengula's son, reportedly married an Irish 'actress', but by June 1900 was estranged from her. G. Pauling, *Chronicles of a Contractor.* London, 1926, pp.188-93, *Diamond Fields Advertiser,* Kimberley, 11th August 1899, South Africa, vol. xlvi, 23 June 1900, p.647.
13. See British newspapers of Saturday, 19 May 1900, for the mass mania occasioned by news of the relief of Mafeking. There was spontaneous cheering, ringing of bells, singing of patriotic songs, student processions, and decoration of public buildings in Britain and the Empire.
14. J.E. Quilian, (St. Lucia) — see news agency report in *Scotsman* 25 July 1900, p.9. This, like many other speeches of the Conference, was not recorded in *The Times* (London) reports, which in this period were particularly partisan in African affairs.
15. G. Christian, *Scotsman,* 26 July 1900, p.7.
16. J.A. Langley, West African Aspects of the Pan-African Movements: 1900-1945'. (Edinburgh University: Ph.D, 1968), p.36; *Scotsman,* 26 July 1900, p.7
17. *Scotsman,* 25 July 1900, p.9. Du Bois' comment became immortalized in the communiqué of the Conference, called 'To the Nations of the World', which he prepared, as: "The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line — the relation of the darker to the lighter races of men in Asia and Africa, in America and the islands of the Sea." The militancy of Conference speakers was not limited to attacks on white capitalism, but also attacked black deference. One delegate, reportedly U.S. Consul at Luanda, attacked all black soldiers in American or British employ as Race-renegades, another bitterly satirised the historic black attitude to white as "Take all the world from me, but give me Jesus!".

Henry F. Downing, and P.C. Lee of Rochester, N.Y., *Scotsman*, 26 July 1900, p.7. It is not unlikely that P.C. Lee accompanied Peregrino from New York State to London.

18. Q.E. Quilain of St. Lucia, Edwin vin Loch, (van Loch?).
19. I. Geiss Notes on the Development of pan-Africanism. *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*. Vol. iii. June 1967. No. 4. p. 746.
20. *SANAC*. Vol. ii. p.323. Was 'South African Pan Congress' a stenographer's error or Peregrino's deliberate mistake?
21. Williams was driven out of his Transvaal legal practice by threat of assassination for his dangerous 'Ethiopianist' ideas, and may then have gone to Swaziland. In a later contact with the Colonial Office, Williams claimed to represent the African populations of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony. See, C.B. Wallis to F.O., 13 & 25 February 1908. C.O. to F.O., 10 April & 25 August 1908. Public Records Office. London. F.O. 367/85. I owe this reference indirectly to Mr Christopher Fyfe.
22. *SANAC*. Vol. ii. p.317-27 *passim*. It has been claimed that Peregrino arrived at Cape Town in the 1890s, founded the Progressive Institute there, and published *A Short History of the Native Tribes of the Transvaal*. 1899. (E. Rosenthal *National Biography*. P. 208.)
23. H.T. & R.E. Simons, *Class and Colour*. p.74. In South Africa at the beginning of the century the present distinction between 'Coloured' (Eurafrican) and Bantu (Black) was not always made.
24. It is said that Sir Harry Johnston called Dean 'the most dangerous Negro in the world'. *Observer* advance notice quoted on fly-leaf of H. Dean with S. North Umbala, *The Adventures of a Negro Sea-Captain in Africa and on the Seven Seas in his Attempts to Found an Ethiopian Empire*. (London. 1929.) Dean claimed to have connections with Pondo and Lesotho royalty; to have visited Swaziland during the Anglo-Boer War; finally to have been expelled from South Africa for elicit diamond buying. For further comment, see, Eric Rosenthal, *Stars and Stripes in Africa*. (London. 1938. p.259) G. Shepperson 'Ethiopianism, "Past and Present" p.255n in C.G. Baeta (ed) *Christianity in Tropical Africa*. (London, 1968.)
25. H. Dean, *Umbala*. p.138-9.
26. Ibid. p.245-7; J.R. Coan, 'The Expansion of Missions of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in South Africa. 1896-1908'. Hartford Seminary Foundation. Ph.D. 1961. p.311-2.
27. See footnote 44 below.
28. J.R. Coan 'Expansion of Missions'. p.319n.
29. Ibid. p.458. Citing A.M.E. *Christian Recorder*. 16 January and 7 May 1902.
30. *SANAC*. vol. ii. Pp. 317-27.
31. Ibid. In 1859-60 a black American, J.J. Meyers, had visited Southern African to investigate Afro-American settlement possibilities. Bishop H.M. Turner, who had organised the A.M.E. church in South Africa by 1900, was a leading exponent of Negro American colonisation in African. A. Meier, *Negro Thought in America, 1830-1915*. (Ann Arbor, Mich. 1963. p.65-6.)
32. *SANAC*. p.317.
33. Ibid. pp.319-20.
34. Ibid. p.320.
35. Ibid. pp. 321-2 & 317 and 325.
36. The South African Native Political Association, and the South African Aborigines Association were both founded in 1883. C.C. Saunders "The New African Elite in the Eastern Cape and some late nineteenth century origins of African nationalism". (London University, Institute of Commonwealth Studies seminar paper. 1969).
37. R. Jones, 'The Black Problem in South Africa.' *Nineteenth Century and After*. vol. lvii. May 1905. no. 339. p.775.
38. C.f. E. Roux, *Time Longer than Rope*. University of Wisconsin Press. 1964.
39. H.J. & R.E. Simons, *Class and Colour*. p.118.
40. Ibid. p.119.
41. S. Trapido, "The Early History of the African People's Organization". (London University. Institute of Commonwealth Studies: Seminar Paper. 1970.)
42. Ibid.
43. T.O. Ranger, "The Ethiopian Episode in Barotseland, 1900-1905". In *Rhodes-Livingstone Journal*. (Manchester). No. 37. June 1965. p.26-41. Passim.

44. T.O. Ranger, "Nationality and Nationalism: the case of Barotseland". *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria.* Vol. iv. June 1968. No. 2. p.232.
45. G.L. Caplan, "A Political History of Barotseland 1878-1962". (London University. Ph.D. 1968. pp.215-6, 225 & 263n.)
46. Ibid. p.228-230.
47. According to G.L. Caplan. Ibid. p. 219 ... but T.O. Ranger "Nationality and Nationalism", p.232, says Peregrino left for home on 11th July 1906.
48. T.O. Ranger, "Nationality and Nationalism". p.232.
49. Ibid.
50. cf. G. Shepperson, "The African Abroad". p.166.
51. W.H. Ferris, "The African Abroad". p. 863-5. Peregrino's membership of the Society could have been based on an old connection with Bruce in New York State or Negro journalism.
52. Khama, Serowe to F.D.S. Peregrino. 12 August 1911. (Khama Papers; Serow/Pilikwe. Botswana). G.K.S. was Khama's Secretary, Goapotlhake K. Sekgoma.
53. C.f. Khama, Serowe to Lekoko Montshiwa. 12 March 1911. (Khama Papers). Khama was insistent on rejecting involvement in wider politics lest the Bechuanaland Protectorate should be absorbed into the new Union of South Africa. He rejected the honorary presidency conferred on him by the N.N.C. [later A.N.C.] (Khama to P. ka Isaka Seme, 10 Jan. & 13 Feb. 1912 — Khama Papers).
54. *African Times and Orient Review.* London weekly edition. Vol. i. No. i. 24 March 1914. p.19. His address was given as 62 Wall Street, Cape Town. I owe this reference to Mr Ian Duffield.
55. F.Z.S. Peregrino, *The Political Parties and the Coloured Vote* (Cape Town. 1915.)
56. E. Rosenthal, *National Biography.* p.184. cf. J.W. Jagger & C Tredgold. *The Native Franchise Question.* (Cape Town, 1930.)
57. F.Z.S. Peregrino, *The Political Parties.* p. 3-4 & 7.
58. Ibid. p.8
59. Ibid. p. 5-7.60Ibid. p.8.
61. Ibid. Inside front cover.
62. F.Z.S. Peregrino, *Life Among the Native and Coloured Miners in the Transvaal.* Unlocated. C. 1917. See, F.Z.S. Peregrino, *His Majesty's Black Labourers. A treatise on the camp life etc. of the S.A.N.L.C.* (Cape Town. 1918. pp. 16-18 & front cover.)
63. According to E. Rosenthal, *National Biography* p.208, Peregrino remained its publisher till his death in 1919.
64. F.Z.S. Peregrino, *The Political Parties.*(Inside front cover.)
65. e.g. Khama might have sent soldiers but refused to send non-combatant labourers.
66. F.Z.S. Peregrino, *Black Labourers.* p.1. Citing St. Paul.
67. e.g. lists of how many pounds of butter, bread, jam, tea, etc. were consumed in August 1917. Ibid. P.8.
68. The different language texts are not identical, e.g. Moshoeshoe is invoked in the Sotho text. The pamphlet also contains valuable photos of Peregrino himself (in Sergeant's uniform?). T.M. Makiwane, J.J. Mgqambo, E.Masiu, J.D. Rathebe, H.L. Appolis, H.P. Kuzwayo & Revs. Mdolomba, Mlongi, Peteretse, Zestranti & Polisa. Plus a full-page photo of Rev. J.I. Xaba.
69. F.S.Z. Peregrino, *Black Labourers.* p.7.
70. C.f. H.S. Williams, *The British Negro*; T.B. Ominiyi. *A Defence of the Ethiopian Movement.* (Edinburgh, 1908.) e.g. G. Shepperson, "Pan-Africanism and pan-Africanism: some historical notes", *Phylon.* Op cit.
71. *South African Outlook.* 1 December 1924.

Rwanda

Zakes Mda

"Classic justice has failed in Rwanda," says Gratien Uwisabye, a Tutsi cultural activist who works for Fest'Africa. "We need to explore other forms of justice. There can be no reconciliation between the Hutu and the Tutsi without justice."

Fest'Africa is an annual literary festival in Lille, France, run by African writers. Fifty African authors, mostly from Francophone countries, participated in last year's festival. The focus was on Rwanda, particularly on how the memory of the genocide can be preserved through literature and on what role the literary arts can play in bringing about reconciliation. All Rwandan participants were emphatic that the South African route of truth-amnesty-reconciliation would not work in their situation. Justice is a prerequisite for any reconciliation. Amnesty is out of the question.

Uwisabye says officially there are 125 000 prisoners accused of participating in one-way or another in the genocide. At the rate that the trials are going it would take eight hundred years to try them all. There is therefore a need to find new forms of justice. Rwandans are now experimenting with a traditional form of justice called Gacaca in Kinyarwanda (the language of both the Hutus and Tutsis of Rwanda).

When there is a conflict between families or villages in traditional Rwanda Gacaca (pronounced as Gachacha) is used to resolve the problems. It is a participatory form of justice. For instance, if two families have a dispute they come together to find out the individual responsible for the offence. Every member of the community is free to participate in the proceedings and in denouncing the culprit. The first step of Gacaca is acceptance. The family of the offender must accept the crime. The offender must make a full confession, and must apologise to the wronged family. After examining mitigating factors the family of the offender must take the responsibility of paying compensation to the wronged family. Gacaca is therefore a restorative form of justice. Compensation depends on the nature of the crime and the status of the victim. If, for instance, a murder of a breadwinner has been committed then the family of the offender will pay ten cows or cultivate the fields of the wronged family for the sole benefit of that family for life. In traditional society Gacaca presents an amicable and unconditional reconciliation.

The Rwandans are now engaged in studies and research to determine how Gacaca can be adapted to deal with the genocide. They have started an experimental exercise of Gacaca at the Rilima Prison in the outskirts of Kigali where the prisoners and their alleged victims were brought together. Some prisoners made public confessions of their crimes during the genocide and begged to be pardoned. The next step will be to bring the villagers together to testify of their experiences during the genocide. After this experiment Uwisabye has expressed his reservations about Gacaca's ability to deal with the more serious cases. Perhaps it can work in bringing to justice those who

collaborated with the killers, say, by giving information, and those who might not have killed anyone but looted from the victims. However those who planned the killings and those who carried out actual executions deserve nothing less than what he calls 'classic justice'.

Fest'Africa hopes to make a contribution to Rwanda's quest for reconciliation. Soon after the 1994 genocide there was great concern that African intellectuals — with the exception of Wole Soyinka - did not react to it. Three years ago a Rwanda edition of the festival was established with the view of breaking this silence. Nocky Djedanoum, a Chadian writer based in Lille who also founded Fest'Africa in 1993, invited ten writers to stay in Rwanda for two months. These writers came from Chad, Senegal, Guinea-Conakry, Djibouti, Kenya, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire and from Rwanda itself. During their stay they visited genocide sites and memorials and talked with the survivors. They were asked to write something on their experiences if they felt they could. They had no obligation to write anything at all.

After two years all the ten writers had published various pieces of literature — ranging from novels, poetry, biographies and travelogues — based on their experiences in Rwanda. At the end of May this year they presented their books at a seminar in Rwanda. The South African writer, Antjie Krog, was invited to share her experiences of the truth and reconciliation process in South Africa. The Ugandan writer, Goretti Kyomuhendo, who had written a novel on the genocide outside the Fest'Africa process, was also invited.

Last November the ten writers once more presented their work to enthusiastic audiences in Lille and in Paris. They shared experiences of their two months' stay in Rwanda. They feel that in addition to putting Rwanda back on the agenda of the international community, their books will encourage a new literary movement in Rwanda. The country has no literature of its own. The writers held a number of workshops with prospective writers. Now the Rwandans are able to write for themselves of what happened during the genocide. But what is most important to Uwisabye is that this literature will dispel the denial that seems to take root with the passage of time.

"Some of the Rwandans who committed the genocide have claimed that the genocide did not happen," he says.

Writers who came to Rwanda met the victims, heard their testimonies and visited memorial sites such as Nyamata, Bisesero, Nyarubuye and Murambi where there are ten rooms full of skeletons

"For us it is important not to bury those skeletons so that people can remember," he adds. "Our people must never forget the genocide."

It is the display of these skulls that disturbed Monique Ilboudo, a university law lecturer and writer from Burkina Faso. She says, "Although I understand the importance of making sure that the people do not forget the genocide, I come from a culture where no one is dead until he or she is buried. All these remains are like wandering souls without a rest."

But then even the people that she met in Rwanda were like the living dead. When they have so much to remember memory becomes a burden. She wonders whether these memorial sites with all the skeletons will hamper reconciliation. "When the survivors see these bones every day how can they forgive?" she asks.

One thing that the writers observed was that the people in Rwanda are still divided and very bitter. Goretti Kyomuhendo recalls an

incident where a Rwandan writer, Yolande Mukagasa, read an extract from her work on how her husband, three daughters, one brother and three sisters were hacked down by the machetes of the Intarehamwe, and how she hid for three days among the corpses of her relatives. She broke down and cried. Other Rwandans at the seminar were angry with her. "Yolande," they said, "we are tired of your tears. You behave as if you are the only one who suffered. You personalise your tragedy. You say 'I lost my husband ... I lost my children.' What about the rest of the people of Rwanda? They lost their husbands and their children too."

This, of course, sounded very callous and insensitive, but it showed her that Rwandans have lost all sense of feeling and are still very bitter.

This bitterness is displayed by one of the Rwandan writers, Venuste Kayimahe, who recalled at the Lille meeting how he hid at the French Embassy for two months during the genocide and how his daughter was hacked to death. He declares that the international community has sacrificed the Tutsis since 1959 (when they were overthrown for the first time by the majority Hutus and many of them went to exile in the neighbouring countries). The international community is an accomplice to the genocide, he says.

"This is not a Rwandan genocide," he adds bitterly. "This is a Tutsi genocide because if you call it a Rwandan genocide then the Tutsis don't count anymore."

Jean Claude Gasana, a Hutu academic who is exiled in Belgium — he was not part of the Lille gathering since only Tutsis were there — says it is statements like these that indicate that the present ruling Tutsis are not really interested in reconciliation. Instead they are vengeful, which will only result in a never-ending cycle of violence.

"This cannot only be a Tutsi genocide because Hutus died too," he says. "Tutsis killed many Hutus on their advance to Kigali during the war. They actually decimated many communities. Post genocide times have even been worse. They have systematically killed Hutus at will. The problem is that the international community does not want to talk about this because the Hutus are regarded as genociders (sic) and therefore deserve to die."

Many Rwandans think that there will not be any reconciliation in their lifetime. Beata Umubyeyi is a 22-year-old political science student in Lille. Her father was a white man whom she never knew and her mother a Tutsi. All her relatives were killed in 1994. Only she and her mother escaped. They are now refugees in France. She says she has nothing against Hutus because she was saved by Hutus who hid her during the genocide.

"But there is still anger and bitterness among the Rwandans," she adds. "Even now I am sure when a Rwandan person meets another one she or he asks herself or himself whether the person is Hutu or Tutsi. Reconciliation is a distant dream. Maybe my children will live in a good country. There may be time to take out the hate from our children. But how? I do not think Gacaca will help. Recently my mother went back to Rwanda to search for survivors. She found nobody in the village of my childhood. There are no more people ... no houses ... nothing! Who will participate in the Gacaca there?"

Koulsy Lamko has faith in Gacaca. He is a writer from Chad who came to Rwanda on the Fest'Africa project, and was so moved by the situation there that he decided to stay. He felt that writing a book was not enough. He wanted to live with the people in order to understand new problems after the genocide. He says that the emotions of the people were destroyed by the war. To the

people there death has become banal and many of them have suicidal tendencies since they do not think they have anything to live for. Yet many of them are looking for vengeance. He uses theatre, music and art to make them feel again.

The method of theatre that he uses is very participatory. The members of the community where the play is being performed give accounts of their personal experiences of the genocide. Out of these stories a play is created. The play only poses the problems and members of the audience have to provide the solutions. One such play was presented before an audience of almost two thousand people and lasted for six hours because the audience began to participate and provide solutions. Many people who started with the view that reconciliation was impossible changed and became activists for reconciliation.

Lamko is now based at the National University of Rwanda in Butare. He is working on a play about Gacaca, which has been collectively created by him and Rwandan actors. This was commissioned by the Centre for Conflict Management. Since the government wants to introduce the Gacaca system to deal with some of the genocide cases, they now want to gauge the reaction of the people to the system through this play. The play will use real-life accused and real-life accusers. The government will therefore be able to tell whether the people accept Gacaca or not.

Not all African writers think the activities of Fest'Africa in Rwanda are commendable. Chenjerai Hove, one of Zimbabwe's leading writers, was invited to participate in the project. He turned the invitation down because he did not want to feel like a tourist into other people's miseries and tragedies. He feared the response of the Rwandan people who would say to him, "So you think our experience is stuff for fiction?"

Indeed, Goretti Kyomuhendo — the Ugandan author of the novel *Secrets No More,* which deals with the genocide — was accused by Rwandan intellectuals of fictionalising their tragedy. She was struck by the fact that they referred to it as "our genocide", as if they wanted to hog it and hoard it for themselves and did not want to share it with anyone.

As a writer Hove says he searches for reality in order to transform it into fiction. But the Rwandan situation from the pictures he saw in newspapers and on television was an overdose of reality, which would leave the writer with nothing more to write because there is nothing more to create.

"Emotionally I could not imagine myself standing the sight of ten thousand human skeletons displayed for the public to view for whatever cause," he says. "I think it is obscene to be displaying those bones there. It is barbaric. The Rwandan government is fighting barbarity with another form of barbarity. It is disgusting that somebody did kill those people and that now they have been displayed like museum pieces."

Hove believes that the Fest'Africa writers were being used by Paul Kagame's government for propaganda purposes in his anti-Hutu campaign. Somebody was bound to hijack the writers to write about their own cause, which was not necessarily a universal human cause.

"I understand from those who went this is exactly what happened," he adds. "The president of Rwanda took them to various sites to show them skeletons and mass graves in order to prove how inhuman and horrendous the Hutus are. Now this campaign is an anti-Hutu campaign rather than an anti-Intarehamwe campaign."

If he had participated in Fest'Africa's Rwanda project as a writer he would have contributed to the hatred rather than to

human compassion and reconciliation which must happen for that country to move forward.

The Rwandan government on the other hand is adamant that it is working for reconciliation, hence its attempts to explore other forms of justice such as Gacaca. It denies that it is whipping up feelings against the Hutus.

Without any meaningful reconciliation the Rwanda genocide is bound to repeat itself.

I Live in Naturena - Why Don't You?

Jo Sandrock

Like most cities, Johannesburg has a railway line running through it. North of this impenetrable barrier are desirable suburbs and expensive shopping centres. Expensive, not because their goods cost more — butter, if you can afford it, is the same price anywhere — but because of the fountains and the marble. On the wrong side of the tracks, south of the railway line, are the mines and the suburbs where the white miners used to live. Then there is what came to be called the New South, more expensive houses, with two bathrooms and double garages, but cheaper because they were, after all, in the dreaded south.

Soweto, of course, is in the south too. Soweto is a phoney African-sounding word made up of the first two letters of the three words South West Townships, and was comfortably out of the way in the apartheid days ('Isn't it terrible how far they have to travel, and get up so early in the morning?' was a popular mantra). There's a big soccer stadium, Soccer City, and, glory of glories, Sun City prison. This is a huge complex with brilliant pink floodlights putting a dawn glow into the sky all night — the great Johannesburg Prison, always known by the name of the outrageously de luxe resort in a former bantustan.

And of course there were warders, white warders who, if they were senior enough, lived in the nearby lush New South suburb of Meredale. South of the prison — yes, even further south — was a cluster of rocky hills, the end of the Klipriviersberg, which was to become the suburb of Naturena. This was the home of many of the white prison staff whose children went to the nearby Meredale primary school, or the high school in Mondeor, somewhat further away. A comfortable right-wing enclave.

In the mid-1980s our children had left home and we were ready to move ourselves. Where could we build a house? Here in Naturena was the ideal piece of ground — half rocky hillside and half flat enough for a small house and garden. In the fifteen years since we arrived the whole world has changed. Soon after we moved in it was reported that there was to be a coloured area established nearby. We attended the indignation meeting in the Meredale school hall. One after the other, residents rose to express their outrage and to suggest stronger and more expensive ways of delivering their protests to the powers that be in the local council. But either the report was a rumour or the council took heed — the township never materialised.

Soon the Group Areas Act was repealed and a trickle of black homeowners were to be seen maintaining Naturena's middle-class image, mowing the pavements and keeping themselves to themselves behind net curtains. But the right-wingers could not see that this was a mirror image of their own lives. They moved out, selling their houses, not to blacks — this would have been betrayal — but to whites who were starting off in family life. By this time it was 1990 and the 2nd of February, when the ANC was unbanned, had come and gone, so these new arrivals were not really interested in

whether they had black neighbours or not, so long as there weren't too many of them. But gradually they too moved on, went up in the world or found their surroundings uncongenial. More houses were built on the rocky hillsides, more children arrived, and we had a new school at the edge of the suburb. In 1996, when Naturena was about half-and-half, suddenly we were in the news. There was another protest meeting, this time against the projected removal of an informal settlement from a stretch of unsafe ground some kilometres away to a swampy piece of land in the valley below us. We collected money for legal fees, we barricaded the entrance roads to Naturena, and we read about ourselves in the newspapers. 'They've forgotten their roots,' said the premier of Gauteng grandly from his house in up-market Houghton. The enraged future occupiers of the area arrived in a bus, bearing placards and ready for a confrontation. When they saw where they were to be dumped they left: it seems they had been given to understand that they were to live near Southgate, the local shopping centre, near schools and transport, with plenty of jobs available — all a figment in the mind of some council bureaucrat. The irony was apparent to those of us — not many — who had attended the original meeting nearly ten years before. But now it was a breakthrough into the New South Africa. We were all in it together, right or wrong. The roots that the politician so sneeringly referred to were not out there in the Struggle, but right here in Naturena, and they belonged to us all. If 'they' had forgotten 'theirs', 'we' had forgotten 'ours'. It was a watershed.

So how are we all now in Naturena? We have a reflection of the country's demography. 'Hello Unca Mike,' shout the little boys to my husband as he toils up the hill in his bicycle's lowest gear, speeding past him on their own five-speeds. We have to be careful as we drive round to our house because there's a flat bit of road at the top of the hill where the kids play soccer or cricket depending on the season. The teenagers mooch around in their posh clothes — they all go to Mondeor High School nowadays.

We have no high walls or electrified fences; we leave that to the rich north. Our crime rate has gone down and our house values have gone up — still lower than those in the north, but the community values are certainly higher. Now that virtually the whole suburb is built up, hardly a vacant stand to be seen, we do not have neighbourhood get-togethers so often, but the community spirit is still solidly there. It would not occur to any of us not to greet a stranger passing by, unheard of in my former life where a stranger was a stranger and undoubtedly suspect.

As I type I look out to the south where my view extends over the new low-cost housing to the horizon twenty kilometres away, no higher ground between me and Antarctica. Because of the hills, the houses all face different directions; the streets curve, no grid-pattern for us. Everybody should live in Naturena.

CONTRIBUTORS

Sola Olorunyomi is a writer and jazz enthusiast. He teaches African Literature and Folklore Studies in the English Department, University of Ibadan. He has published extensively on these themes in his research in West Africa, the Caribbean and Nicaragua – where he worked in the literacy and harvest volunteer project while also doubling as a freelance behind Sandinista guerilla lines during the Contra offensive of the mid-eighties.

Raymond Suttner is South African Ambassador in Sweden. He is Chair of the Foreign Affairs Study Group of the ANC; Member of the National Executive Committee (NEC); Member of Central Committee, SACP; and Head, Department of Political Education of the African National Congress (ANC)

Peter Adwok Nyaba is currently a senior member of the Sudan People's Liberation Army's (SPLA) National Executive Council. Dr Nyaba joined the SPLA in 1986, served as a SPLA military commander inside Sudan, and has a first-hand knowledge of SPLA behaviour on the ground. He was Head of the Geology Department of the University of Juba during the early 1980's. He won a Noma Award for his book *The Politics of Liberation in South Sudan* (1997).

Kwesi Kwaa Prah is retired Professor of Sociology at the University of the Western Cape. He is currently Director of the Centre for Advanced Studies of African Society (CASAS) based in Cape Town, South Africa. Educated in Ghana, he took university degrees in the Netherlands. He has held research and teaching posts in Sociology and Anthropology in various universities across Africa as well as in Germany, the Netherlands, England and China. Prah has written many books including *Beyond the Color Line* (1998), *African Languages for the Mass Education of Africans* (1995) and *Capitein. A Critical Study of an 18th Century African* (1992).

Zeng Qiang is a Senior Researcher at Beijing University, specialized on Africa. He has until recently been working at the Africa Institute, Pretoria as a Visiting Research Fellow.

Hisham Aidi is an academic and a freelance writer living in New York City.

Bahru Zewde is Senior Lecturer in History at Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia. He is one of Ethiopia's leading historians and is local Vice-President of the Organization for Social Science and Research in Eastern and Southern Africa (OSSREA).

Jabez Ayodele Langley is Professor of African History in the African Studies Department at Howard University. He was previously Head of the Gambian Civil Service and author of *Ideologies of Liberation in Black Africa 1856 – 1970.*

Quinton Neil Parsons was born and educated up to secondary level in England, and first came to Botswana as a teenage volunteer (as a teacher's aid at Moeng College), before returning to England. He studied for his first degree (BA London External) at North-Western Polytechnic, now the University of North London. He then went on to African Studies and a doctorate in History at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland, where he was supervised by George Shepperson. His first academic job was teaching history at the University of Zambia, followed by the University of Swaziland, then part of the joint University of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. After that he became a researcher and freelance author in History and Education for some years in England and Botswana and for short periods in the U.S. After a short stay at the University of Cape Town he went to the University of Botswana, where he is currently in the History Department. His published work include *The Roots of Rural Poverty in Central and Southern Africa* with Robin Palmer (Heinemann, 1977), *A New History of Southern Africa* (Macmilland, 1982, 1993). His latest book is *Kind Khama, Emperor Joe, and the Great White Queen* (Chicago, 1998), a detailed reconstruction of the 1895 mission to Britain by Khama, Sebele and Bathoen.

Zakes Mda is the pen-name for Zanemvula Kizito Gatyeni Mda. He is former Professor of Literature and Drama and is the author of a number of plays and novels, many of which have won major awards including the M-Net Book Prize, the Sanlam Literary Prize, the Olive Schreiner Prizes and another for prose, the Christina Crawford Award of the American Theatre Association, Amstel Playwright of the Year Award, etc. One of his novels, *Ways of Dying*, is currently being made into a feature film by the British production company, Skreba. Two others are being produced as television mini-series. His plays have been performed widely in South Africa, Europe and the USA. His latest production in Europe is *La romantica historia d'una monja,* a Catalan translation of his play *The Nun's Romantic* Story, in Barcelona, Spain.

Jo Sandrock retired from the Witwatersrand University Press as Senior Editor. She has worked on several publications for CASAS.

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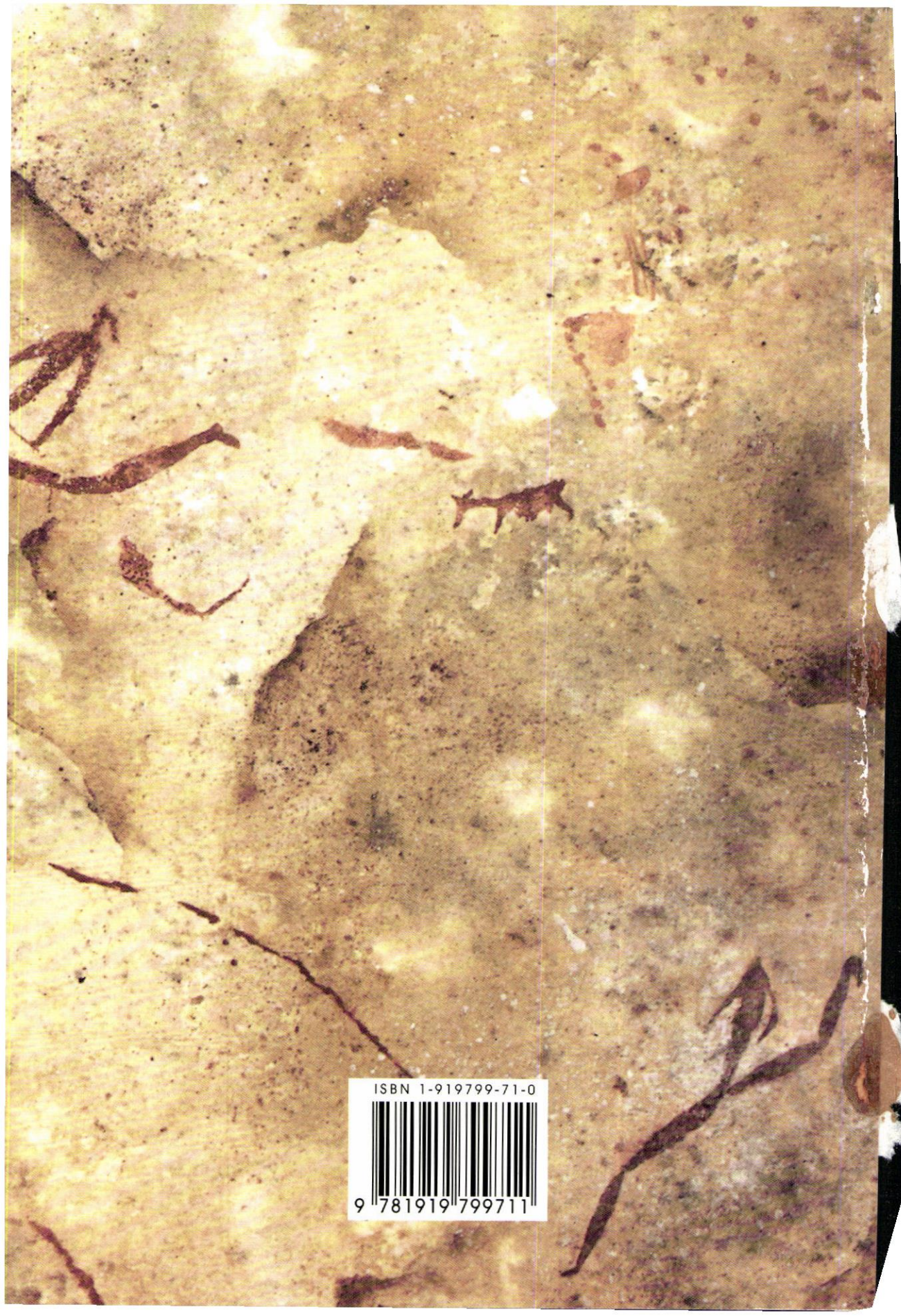

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