

Editorial

We are in the third year of the appearance of *Tinabantu* and are in a position to look back and reflect on the initial steps we have taken, on hopefully, a long journey. Initially, the intention had been to appear twice a year. This has so far been difficult to achieve largely because of the paucity of the articles and papers we have received from prospective authors. As we said in the Editorial of our maiden volume, the intention of the Editor is to produce a journal which is serious, if you like highbrow, without being esoteric, snooty or academic. The journal is supposed to present a mix of topics reflected from totally independent philosophical dispositions, of the authors. As we have indicated in the verso page, the views expressed in *Tinabantu* are strictly for the account of the authors. The fact that we are still coming out in print, after two years, is particularly cheerful because there is a popular view that African journals based on the continent, like this one, appear only once. We have broken this understanding, or if you prefer, misunderstanding.

Our articles are intended to intellectually reach a wide audience. This particular issue has a number of very interesting considerations for the reader. *Annette Groth's* contribution represents a sharply critical view of globalization and related issues from the north. Groth's candid perceptions and insights usefully elucidate a topic which has become the talk of all concerned about the socio-economic future of humanity in our times. *Eugene Godfried's* "Reflections on Afro-Cubans" shows us a face of Cuba which we usually do not see from outside, a face which almost half the population of Cuba shares and which points to the African roots of the Cuban population. *Humberto Márquez's* piece on Venezuela draws attention to a reality which is not easily acknowledged in South America. All over the continent pockets of people of African descent exists in sometimes, sizeable numbers and with considerable historical depth. Márquez tells the story of this reality in contemporary Venezuela.

Halima Mwinsheikhe and *Mwajuma Vuzo* summarize two research studies on the medium of instruction in Tanzanian secondary schools. The objective of these studies was to find out how the use of Kiswahili affects students' understanding, participation and performance in classrooms. Data was collected by means of interviews, questionnaires, classroom observation and a cartoon comprehension test. Generally, the studies showed that when Kiswahili was used as a medium of instruction, students understood better, explained themselves better and participated much more enthusiastically in class. Performance was likewise improved. The paper is the first example of our intention to include papers in the larger African languages in the output of *Tinabantu*. We hope in the future, we will quickly reach a stage where at least half our output is in African languages.

John Adebayo Afolabi goes on the trail of the Rastafarians and weaves a delicate balance in his consideration of the arts, life and aesthetics of Rastafarians. He argues that the perpetual inextricability of art and social reality (which is natural) ensures that art encapsulates the totality of human experiences in society and projects, in varying forms and nuances, the ascendant moods, conflicts, yearnings and aspirations of humans at particular periods of history. This is why bondage is a *leitmotif* in Rastafarian arts, life and aesthetics.

Rastafarian reactions to bondage are, in his view, multifarious – revolutionary violence in art, exile in more affluent countries, and the adoption of messianic religiosity, marijuana and a psychedelic route through life.

Hong Yongyong, who is currently a visiting professor at the Centre for Advanced Studies of African Society (CASAS) throws some light on a matter which is little known of outside China. We have consistently published in each of the issues we have so far produced, a paper which links Africa and China. In a period when China is rapidly becoming the engine for economic growth in the world, there are some of us who are anxious that Africa forges useful linkages with China for the mutual benefit of our peoples.

Peter Adwok Nyaba draws attention to a real fear which needs to be articulated as the Southern Sudan moves from a period of war to peace. We need to be careful about handing over the Southern Sudan to a network of NGOs. The Sudanese will have to take charge of their own future. Two other papers are presented in this section on Sudanese issues. Both of them are from *Eric Reeves*. It is ten years since the world closed its eyes and ears whilst the genocide in Rwanda took place. The powers of the world decided that they were not sufficiently interested to do anything about it, so in 100 days in 1994, 800 000 people were slaughtered. As I make these observations, it is a cruel irony to note that, a similar danger has emerged in the Sudan, in Darfur, where the Arabist regime in Khartoum is carrying out ethnic cleansing in a ferocious way. Eric Reeves has provided an insightful expose of the crisis in Darfur. He also has a powerful description of what is going on in the Shilluk area of the same country. Africans need to wake up to the crisis in the Afro-Arab borderlands. After the demise of apartheid in South Africa, the next major flashpoint, with potentially difficult long-term implications are the tensions between Arab and African interests in the Afro-Arab borderlands.

Monika Firla, who is an authority on African figures in European history makes an interesting presentation of a personage who is relatively little known, Angelo Soliman. I attempt a portrait of Walter Sisulu, “the man who put the African National Congress (ANC) together”. *Dieudonne Gnamankou* presents us with a figure out of the history of the Ottoman slavery of Africans, in present-day Turkey; and *Yvonne King* draws our attention to the case of Omar Askia, one of the many African-Americans who are spending a good part of their lives in prisons, in the land of milk and honey. *Akwasi Aidoo* takes us to the psychological edge of life and death.

The Editor
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